

**MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED TO
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NETWORK TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN STEM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP LAUNCHED RISE WINDSOR-ESSEX

Windsor-Essex County, Ontario, Canada – Thursday, March 5, 2020 – RISE Windsor-Essex, a network created to support women in STEM and women in entrepreneurship was launched in front of over 125 attendees at an event entitled *How Women Are Using Tech to Change the World* held at the Water's Edge Event Centre.

RISE Windsor-Essex is a network to empower women in STEM and women in entrepreneurship in Windsor-Essex, Ontario, Canada. The network was founded by community partners – the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation's Small Business Centre, WE Tech Alliance, Build a Dream, Windsor Essex Capital Angel Network (WECAN), The University of Windsor's EPICentre and Workforce Windsor Essex.

Funded by the Government of Canada's [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy](#), the RISE network and website (risewindsor-essex.com) will provide information for ongoing activities, events, programs, job boards, funding opportunities, and mentoring opportunities. The network is open to organization and corporations with an initiative to empower women in the STEM and entrepreneurship fields.

RISE utilized two events to kick off the regional network. On Thursday, March 5th, RISE held a panel discussion, *How Women Are Using Tech to Change the World* at the Water's Edge Event Centre and was sponsored by WEtech Alliance and the University of Windsor's EPICentre. Five panelists with Windsor-Essex ties spoke with moderator Gemma Grey-Hall, past President, Women's Enterprise Skills Training (WEST) of Windsor, Major Gift Officer, Faculty of Science, University of Windsor about the importance of tech and the impact women are making in the tech world. Guests heard from panelists: **Dr. Mitra Mirhassani**, Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Windsor; **Sarah Dobbin-Battersby**, Founder & CEO, State of Kind; **Karolyn Hart**, Founder & President, InspireHUB; **Dr. Alex Ward**, President, Origin Materials, Canada Research Director, Open Innovation, Organic Materials; and **Shreya Patki**, 4th Year Mechanical Engineering student, University of Windsor.

On Friday, March 6th, at the Institute for Border Logistics and Security, RISE will host a workshop entitled *Negotiating with Confidence*, with guest speaker **Fotini Iconomopoulos**, Management Consultant, Forward Focusing. Over 60 women and men will attend the four-hour workshop where Ms. Iconomopoulos will lead the participants through a series of lectures, activities and challenges, aimed at increasing perceived and actual power in personal and professional life.

Nicole Anderson, Program Director, Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, WindsorEssex Small Business Centre, said "Our region boasts many organizations who are empowering women entrepreneurs and women working in under-represented fields. RISE will create a place where these organizations can operate as a collective; by amalgamating their information on one site, women will be able to access resources in one place. Our goal is to increase the number of female-run businesses and women working in STEM, in Windsor-Essex County."

Stephen MacKenzie, President and CEO, WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation added, “The Women Entrepreneurship Strategy Grant provided by the Government of Canada is the first of it’s kind for our region – and one that will have a broad economic impact in the community. We know that women in our region, province, and in our country are under-represented in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, as well as under-represented as entrepreneurs. The work that is being done by RISE, Small Business Centre, and the other founding partners of the network will make significant strides to move the dial towards – and hopefully beyond – equal representation in Windsor-Essex in STEM and as entrepreneurs.”

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