

JANUARY 2026

2025-26 Chapter Officers

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Karen Cain

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913-553-0612

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www.abwamokan.org

Follow us on social media



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ABWA National:

www.abwa.org

(800) 228-0007

President's Message

Happy New Year MOKan members and friends!

I hope you all had a good holiday break with family and friends and are ready to start off 2026 with new opportunities coming your way.

With the start of the new year, I want to re-visit the Mission Statement of our Organization. It is a powerful reminder of what a person can achieve if you wish to grow into an awesome leader – whether you are a small business owner, work for a company or just looking to gain knowledge to grow personally, ABWA is a great organization to belong to.

This month, I wish to focus on one aspect of the Best Practices that our chapter is following for our Chapter Year: **Members to complete 9 Professional Development Programs**, also known to some as APEX classes. You probably have seen incoming emails from time to time that ABWA has featured classes for the month. Another avenue is to sign in with your login information to the national website to see what classes are available. <https://www.abwa.org/>

Currently, there are several topics to choose from:

- School of Leadership
- School of Lean
- School of Six Sigma
- Marketing Tools for Your Business
- Preparing for Your Next Job Opportunity
- Tech Tips and Tools

The 2025-2026 MOKan Best Practices Tracking sheet is in this newsletter. I encourage you all to see where you can step in and help our chapter be a success. Thank you to all who have helped with the chapter throughout the year.

Karen Cain, ABWA MOKan President 2025-2026



Member Benefits: Training Courses

Register today for our newest Apex course and save dollars!

Login at www.myapexcampus.org under the **The School of Lean** and register today!

"You can only manage time if you track it right."

Register today for our leadership courses and save dollars!

Develop the next set of leaders with these concise micro-learning modules ranging from 3-10 minutes. Each course provides practical strategies and insights to enhance leadership skills, foster a winning culture of continuous improvement, and equip professionals to lead efficiently and effectively in any business environment.

- Change Management
- Facilitation
- Leading Teams
- Adaptive Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Self-Awareness
- Giving and Receiving Feedback
- Time Management

Login at www.myapexcampus.org under the **The School of Leadership** and register today! Once you register, you will now have 180 days to complete the course! Please call the ABWA National team at 913-732-5100 or email us at webmail@abwa.org, if you have questions.

COMPLIMENTARY APEX IN JANUARY:



Be the Buffalo: Navigating Winter Wellness in the New Year

Practical Tools for Mental Wellness, Energy, and Compassion
Presented by Aubree Ridley and Valerie Guile

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026

O'Neill's Restaurant & Bar
9417 Mission Rd, Leawood, KS 66206



5:30 PM	6:00 PM	6:40 PM
NETWORKING	DINNER	PROGRAM

Winter can feel like a long mental and emotional storm. Shorter days, lower energy, and the pressure to "start fresh" in the new year often lead to increased sadness, anxiety, and burnout -- especially for women balancing professional and personal responsibilities. At Buffalo Roam Therapy Group, we use the buffalo as a symbol of resilience. While cows instinctively run from storms and remain in them longer, buffalo move directly through the storm, minimizing how long they are affected. This presentation explores how to apply that same principle to winter wellness through practical, compassionate, and evidence-informed tools.

Co-Founders Aubree Ridley, LCMFT a Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist and Valerie Guile, LCSW a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker will share insights on:

- A deeper understanding of how winter impacts mental health and motivation
- Simple, realistic strategies to manage winter sadness, anxiety, and burnout
- A compassionate, sustainable approach to the new year that supports long-term wellness

Invite a friend and reserve your spot today!

Program & Dinner: \$25; Members \$27; Guests
Reservations AND Dinner Choice required
by 6 pm Sunday, January 11, 2026.

Details at www.abwamokan.org



AMERICAN BUSINESS
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

*Changing Women's Lives
One Woman at a Time.*

MO-KAN CHAPTER

Email
ABWAMoKan@gmail.com
Website
www.abwamokan.org

BINGO PARTY

FUN! PRIZES! AUCTION! GOURMET POPCORN!

1.17.2026

1761 Burlington St. Kansas City, MO

Chicken N Pickle.
KANSAS CITY

10 AM – Noon
\$25 per person

Includes a bag of gourmet popcorn and prize drawings throughout the event!

Additional Bingo Cards
(3 per sheet)

Event hosted by Mo-Kan Chapter of the
American Business Women's Association
www.abwamokan.org

Limited space available –
Click the QR code to
register before January 14

Introduction to Agile Kanban—January 5–30, 2026

Kanban has become one of the most widely adopted Agile ways of working since it originated as a visual management method for project management and software development. These modules provide an overview of the principles, cadences, and metrics employed in Agile Kanban. Learners are guided step by step through the creation and adaptation of Kanban to suit their individual and organizational needs.

