

WORLD JEWELRY HUB



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Empowerment of women in Latin American jewelry industry to be focus of meeting at 2nd LATAM Diamond and Jewelry Week



Ali Pastorini (left), Senior Vice President at both the Panama Diamond Exchange and World Jewelry Hub, and Judy Meana, PDE Vice President.

PANAMA: APRIL 18, 2016 – A discernible tendency within the Latin American jewelry industry over the past decade has been the growing involvement of women at the design, manufacturing and business levels. But while their numbers have grown steadily in the sector, they have been less successful in breaking the glass ceiling in management and the board room. The role and empowerment of women in the Latin American jewelry industry will be the focus of a special meeting that will take place on the trading floor of the Panama Diamond Exchange during the Second Latin

American Diamond and Jewelry Week, at the World Jewelry Hub in Panama City, June 21 to 23, 2016.

The venue for the meeting is particularly appropriate, because the Panama Diamond Exchange has bucked the industry trend, appointing women to two of the four positions in its senior management team – Ali Pastorini, PDE Senior Vice President and Judy Meana, PDE Vice President. Latin America’s single diamond exchange is also the only diamond bourse worldwide to have proportionally as large a representation of women executives.

"We currently are witnessing two independent but parallel movements," said Ms. Pastorini. "The one is sectorial, and it involves the development of the jewelry and gemstone industry in Latin America, and the establishment of a sophisticated infrastructure, particularly in Panama, to facilitate its growth. The second is more general, and it is the enabling of women as full participants in their own right in the region’s economy and power structure. What we want to do is to place the two under the same microscope, and look how more women in more influential positions will serve the development of an ethical and transparent jewelry and gemstone business, enhancing consumer confidence."

"There already are many women who are leaving footprints and who can be inspirations and role models for others in their respective countries, be it as dealers, designers, jewelry manufacturers and goldsmiths, entrepreneurs and also board room executives. We want to provide not only motivation, but also real support, so that together we can strengthen the business in our region," she added.

A jeweler herself, before joining the Panama Diamond Exchange Ms. Pastorini, established her own brand with a female partner in her native Brazil, and today its jewelry is sold at multiple sites in North America and Dubai, as well as in Latin America. She also is Senior Vice President at the World Jewelry Hub, after previously serving as its marketing director.

Ms. Meana is a communications specialist, having started out as a journalist and becoming one of Panama’s most well-known television news anchors, and later serving as the spokesperson for the Panamanian President and Government. She then joined the private sector, eventually taking up a senior position at the Panama Diamond Exchange.

"In organizing this meeting during the Second Latin American Diamond and Jewelry Week we plan to do a lot more than just pay lip service to the subject," Ms. Meana said. "We want this to be a first step in developing a concrete strategy for raising the involvement of women in our industry, along with an action timetable."

"We already have an educational program, including courses and seminars in Spanish," Ms. Meana continued. "We want to provide Latin American women access to a knowledge base that will help them grow professionally and develop technical skills, including Corporate Social Responsibility. Networking also is critical, for

together we will be significantly strengthened. We want successful women to be able to look back to this meeting in June, and say it was a milestone in their journey.”

The Second Latin American Diamond and Jewelry Week will be a commercial and networking event that is specifically designed to bring together players from both the regional and global trades. The week will also spotlight the growing role of Panama in the jewelry and gemstone business, and will feature a social and educational program that looks at challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

To obtain more information about participating in the Women in the Latin American Jewelry Industry event, as well as the Second Latin American Week Diamond and Jewelry Week, please visit the dedicated website at www.latamweek.com or email the Panama Diamond Exchange at info@pde.com.pa.

Located in the Santa Maria Business District of Panama City, the World Jewelry Hub (WJH) is a center that serves the specialized needs of the diamond, colored gemstone and jewelry sectors, and is designed to serve the primary trading center in Latin America and the access point to the region for industry professionals from around the world. Home to the Panama Diamond Exchange (PDE), the region's only recognized diamond bourse, WJH has been authorized as a Gemstone and Jewelry Free Zone by the Government of Panama, where transactions conducted within it are exempt from duties and other taxes. The first phase of the WJH complex was completed at the end of 2014. The second phase, which includes the construction of multi-story office tower, will commence shortly. For more information see www.pde.com.pa.