



USBLN® 17th Annual National Conference Leadership Team Announced

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WASHINGTON, DC (March 6, 2014) – Today, the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) announced its 17th Annual National Conference Leadership team. Educational Track Chair representation includes Workplace Track Chair **Belinda Reed Shannon**, Vice President, Equality & Inclusion, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK); Supply Chain Track Chair **Ronnette Smith**, Developmental Club Manager-North Division, Market 20 Upstate New York, Sam's Club; and Marketplace Track Chair **Apoorva N. Gandhi**, Vice President, Multicultural Markets and Alliances, Marriott International, Inc. The inaugural Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE®) Host Committee Chair is **Joyce A. Bender**, Founder and CEO, Bender Consulting Services, Inc. For full biographies of the Conference Leadership team, please visit <http://www.usblnannualconference.org/chairs.html>.

“Our 2014 Conference Leadership team of Belinda, Ronnette, Apoorva and Joyce will shape our educational programming to create a robust agenda focused on disability inclusion for innovation and growth through talent, supplier diversity and market share. This year’s conference will include an outstanding mix of dialogue sessions, interactive forums and thought-leaders guaranteeing that our educational content is responsive to business’s needs” said **Jill Houghton**, Executive Director, USBLN®.

The 2014 USBLN® 17th Annual National Conference & Biz2Biz Expo entitled, “**A Sea of Opportunity: Disability Inclusion for Innovation & Growth**” on September 29 - October 2, in Orlando, Florida is the preeminent national business to business event that focuses on disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain and marketplace. With cutting-edge educational sessions, enhanced networking, engaging programming plus high-profile speakers, attendees will gain actionable knowledge to implement their disability inclusion initiatives and goals. Early-bird registration is now open, visit: www.usblnannualconference.org

Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE®) Host Committee Chair, **Joyce A. Bender**, Founder and CEO, Bender Consulting Services, Inc. said, “As Chair of the DOBE® Host committee, it is my honor to work with the USBLN® and other great leaders of Disability-Owned Business Enterprises to advance the message of partnership, value, quality and delivery. We represent the engine of the American economy. When we compete and succeed, we provide important examples of talent, ability and economic empowerment.”

Marketplace Track Chair, **Apoorva N. Gandhi**, Vice President, Multicultural Markets and Alliances, Marriott International, Inc. shared, "If you are learning about or already established in the importance of inclusion, the USBLN® conference is a critical event to stay relevant in this space! It is worth every minute!"

Workplace Track Chair, **Belinda Reed Shannon**, Vice President, Equality & Inclusion, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) said, “The USBLN® conference is an incredible experience for anyone advocating for people with disabilities in the workplace. The conference provides practical and proven solutions to challenges that are readily applicable in the workplace. When searching for the best and the brightest, the USBLN® should be top of mind for resourcing top talent.”

Supply Chain Track Chair, **Ronnette Smith**, Developmental Club Manager-North Division, Market 20 Upstate New York, Sam's Club shared, "I am excited to serve as the 2014 USBLN[®] Conference Supply Chain Track Chair. The USBLN[®] conference is the place to be to benchmark with colleagues and for Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBE[®]'s) to gain insights from other corporations. I invite you to join us in Orlando for rewarding, innovative and powerful program sessions on achieving disability business inclusion."

About the US Business Leadership Network[®] (USBLN[®])

The US Business Leadership Network[®] (USBLN[®]) is a national non-profit that helps business drive performance by leveraging disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain, and marketplace. The USBLN[®] serves as the collective voice of nearly 50 Business Leadership Network affiliates across the United States, representing over 5,000 businesses. Additionally, the USBLN[®] Disability Supplier Diversity Program[®] (DSDP) is the nation's leading third party certification program for disability-owned businesses, including businesses owned by service-disabled veterans. www.usbln.org

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