Invite a guest to our upcoming program!



Using Artificial Intelligence to Win for You
How to Use AI and Avoid Becoming the Next Scam Victim
Presented by Tracey Hawkins



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026

O'Neill's Restaurant & Bar
9417 Mission Rd, Leawood, KS 66206

5:30 PM	6:00 PM	6:40 PM
NETWORKING	DINNER	PROGRAM

"Tracey, the Safety Lady" Hawkins is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in safe work practices, psychological safety, generative AI safety, cybersecurity, scam and fraud prevention. She will uncover how you can achieve more productivity, more creativity, and more protection in an AI driven world.

Come enjoy a fun and eye-opening session that shows you how to use generative AI to simplify your life, grow your business, and stay cyber-safe. This session blends real stories, live demos, and humor into AI literacy you can use immediately.

Tracey will share ways to use AI to:

- ▶ Create content for social media, email, newsletters, and marketing
- ▶ Organize projects, ideas, and daily tasks
- ▶ Save time, reduce stress, and boost creativity at work and at home
- ▶ Stay safe while using AI, spot fake content, and report scams

Come curious. Leave confident. Use AI with clarity, creativity, control, and stay safe doing it!

Invite a friend and reserve your spot today!

Cost for Program & Dinner: \$28 per person
Late & Walk-in Reservations: \$15, which includes the Speaker Program;
Dinner will need to be ordered/paid for separately at the time of arrival.
Reservations AND Dinner Choice deadline is
by 6 pm Sunday, February 8, 2026.

Details at www.abwamokan.org



AMERICAN BUSINESS
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

*Changing Women's Lives
One Woman at a Time.*

MO-KAN CHAPTER

Email
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We are thrilled to share a bold new chapter in ABWA's history—one inspired by your voices, your stories, and your ambitions. This year, ABWA unveiled a **refreshed brand identity** that reflects who we are together: a vibrant, diverse community of women supporting one another as we grow personally and professionally. Our purpose remains strong and clear: to empower women in business to turn ambition into action. Now, our brand reflects that energy more powerfully than ever.

At the heart of the new brand is our updated tagline

Activate Your Ambition

a call to action that honors the drive already within every ABWA woman. It's not about giving you something new, it's about helping you step into your confidence, courage, and leadership.

You'll also see our new logo, inspired by stained glass, symbolizing the **mosaic of women** who make ABWA extraordinary. Each piece is unique, yet together we form something powerful, unified, and full of possibility.

The new tagline and logo were created by D.C. marketing firm, NickelBronx. Utilizing months of research, including surveying and interviewing members and staff, researching competitive national women-centered associations and applying years of marketing and branding experience—NickelBronx provided recommendations while also taking feedback from ABWA national to help provide the final product we have today.

As a member, you can find new logo files on the membership platform, shop updated ABWA merchandise, and watch for refreshed materials across ABWA channels. This is just the start, more updates will continue throughout 2026 as we roll out a revitalized digital experience and new communication tools.

Thank you for being part of ABWA's evolution. We can't wait to grow, lead, and activate our ambitions... together.



Mark your Calendar for the 2026 Spring Conference...



Mission Statement

The mission of the American Business Women's Association is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition.



Annual Valentine's Auction

To celebrate the month of love, we'll have our annual Valentine's Auction **at our February meeting**. If you would like to donate an item to be auctioned off, **please bring it** with you on 2/11. Items should be 'love-themed' and/or a good gift for that special someone like **wine, candy, candle, hearts**, etc.

Attendees have the opportunity to **bid on the items** presented to raise funds and support furthering education and conferences for our members.



Upcoming Events

- January 14 ● Monthly Chapter Event
- January 17 ● **BINGO!** at Chicken & Pickle
- January 20 ● Mo-Kan Board Meeting
- January 22 ● ABWA Just in Time Webinar for all members
- January 29 ● ABWA Ambassador's Meeting
- February 11 ● Monthly Chapter Event and Valentine's Auction!
- February 15 ● Grow, Share & Lead Strategy & Marketing Session
- February 17 ● Mo-Kan Board Meeting
- March 11 ● Monthly Chapter Event

In Memoriam... We remember of our former members Patty Bundi and Carolyn Hale who recently passed away. Both were lights and leaders in Mo-Kan with Patty a past President and Carolyn one of our Charter Members in April of 1980. They will both be missed greatly.



