



## WiM-Virginia Leadership Conference

### **Thursday, October 26, 2023**

**4PM**                      **Hotel Check-in: See Policies & Amenities**

**5:30PM – 6:45PM**    **Dinner – On Your Own**

**7PM– 8PM**                **Evening Networking & Fun: Haunted Williamsburg Tour**

*From authentic 18th-century colonial ghost stories to creepy modern-day encounters, costumed storytellers share unnerving tales on this Colonial Williamsburg ghost tour. Haunted Williamsburg is the only tour that takes you inside our historic buildings. Haunted Williamsburg is the official ghost tour experience of Colonial Williamsburg. Join your fellow WiM members as we experience Colonial Williamsburg – at night. If you would like to participate, [you must purchase your ticket online for the 7pm timeframe](#). The Haunted Walk ticket is not included in the Leadership Conference registration price and must be purchased separately.*

**8PM – 9PM**                **Welcome & First Timers Happy Hour**

*Immediately after the Haunted Williamsburg Tour, WiM Leadership will host a post-walk cocktail hour at [Sweet Tea & Barley Tavern](#) as a way to clear the cobwebs and welcome our first timers.*

### **Friday, October 27, 2023**

#### **WiM-Virginia Leadership Conference**

*Join the VMA and WiM Virginia community as we focus on the importance that women play in keeping manufacturing competitive in Virginia. This conference will include professional development sessions, roundtable discussions on important topics, and inspiring keynotes. Join us for a day devoted to celebrating women in manufacturing who exemplify leadership within their companies and recognizing the widespread impact women have on shaping the industry, whether they are running the company, designing the next big product, or testing innovations that help make Virginia more competitive.*

**7:30AM – 8:30AM**            **Breakfast – On Your Own**

**8:30AM**                      **Registration Open**

**9AM – 9:10AM**              **Opening Remarks/Welcome**

**9:10AM– 10AM**

**Morning Keynote: Unlike some other food celebrities, Little Debbie is a real person.**

**Speaker:** Debbie McKee-Fowler, Chairman of the Board, McKee Foods Corp.

*Debbie McKee-Fowler is the original inspiration for the Little Debbie logo and still is very much a part of the family business which was created by her grandfather in 1934. She currently serves as the Chairman of the Board for McKee Foods. Join Little Debbie herself to hear about how her name became an icon in the snack world, what it takes to manage a brand that is so recognizable, the challenges of running a family business and why we just can't get enough of our favorite comfort food.*

*Since 1934, McKee Foods has operated based on the principles left by O.D. and Ruth which emphasize family values and integrate those values into daily operations. In 1960, the company introduced the Little Debbie brand and ever since, Little Debbie snacks have remained a value leader. McKee Foods was the first bakery to sell individually wrapped cakes in a multipack carton. More than 75 varieties are available. Little Debbie snacks are available in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico and Puerto Rico, as well as on U.S. military bases throughout the world. The top-selling Little Debbie varieties are Oatmeal Creme Pies, Swiss Cake Rolls and Nutty Buddy Wafer Bars. McKee Foods sells more than 200 million cartons of these three products every year. McKee Foods has a manufacturing facility in Stuarts Draft, Virginia.*

**10AM – 11AM**

**Girl Apprenticeship PoweR**

**Moderator:** Dr. Latitia McCane, Director of Education for The Apprentice School at Newport News Shipbuilding

**Panelist:** The Apprentice School Female Apprentices

*Gender diversity in apprenticeships is still low, with women making up only 9% of all active federal apprenticeships. Newport News Shipbuilding's Apprentice School has been very intentional in hiring women since the 1970s, and our current enrollment is 14% women, well above the national average.*

*A panel of current apprentices and their mentors will share why women can be successful in manufacturing apprenticeships. Panelist will share their journeys and the barriers they had to overcome to thrive in a male dominated environment. You will receive tips on hiring and retaining female apprentices, and tools to grow your own female talent pipeline.*

