

Business Jumpstart Badge

Inspiring Entrepreneurs

Lizz Whitacre to the Animal Rescue!

As a teen, Lizz Whitacre volunteered at a pet shelter to help dogs and cats find forever homes. By the time this animal lover graduated high school, she co-owned the shelter! Lizz discovered that one problem with running a pet shelter was filling out all the paperwork to manage the animals' adoption. What did she do? She came up with a computer program to make it easier! Soon, rescue shelters all over the country were using her program called Pawlytics. "The world needs people who are willing to think differently," says Lizz. "Why not you?"

Kathryn "KK" Gregory Greer Keeps Your Wrists Warm

Kathryn "KK Gregory" Greer was a 10-year-old Girl Scout when she invented a fleece sleeve that can be worn underneath coats and mittens to keep kids' wrists warm while playing in the snow. She tested her "Wristies" on her Girl Scout troop by making 12 pairs for a sledding day, and they all loved them. Local stores soon started selling Wristies and her company grew quickly. "I never planned to start a business. I just came up with an idea to solve my problem," says KK. "The hardest part for me was when I was young, some of the men I would meet for business would ignore me, reaching to shake my mother's hand, thinking she wasn't able to get a babysitter. I would have to stand up straight, look them in the eyes, smile, and introduce myself as the inventor."

Luz Cristal Glangchai Ignites Your Entrepreneurial Spirit

Cristal is a scientist, entrepreneur, and mentor who is passionate about developing the next generation of creative leaders. Her passion for igniting the entrepreneurial spirit in girls led her to found VentureLab in 2013 and to write the VentureGirls book. VentureLab is a nonprofit organization that works to bring entrepreneurship education to kids—especially girls—all over the world. As Chief Innovation Officer, Cristal helps girls learn how to be entrepreneurs. As she explains: "When I was in graduate school, I was developing a new method of targeting cancer cells. I had been working on an experiment, sometimes until 2 or 3 in the morning. When I analyzed my results, I found out that my experiment did not work. Of course, I was frustrated and disappointed because of all of the late nights and the effort I put into it. However, I was very determined

and felt that what I was doing was important. I knew that at some point I would find something that worked. So I went back and studied some scientific papers about the materials I was using, tried to guess why it may not have worked, and then performed another experiment. It took several attempts, but each time I learned what did not work, and was able to narrow it down. And when it finally did work, I felt a great sense of accomplishment.”

Brit Morin Is an Influencer for Female Millennials

Brit Morin is the founder & CEO of Brit + Co, a lifestyle and online learning company that provides classes, content, product, and experiences for more than 125 million women. After she launched her company, the former technology executive (and Girl Scout alum!) had to pivot her business model. “Pivot” means making a change in the product or strategy, like hitting the reset button on your computer. “In the process, I had to let go of some of my favorite colleagues and take some heat from the press and from investors,” explains Brit. “It was definitely one of the most humbling experiences of my professional life, but I knew it had to happen for us to continue to be successful. I learned that as a founder, you have to be thinking two steps ahead even while others are not.”

Miko Branch Finds Help for Curly Hair

After straightening her hair for years, Miko Branch decided to wear her curly hair in its natural state. The hairstylist’s customers wanted to know how she kept her curls looking natural and soft. So Miko and her sister, Titi, took to her kitchen table to whip up mixtures from various ingredients, eventually creating products like Curly Pudding and Pillow Soft Curls. Soon, the demand for the products was so great that the sisters launched Miss Jessie’s, a hair care company that sells products designed for maintaining and styling naturally curly hair.

Sallie Krawcheck Shows Women How to Invest

Wall Street financial superstar Sallie Krawcheck knew that the investment industry often did not engage women, which led to women keeping their money in cash, missing out on potential market returns. So Sallie did the research to find out how to motivate women to invest. With her findings, she started Ellevest, an investment company that gives women the confidence to invest smartly and meet their financial and professional goals.

Shiza Shahid Is Always Changing the World

Growing up in Pakistan, Shiza Shahid spent her teens as an activist and volunteer. At age 14, she helped children of the women being held in a Pakistani prison. When a devastating earthquake ravaged her country, she worked in the relief camps. Soon after graduating from college, Shiza became a founder of the Malala Fund, an organization named for Nobel Peace Prize winner and educational activist Malala Yousafzai, who was shot by a masked Taliban gunman on her school bus. Shiza is also the founder of Our Place, an ethical, sustainable cookware line, and NOW Ventures, which invests in primarily female-led startups. “You have no idea where life will take you,” says Shiza. “Just show up in the best way you can, and believe in your ability to lead.”

Susan Bulkeley Butler Helps Women Become Leaders

Susan Bulkeley Butler is an accomplished businesswoman and the first female leader of a major financial institution. Throughout the years, Susan has helped thousands of women reach their goals by writing business advice books, and being a mentor and role model. She also started the Institute for the Development of Women Leaders to help women achieve their dreams. “Make your dreams come true and help others that follow you,” Susan says. “Make the world a better place for your having been there.”