2025–2026 National Board of Directors

National Officers.....



BARBARA PEDERSEN
National President
Member since 2004, Heart of the
Piedmont Chapter



DIOR DAVIS
National Vice President
Member since 2021, Airport
Charter Chapter



**DR. TRACEY
G. JACKSON**
National Secretary-Treasurer
Member since 2007, Oxon Hill
Charter Chapter

District Vice Presidents



**DR. DEBORAH
JOHNSON-BLAKE**
District 1 Vice President
Member since 2016, Douglas
County Charter Chapter



KATHY ELLER
District 2 Vice President
Member since 2020, Tu'ya
Chapter



LESLIE MCMILLIN
District 3 Vice President
Member since 2018, Kansas City
Express Network



LINDA B. JOHNSON
District 4 Vice President
Member since 2014, Limitless
Ladies Chapter



RENEE CLEMENT
District 5 Vice President
Member since 2018, Gem City
Chapter



KAREN FITTING
District 6 Vice President
Member since 2017, Pathfinder
Chapter

ABWA Kansas City Area Council ●

www.abwakcac.org

The purpose of the Kansas City Area Council is to promote communication between ABWA area leagues, to disseminate information, to exchange ideas, to participate in workshops, seminars, and other joint activities... that supports the ABWA mission.

Congratulations to the 2026 Officers!

Chair

Debra Weilbacher, Dynamic Connections Chapter

Vice-Chair

Eileen Caspers, Ad Astra Chapter

Communications Officer

Nancy Ballenger, KC Express Network

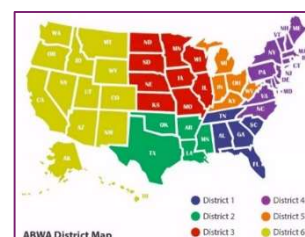
Financial Officer

Sandy Jacobson, Mo-Kan Chapter



ABWA is a national organization and we are in ABWA's **District III**. Each year new ABWA Officers are elected at our National Women's Leadership Conference with a President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and the six District Vice Presidents.

Leslie McMillan is our 2025-26 D3VP and a member of the KC Express Network.



Grow. Share & Lead Strategy & Marketing Session

SATURDAY ★ FEBRUARY 15 ★ 2:00-4:00 PM

6850 COLLEGE BOULEVARD ★ OVERLAND PARK, KS ★ PIZZA LUNCH SERVED

Please plan to join us as we map a plan for the continued growth and success of Mo-Kan

We are asking all members to please attend this important brainstorming session, where we will:

GROW ★ Create a specific roadmap to increase visibility and inclusion of ABWA benefits to area women

SHARE ★ Define which groups and platforms would be the best to promote ABWA to potential members

LEAD ★ Discuss who is interested in stepping into a leadership role as Chapter Officers & Committee Leads

Action Item: **Bring your ideas to HOW/WHERE/WHEN we can grow our Chapter.**

Do your research, write your ideas down, and bring them ready to share with the group, so we can maximize our time and develop an actionable plan to move forward. Now is the time to take action and grow our group.

New ABWA Leadership, Look, and Legacy for the Future

From the **ABWA** **National** **Office**

.....
ELIZABETH H. JOHNSON, CAE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear ABWA Members,

As we reflect on the close of a remarkable year, I am reminded of the strength, power, and purpose of our ABWA community.

This season naturally invites us to pause and to appreciate how far we've come, the connections we've made, and the momentum we continue to build together. Returning from an energizing week in Portland, Maine, I am filled with gratitude for the hundreds of women who joined us, shared their stories, lifted one another up, and once again demonstrated why ABWA remains such a transformative space for women in business.

At the National Women's Leadership Conference, I experienced firsthand one of the greatest benefits of ABWA membership: the deep sense of connection and belonging. The week was rich with exceptional content from MBA professors at the University of Kansas School of Business and presenters from Franklin Covey, as well as heartfelt moments recognizing our members' accomplishments. We celebrated those who earned their MBA certificates, applauded record-breaking engagement in Apex Campus, honored members through the Inner Circle program, and recognized tenure and chapter excellence through the Best Practices Awards. Hosting the Top Ten Women's Breakfast was a personal highlight, hearing inspiring

speeches from our Top Ten honorees and announcing this year's American Business Woman of the Year, J Franco of the Cy-Fair Express Network. And of course, unveiling ABWA's new logo and tagline marked a defining moment, ushering our Association into its next generation.