**11AM – 11:30AM**

**Break**

**11:30AM-12:30PM**

**Lunch Keynote: Virginia's MFG Competitiveness State Ranking & The Growing Importance the Women Play in Advancing Industry**

**Speaker:** Ted Abernathy, Managing Partner of Economic Leadership LLC

*Ted will unveil the 2023 VA MFG Competitiveness Index results as well as compare and contrast Virginia to southern states as well as highlight workforce data trends and the growing importance that women in manufacturing play in advancing industry.*

*Ted Abernathy is the Managing Partner of Economic Leadership LLC, a consultancy that is currently working in more than a dozen states to develop economic and workforce strategies. Ted has 35 years of experience in directing economic development and workforce development programs.*

**12:30PM – 1PM      Break**

**1PM – 2PM            The Game of Life! Crafting a Woman’s Game Plan for Success**

**Speakers:** Kimberley Eley, CEO, KWE Publishing; [Patricia Taylor Kennedy](#), CEO, The Kennedy Effect; Best-Selling Autor of [The Game of Life!: A Woman’s Game Plan for Success](#)

*Feeling stuck? Ready to make a move but you’re not sure what to do next? Look ladies, it’s still a man’s world and it’s not designed for you. As a result, you may think small, doubt yourself and allow the real world to beat you down. Ready to make your own rules and play a game designed for and by YOU?*

*In this session, we’ll learn TogetHER from two professional women—one a senior leader in a Fortune 100 company based in Atlanta who is responsible for managing the business stakeholders for legal and HR platforms, and the other a successful entrepreneurial book coach and publisher—how you can unlock the rules in the game of business life, overcome resistance and make the most of your current and future opportunities.*

**2PM – 3PM            Being A Lifelong Learner**

**Speaker:** Ariella Weiss, Sr. Manager, PepsiCo

*The act of learning can look different to everyone. It may be returning to school, engaging in workshops, learning a new language, or seeking to learn a new fact each day. What really matters is that it is something you find useful, interesting, meaningful, or enjoyable. When we dedicate time to voluntarily engage in learning opportunities, research shows we strengthen our cognitive capacity, causing our mental health to flourish. Ariella Weiss, Sr. Manager at PepsiCo, will share her lifelong learning journey and passions she’s found through continual education. She’ll share how this mindset has opened doors both personally and professionally and why we should all strive to push the boundaries of our comfort zone. Come with an open mind and expect to learn something new!*

**3PM – 4PM            Are you a “Star” at work?**

**Speaker:** Julia Jones, VP-Quality, Newport News Shipbuilding

*Are you a star employee—an optimal performer in the workplace who stands out among your colleagues? Most people know that they have a star within them and everybody wants to shine at work, but not everyone does. Some employees have a natural knack for what it takes. But if you didn’t get the star gene, feel like your star is*

*fading or are unsure what it takes, there are a number of things you can do to learn how to brighten your career. In this session, we will discuss how to use what you have to shine your brightest.*

**4PM – 4:10PM      Closing Remarks**

**4:10PM – 6PM      Departure – OR – Attend Virginia Cup Competition & VMA Recognition Gala**

**6PM – 10PM      [Virginia Cup Competition & VMA Recognition Gala](#)**

*The Annual VMA Gala will be held at the beautiful Williamsburg Lodge on October 27th and include a cocktail reception, plated dinner, and program. During this year's program, we will award the first-ever winner of the [Virginia Manufacturing Cup](#) and announce our WiM Virginia Women of the Year. We will also recognize this year's inductee from Virginia into the WiM National Hall of Fame. WiM members are encouraged to stay and attend the Gala event.*

*Since the very first meeting of our founding members in 1922, VMA has been the only statewide association in Virginia exclusively dedicated to manufacturers and their allies. The Gala is dedicated to celebrating our past and looking to the future as we lead our industry into tomorrow. The Annual Gala Celebration is a formal black-tie event. WiM members [must purchase an additional ticket to attend Gala.](#)*