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**IN NEW REPORT, WE NYC PROGRAM SURVEYS FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE TO  
NEARLY 17,000 NYC WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Jonnel Doris today announced that nearly 17,000 women have been served through the City’s landmark initiative, Women Entrepreneurship NYC (WE NYC), which connects women entrepreneurs with the resources and support they need to start and grow thriving businesses. This achievement comes with the release of WE NYC’s [Impact Report](#), which measures the program’s outcomes during its first five years.

“Building a recovery for all of us means leveling the playing field for women entrepreneurs, who have historically lacked equal access to the capital, training, and business networks they need to compete with their male peers,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “As this city fights back COVID-19 and shapes a new economy, we’ll need WE NYC more than ever. I’m proud of everything this initiative has accomplished so far, and I look forward to working with them to create real change for women entrepreneurs.”

“When we launched WE NYC five years ago, the mission was clear: level the playing field for the talented, hard-working women in our City,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “Today, that mission feels more important than ever, as our City wrestles with the COVID-19 pandemic and an economic crisis that has revealed painful longstanding inequities. Small business owners, especially those in communities of color, have been hit hard, and it isn’t enough for our city to return to ‘normal.’ We must build a fairer, stronger New York City and WE NYC is helping to lead the way.”

“Women entrepreneurs are critical in our innovation economy and will help lead New York City’s recovery,” **J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives and Co-Chair of the Racial Inclusion and Equity Taskforce**. “The WE NYC Impact Report shows promising development for women joining WE NYC programs. I look forward to seeing the initiative’s continued success.”

“Women-owned businesses strengthen the national economy and are critical players in the economic recovery plan of our City,” said **Jonnel Doris, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services**. “WE NYC is an initiative that will continue to empower and support women entrepreneurs, and I am proud of the work we have done over the past five years.”

“WE NYC was the first comprehensive initiative for women entrepreneurs offered by a City government, in the country,” said **Diana Franco, Executive Director of WE NYC**. “It has

succeeded in creating that space where women entrepreneurs not only learn together but also support each other in growing and bringing their business ideas to life.”

The report reveals how WE NYC programming influenced women to launch new businesses, advance their business stage, gain confidence in core business skills, and improve other key indicators that demonstrate personal and business success.

In addition to serving nearly 17,000 individual women entrepreneurs, WE NYC achieved the following milestones:

- Distributed \$8.9+ million in affordable loans
- Provided 28,110 services among the women served
- Delivered 2,000+ hours of workshops
- Mentored 1,400 women
- Contributed 1,000+ credit consultations.

The report found that 60% of WE NYC’s clients are women of color, coming from 72 countries. 86% of participants found WE NYC has helped them strengthen their business pitch and nearly 70% said WE NYC helped them become better negotiators. Women who joined two or more WE NYC workshops were also twice as likely to move from pre-startup to an operating business stage.

[WE NYC](#) was announced in 2015 with a research-centered approach to best serve women entrepreneurs. Since its launch, the program has developed tailored programs and tools that connect women entrepreneurs with the resources, education, and community they need to thrive such as [WE Connect](#), [WE Master](#), [WE Fund](#), and [WE Legal](#).

“COVID-19 has impacted the lives and the livelihoods of women owned businesses in our city, and our recovery efforts must be inclusive of that fact,” said **State Senator Jessica Ramos**. “I commend the NYC Department of Small Business Services for continuing their efforts to empower and support women owned businesses through WE NYC.”

"It is especially critical that we support female entrepreneurs given the disparate hardships they have suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic. In part, because of these hardships, we are also seeing unprecedented innovation by female entrepreneurs,” said **Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn**. “I am glad to see the city supporting and channeling resources to female entrepreneurs through the WE NYC program and I congratulate the City and Commissioner Doris on these milestones raising capital, providing services - especially to women of color - and mentoring over 1,400 women citywide.”

“Queens is a hub of innovation and entrepreneurship. Women Entrepreneurship NYC (WE NYC) has been an important component in ensuring the success of women entrepreneurs, the very women who will help drive the economic recovery and long-term success of New York City,” said **Assembly Member Cathy Nolan**. “I applaud the achievements of WE NYC and the women who incubated ideas and turned them into successful businesses using the resources WE NYC offers. Western Queens, in particular, has supported women-owned businesses for years.

Restaurant owners like Gianna Cerbone and Keri Kerim, publishers and media producers like Vicki Schneps, and bakery owners like Antonetta “Toni” Binanti are a few examples of the innovative and hard working women of Western Queens. I am proud to support them and believe that the entrepreneurial women of Queens and WE NYC will inspire women entrepreneurs in a variety of industries for years to come.”

“Launching a small business can be challenging, especially when managing a household, career, or pursuing higher education. Women wear many hats and need a dedicated space where they can freely explore the resources that are readily available to turn their dreams into reality. WE NYC has become a digital hub for diverse and multitalented women to connect and network at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey. Women have always been at the forefront of our economy, and it is time that we invest in building their confidence, capacity, and contract awards to stabilize families and communities across this city,” said **Council Member Farah N. Louis, co-chair of the New York City Council Women’s Caucus.**

"As we celebrate International Women's Day, I'm excited to see SBS's new report detailing the impact the Women Entrepreneurship NYC program has had for over 17,000 women in New York City. With the end of the COVID-19 pandemic in sight, encouraging and supporting women-owned businesses and entrepreneurship will be key to achieving an equitable and just recovery, and I look forward to working with SBS on future endeavors, including through this program," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera.**

"I applaud the Women Entrepreneurship NYC (WE NYC) program for achieving the remarkable milestone of reaching 17,000 entrepreneurs over the past five years,” said **Council Member Adrienne Adams.** “More than ever, it is critical to support women who are starting new businesses and connect them with the necessary resources to succeed. I look forward to seeing WE NYC reach even more entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds and uplift them as we continue the economic recovery of our City.”

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