As I approach ten months in the role of Executive Director, I have gained a deep understanding of what makes ABWA extraordinary. While I still have many chapters, DVP celebrations, and special events left to visit, I now have a strong baseline of our national programs, giving us the foundation we need to modernize and streamline many of the ways we operate. In the year ahead, you can expect enhancements to Best Practices, NWLC, member communications, chapter support, and more. Above all, our focus remains on increasing the value of your membership so that renewing with ABWA is an easy and rewarding decision.

Looking ahead to 2026, I am excited to continue rolling out our refreshed brand and investing in new resources to help us reach and recruit the next generation of ABWA members—professional working women who are driven, eager to grow personally and professionally, seeking meaningful connection, and ready to **Activate Their Ambition**.

Sending you warmth and gratitude this season,

Elizabeth H. Johnson, CAE
Executive Director
American Business Women's Association

ABWA Chapters and Express Networks

More than 5,000 business/networking meetings are hosted each year in more than 300 cities across the nation by chapter and network leagues. While chapters provide a broader community with traditional meetings and programs, Express Networks offer more networking opportunities for busy professionals. Both contribute significantly to ABWA's mission of empowering women in business and leadership roles.

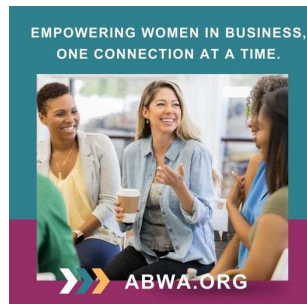
Here are the ABWA leagues in our area:

AD ASTRA CHAPTER

Topeka, Kansas

abwaadastra.org

Meets 4th Wednesday



DIAMONDS OF EXCELLENCE CHAPTER

Kansas City, MO

diamondofexcellence.abwa.org

Meets 4th Thursday

DYNAMIC CONNECTIONS CHAPTER

Blue Springs, MO

dynamicconnections.abwa.org

Meets 2nd Thursday

GOLDEN ROYALTIES CHAPTER

Kansas City, KS

goldenroyalties.abwa.org

Meets 2nd Thursday via Zoom

KANSAS CITY EXPRESS NETWORK

Overland Park, KS

abwakcexpress.org

Meets 3rd Tuesday

KEEN NETWORK

Kansas Executive Express Network

Topeka, KS

<https://www.facebook.com/ABWA.KEENTopeka/>

Meets 2nd Wednesday at lunchtime

MO-KAN CHAPTER

Lenexa, KS

abwamokan.org

Meets 2nd Wednesday

Best Practices

Each year, our Chapter strives to achieve ABWA's Best Practices level by meeting or exceeding those requirements. Here are the criteria and how we're doing.

2025-2026 MOKan Best Practices Tracking		
Requirement	As of 01/09/2026	Needed
Minimum of thirty (30) primary members in good standing	13	17
Recruited at least thirteen (13) new members in the current award year	1	12
League in Good Standing	Completed	
10 members complete 2025-2026 Member Interest Survey	9	1
GAP Analysis	Completed	
Competitive Analysis	Completed	
Annual Business Plan, Action Items, Budget, Executive Summary	Completed	
Vote on Standing Rules	Completed	
6 members subsidized to attend a Regional/National Conference or Professional Development Program	0	6
Just in Time Attendance by Officers	1	8
Fundraising Event (minimum 1)	1	
At least 3 members present to accept award at the 2026 NWLC	TBD	3
Woman of the Year Selected		Need
Top 10 Businesswoman Nominee	Optional	
Protégé Award	Optional	
Chapter Brochure	Completed	
Website	Ongoing	
Facebook/Instagram	Ongoing	
4 Newsletters	1	3

Help us get there!

Please always think of who you can invite to a program and share the many benefits of ABWA!

Code of Conduct

The **American Business Women's Association (ABWA)** has a **Proud Code of Conduct** that guides its members in making ethical decisions. Here are some key points from the code:

Goodwill Ambassadors: All ABWA members serve as goodwill ambassadors for the organization. They represent ABWA's mission and values in their interactions with others.

Personal Beliefs: Members do not allow their personal beliefs and convictions to interfere with the representation of ABWA's mission. This ensures that their actions align with the organization's goals.

Treatment of Others: Members treat their colleagues, guests, vendors, and sponsors with honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and in good faith¹².

Compliance: Members maintain compliance with ABWA National, Chapter, and Express Network Bylaws.

Avoiding Personal Interests: Members do not use their personal power to advance their own interests. Instead, they focus on the collective benefit of the organization.

The Proud Code of Conduct is designed to be a living and fluid code, adapting to various situations as needed³. It reflects ABWA's commitment to professionalism and ethical behavior.