

# WEST OF WINDSOR NEWSLETTER

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## 2026 Journey Towards Success Award Recipients

### Georgia Vary

The Phenomenal Woman Award,  
sponsored by TD, Presenting Gala Sponsor

### Myrtle Donnipad

The New Partnership Award,  
sponsored by WEST, Gold Sponsor

### Melissa Munger

The Sisterhood Award,  
sponsored by Erie Shores Health Foundation

### Margo Reilly

The Visionary Award,  
sponsored by AM800/CKLW

### Hajar Abelouah

The Youth Community Leadership Award,  
sponsored by CTV Bell Media

### Josie Hope

The Influencer Award,  
sponsored by Caesars Windsor Cares

### UHC – Hub of Opportunities

The Perseverance Award,  
sponsored by Attache Group

### Earnest Immigration and Citizenship Services Inc.

The Daphne V. Clarke Trailblazer Award,  
sponsored by LiUNA!625

### Mary Cifende Aganze

The DEI Award,  
sponsored by The Multicultural Council  
of Windsor and Essex County

### UNIFOR Women in Trades

The Give to Gain Award,  
sponsored by Biz X Magazine

## International Women's Day 2026 Celebration

WEST proudly welcomed over 550 guests to celebrate International Women's Day 2026. The evening brought together community leaders, partners, entrepreneurs, and supporters from across Windsor-Essex to honour women's achievements and reaffirm our shared commitment to empowerment, leadership, and opportunity.



## Thank you to our Sponsors, Guests & Event Partners

We extend our sincere thanks to our Presenting Sponsor TD, along with our Silver Sponsors, Equity IWD Sponsors, Event Sponsors, Friend Sponsors, YQG Supporters, WEST Participant Sponsors, and our generous donors.

We also thank our MC Dr. Janelle Abela, our honoured guest Dr. Mona Stonefish, and musical guests Eclipse Duo, along with our event partners CYLK Studio, Designs by Diane, Elev8 Productions Inc., and Mactools Visual for helping make the evening a success.

## Thank you to Warden Hilda MacDonald

Our keynote speaker, Warden Hilda MacDonald, delivered an inspiring and heartfelt message about leadership, perseverance, and the power of giving back.

Through sharing her personal journey and experiences in public service, she reminded us that meaningful change begins with compassion, community, and a willingness to lift others as we build.



## Celebrating Success: WEST Program Recognition Ceremonies

### Young Women in Leadership, Development and Employment (L.E.A.D)

For Q4, we are proud to celebrate the graduation of 38 students from the LEAD program. Of these, 36 have secured placements across a wide range of industries, including immigration, healthcare, marketing, customer service, retail, non-profit organizations, restaurants, child care, and tax firms, with one intake currently in placement.

Notably, 1 student was hired directly following in-class training, 6 secured employment after completing their placements, and 4 have returned to school to further their education.

This achievement highlights the dedication and resilience of our students, as well as the invaluable support of our community partners in preparing them for continued success.

### Empowering Women for Employment (EWE)

As we honor a group of remarkable women, who did not just complete a curriculum, they lived it for 9-weeks during the in-class training, where they explored new possibilities through hands-on industry tours in Education, Food and Agriculture, Banking and Finance and Health and Technology.

With a blend of curiosity and confidence, they mastered their career path in intensive employment workshops such as Interview preparation skills, resume building and gained certification in CPR Training and Customer Service.

All 19 students in this cohort will be moving forward with completing a 2-weeks volunteering in the community to gain Canadian work experience.

We are so proud of your growth, your resilience and courage as you step into this next chapter of your journey!

### Women in Skilled Trades

Our WIST Recognition Event was held on March 26, 2026, at the Ciociaro Club, where we proudly celebrated the achievements of participants enrolled in our 2025–2026 Women in Skilled Trades programs.

The Building an Inclusive Workforce Award was presented to Laval, Cavalier Tool & Manufacturing Ltd., EnerQuest Technology Solutions, and MTE Controls Corporation in recognition of their ongoing commitment and support.

The Blueprint for Student Leadership Award was awarded to Joan Walsh (Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Women), Amie Robson (Skills Training in Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Sheet Metal for Women), and Trudy Yax (CNC Industrial Mechanic Millwright Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Women) for their outstanding leadership and dedication.

Congratulations to the award recipients on their well-deserved recognition!



## Year-End Impact & Growth

As we reflect on the past year, WEST is proud to highlight the continued growth and impact of our programs across Windsor-Essex.

This year, WEST served over 2,000 clients, not including walk-ins, supporting women at various stages of their employment and career journeys. Through our expanding network, we also established over 30 new community partnerships, including collaborations with Your Neighbourhood Credit Union, Earnest Immigration and Citizenship Inc., and Scotiabank, strengthening our ability to provide holistic support and opportunities.

None of this work would be possible without the continued support of our funders, partners, and community. We extend our sincere appreciation to WREN, LiUNA, and UNIFOR, whose investment allows us to deliver impactful programming and create meaningful opportunities for women.

We also thank our dedicated employers, community partners, and collaborators who continue to open doors, provide placements, and champion the success of our participants.

In addition, WEST introduced new initiatives and strengthened existing programs to better respond to community needs, ensuring women are equipped with the skills, confidence, and support required to succeed in today's workforce.



## Looking Ahead: Annual General Meeting (AGM)

WEST looks forward to hosting our upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM), where we will reflect on this year's achievements, share organizational updates, and outline our priorities for the year ahead.

The AGM provides an opportunity for our partners, stakeholders, and community members to come together, celebrate our collective impact, and remain engaged in the ongoing work of empowering women in our region.

More details, including the official date and registration information, will be shared soon.

We look forward to connecting with you and continuing this important work together.

## Integrated Employment Services Program Highlights

The Integrated Employment Services (IES) team continues to deliver strong, community focused employment support across Windsor Essex, empowering job seekers and deepening partnerships with local employers.

Over the past fiscal year, more than 750 new clients accessed individualized employment planning, skills development assistance, and direct connections to job opportunities.

Community outreach remained a major priority, with the team participating in over 70 initiatives to promote services, engage employers, and encourage job seekers to explore WEST's training and employment supports.

Our satellite offices in Amherstburg and LaSalle further strengthened our reach, enabling us to connect local clients with nearby employers and expand access to employment services within those communities.

Employer partnerships also expanded significantly, resulting in successful client placements across a wide range of sectors including retail, healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, marketing, and professional services helping meet regional workforce needs while strengthening employment pathways for our clients.



## Make a Donation

Donations are accepted by filling out the form on our website or a cheque can be mailed to:

**Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST)**

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Windsor, ON N9A 4J4