

## Susan Bari Profile



Susan Phillips Bari is President of Fly Fast, LLC and CEO of the Susan Bari Company: Imagine, Plan, Execute. She is President Emeritus of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the leading advocate for the advancement of women owned businesses as vendors and suppliers to the nation's corporations. As a founding architect of WBENC in 1997 Bari, during her tenure as President, grew the organization to become the nation's leading third-party certifier of businesses owned and operated by women.

At WBENC, Bari led the development and deployment of systems that provided online applications for WBE certification, enrollment of corporate members and registration for the Women in Business Conference, the largest business fair of its kind in North America, attracting nearly 3,000 corporate, media, government and WBE participants each year. Of the 120,000 majority women owned businesses in the country, more than 14,000 each year visited the WBENC website to begin the certification process. The average revenue of WBENC's 6,500 certified businesses is \$8.5M with 49 employees.

Bari has been extensively featured in the business press as an expert on the growth of, and challenges faced by, women-owned businesses.

Throughout her career, Bari has been committed to fostering diversity in the world of commerce by expanding opportunities and eliminating barriers in the marketplace for women business enterprises. In 1986, while serving as an Associate Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel, she entered the public advocacy arena on behalf of women business owners as the Chair of then President Reagan's Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise. Under her direction, the Committee conducted a base line study on the inclusion of women business owners on federally organized trade missions and worked to increase compliance with federal contracting goals for women-owned firms. In that role, she participated in a trade mission for women in the construction trades to China and Hong Kong (1987) and a study group investigating the influence of legislation and regulation on women at work in Israel and Greece (1986). From 1990 to 1995 she continued to champion women business owners as a founding Executive Director of the American Women's Economic Development Corporation Washington Regional Training Center, assisting more than 2,000 women with the startup and growth of their companies.

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### *Susan Bari Profile continued*

In 1994, she received the Small Business Administration's Small Business Advocate of the Year award for Women in Business for the Washington, D.C. region. She was a recipient of the WBENC Applause Award in 2002, was awarded the first "Impact Award" by the Billion Dollar Roundtable in 2004 and was one of the first inductees into the Enterprising Women Hall of Fame that same year. She has been named by the Women Presidents' Education Organization of Washington, DC and New York City and the Women's Business Development Center of Illinois as the Women's Business Advocate of the Year. In 2007, she received the "Standing Ovation Award" from WBENC in recognition of her ten years of accomplishment on behalf of that organization and its members.

In 1997 Bari was appointed by then Virginia Governor George Allen to a four-year term on the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, from whose Pamplin College of Business she received her MBA degree and for which she serves on its Business Advisory Council as a member of the International Programs Committee. During her Board of Visitors' term she chaired the Education Committee and served as a member of the Advisory Council to Tech's new Bioinformatics Center. She currently serves as an advisor and guest lecturer for the entrepreneurship program. In March, 2007, Bari completed her third term as a member of the National Women's Business Council, advisors to the President, the Congress and the Administrator of the SBA. She is a member of the Women's Leadership Board of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard College, the Board of Directors of the Women Presidents' Organization and the Advisory Council of Enterprising Women magazine for which she writes a bi-monthly column. Bari has been featured frequently on SBTV.com and will host a business travel program for them beginning in the winter of 2007.

Susan has also been instrumental in the growth of women's business advocacy on a global basis. She was a speaker at the 1999 OECD sponsored Conference for Women Entrepreneurs from Eastern Europe on Croatia and participated as a member of the US Delegation to the OECD's Ministerial Meeting on SMEs in Istanbul, Turkey in 2004. She also participated in the 2000 OECD Conference on Women Entrepreneurs and presented a paper on the impact of technology on the growth of women-owned businesses at the 2002 OECD meeting in Paris, France. She was an expert member of the Atlantic Council of the US project on the Role of Women in the Growing Capitalist Culture in China and participated in their meetings in Beijing (1996) and Taiwan (1997). In 1992, Susan was selected as a member of the Executive Committee Delegation to the John Manjiro Society meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

Bari is the author of three books: *Breaking Through: Creating Opportunities for America's Women and Minority Owned Businesses*, and *Partnering for Profit: Success Strategies for Tomorrow's Supply Chain*, both published by WBENC. Her third book, *Yes, I Can Do That!* was released in June 2007. Recently, she was the editor of *Globalization: From the Inside Out* authored by Kent Brittan, former Chairman of United Technologies International.

Bari received her B.A. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and her MBA from Virginia Tech.