

MEDIA

Women in Cable Telecommunications Celebrates 1,000th Leadership Institute Graduate

CASE STUDY



CLIENT PROFILE & CHALLENGE

With too few women in executive ranks and corporate boardrooms, Women in Cable Telecommunications (WICT) formed as a nonprofit in 1979. Their mission: to establish a collaborative conduit for industry women interested in professional advancement.

Toward that goal, WICT reached out to the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) in 1994 for assistance designing an executive leadership education experience for women in senior- and upper-middle management levels.

SOLUTION & RESULTS

With seed money from Bob Magness and JC Sparkman, 2 cable industry pioneers, the Betsy Magness Leadership Institute (BMLI) was born. Sara King, now principal of her own consulting firm, was at CCL when the first class of 24 leaders arrived.

“The program filled a strong need for women navigating a male-dominated environment,” King says. “BMLI gave them a place to talk about their challenges, learn from female role models, and build a lasting network.”

IMPACT OF THE CCL-WICT PARTNERSHIP¹

In addition to the impact on their careers, BMLI alumnae also report personal growth, such as:

- *Enhanced self-awareness.*
- *Improved resilience, well-being, and overall health.*
- *Improved confidence.*
- *New and strengthened relationships and social support.*

CLIENT: Women in Cable Telecommunications (WICT), a global organization with a mission to transform the media industry.

LOCATION: Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit with an international impact

MEMBERSHIP: 10,500+



Through the years, BMLI gained prestige among aspiring female leaders, and a competitive application process ensued. Today, a total of 54 annual participants from an array of companies, disciplines, and worldwide locations participate.

Susan Jin Davis, chief sustainability officer at Comcast NBCUniversal, was a graduate of the class in 2010-2011 and returned as a faculty member in 2018-2019. “BMLI graduates have increased credibility and visibility in their companies, positioning them for new opportunities,” she says.

Seeing the program through different perspectives has enriched her as she helps develop the next generation of female leaders. As a BMLI participant, Jin Davis discovered that no matter how high up in an organization one rises, there are always learning opportunities. As a faculty member, she continues to absorb information from program participants. "It's that reciprocity of learning that happens."

Sloan Kennedy, vice president of Domestic Network Distribution and director of Affiliate Sales at HBO, applied to be in the program when she was in her late 30s and relatively new to HBO. Now, she finds strength and camaraderie in other BMLI alumnae at HBO.

"We have fired up group chats online and in person to galvanize support for women leaders, increasing attendance for women leadership programs, speaking engagements, industry committees, and leadership award recognition at HBO," says Kennedy. "The effort provides exposure for effective and positive leadership through executives that speak to the professional and personal strengths of one another. We challenge and cheer one another in true BMLI spirit!"



This year, as CCL and WICT recognize their quarter-century bond, they celebrate another milestone: BMLI's 1,000th graduate. "In CCL, WICT found the ideal partner, well versed in providing best-in-class leadership development and bursting with faculty and staff committed to their clients' success," says Maria E. Brennan, CAE, WICT president and CEO. "CCL cares about our members as much as we do."

Each year, WICT and CCL adapt the curriculum to address challenges and changes in an industry that has experienced unparalleled growth, numerous tech advances, new disrupters, and a series of consolidations. "Throughout the ebbs and flows, the industry has remained steadfast in its support of women's leadership, and its recognition of WICT's capacity to positively impact companies' diversity and inclusion goals — and also their bottom line," Brennan says.

About 10 years ago, after BMLI alumnae expressed a desire to sharpen their skills and reconnect, the annual 2-day Betsy Magness Graduate Institute (BMGI) was established. In addition to networking, participants learn the latest leadership research from business luminaries.

"The partnership WICT shares with CCL is one of the longest-running relationships we have had with an education provider," Brennan says. "We look forward to seeing what the next 25 years will bring!"

BY THE NUMBERS

99% of participants said the program was a good investment.

89% called it "very" or "extremely" impactful on their development.

91% said the program helped them to empower others to become better leaders

94% keep in touch with past BMLI class members.

Over **35%** of graduates were promoted within 24 months (91% believe BMLI contributed to advancement).

¹Impact data come from three sources: 1. Alumnae impact survey (collected in 2019 from 68 alumnae who represented 27 different BMLI classes); 2. Survey responses collected immediately following the program from 197 BMLI participants; 3. Alumnae data collected by WICT

PARTNER WITH US

Our multi-phased [Women's Leadership Experience](#), available in off-the-shelf or customized versions, is a bold 3-month development engagement designed to equip women who are already proven leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to have greater impact and broader influence within their organizations.

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