



of Greater Santa Barbara

2019 Celebration Luncheon

The Path of Most Resistance: Effecting Change Through Perseverance

Strong, Smart, Bold Honoree Marsha Bailey, Founder and CEO

Women's Economic Ventures (WEV)

“The idea that women’s economic status could be improved by helping them start their own businesses was both innovative and unproven.”



Nationally recognized for its high-impact and innovative programs, [WEV](#) has helped start or expand more than 4,500 businesses on California’s Central Coast through its training, consulting and loan programs.

Marsha Bailey launched WEV in 1991, after three years of planning and fundraising.

“The idea that women’s economic status could be improved by helping them start their own businesses was both innovative and unproven,” Bailey says. “But 28 years later, WEV has proven not only that business ownership can provide a viable pathway out of poverty, but that it can build family wealth and stability and contribute to the economic well-being of our communities.”

Initially, WEV served South Santa Barbara County with Bailey as its only full-time employee supported by a half-time assistant and dozens of volunteers. Its annual budget was \$75,000. Today WEV serves all of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, has more than 30 full and part-time staff members and an annual budget of \$2.5 million.

Bailey is a former member of the National Women’s Business Council, which provides policy guidance to the White House, Congress, and the Small Business Administration on issues related to women’s business ownership. She is the former Chair of the National Association of Women’s Business

Centers, the California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity (CAMEO), Union Bank's Community Advisory Board and the Fund for Santa Barbara. She returned to the Fund for Santa Barbara's Board in May 2019 after 25 years.

In conjunction with her work with WEV, Marsha has mentored and trained emerging women leaders from California, Nepal, and Jordan, has provided entrepreneurial training for women in Hungary, and lectured at the Sorbonne in Paris. She has provided consulting and training on organizational development and sustainability to a USAID-funded women's business organization in Jordan, as well as to many U.S. organizations.

Marsha's work has been recognized by multiple organizations including the Association of Women in Communications and Women Lawyers of Ventura County. In 2017, Marsha was inducted into the South Coast Business Times' Business Hall of Fame.

She has a master's degree in communication from UCSB and a BA from Michigan State University in fine art and sociology. She is a certified Economic Development Finance Professional.

Learn more about Marsha and WEV:

[Santa Barbara Independent](#)

[Voyage LA](#)

[KEYT](#)

The 18th Annual Celebration Luncheon will be held on Friday, September 27th, 11:30AM-1:30PM at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort. Tickets are \$150 and may be reserved on our [website](#) or by calling (805) 963-4757.