



owa  
champagne breakfast

Thursday, April 14th, 2016  
7:30 am to 9:00 am  
The Westin, NY Times Square  
New York, New York

## WELCOME

We are thrilled that you have joined us for our annual OWA Champagne Breakfast. This is an event that we look forward to as it provides a special format to celebrate women in leadership.

In addition to shining a spotlight on our annual Pleiades and Pyxis honorees, the annual breakfast is also where we bring you interviews with dynamic female leaders. This year is certainly no exception!



It is our honor to have Sherianne James, vice president of marketing for Transitions Optical, here to discuss a variety of topics with Jobson Editor and OWA Past President, Christie Walker.

The format for this discussion is much like a talk show and will give all of us an opportunity to learn from her insights and be inspired by her story. Below is a peek into some of the topics they will discuss:

- Changing disciplines and finding success
- Skills for success as an individual contributor, manager, and leader
- Diversity and inclusion in the optical industry
- Finding inspiration and mentorship for career development

On behalf of the OWA Board, thank you for joining us as we raise a toast in honor of our award recipients and this celebration of women in leadership.

**Heather Smith**

*OWA president*





## SUE DOWNES

Sue Downes, CEO of MyEyeDr, is driven today by the same goal that inspired her to co-found the company 14 years ago. Sue believed that patients received the finest vision care from their local independent optometrist. However, she recognized that the demands of the 21st century patient were outpacing what the independent optometrist could deliver. So she asked a simple question – could she surround independent practices with a management services team that

could help deliver a great patient experience and meet the demands of a new generation of patients? With MyEyeDr, she has done just that. Starting with one office in 2001, she has led the growth of the MyEyeDr brand to over 200 locations across the mid-Atlantic and southeast United States.

Sue has built a brand that is as unique as she: it's fun, it's fashion, it's a caring experience, and the results speak volumes about her leadership in the industry. Her real skill is in her ability to share that vision with her team and instill that same commitment to the profession that she has demonstrated over the past 30 years.

In addition to her work managing MyEyeDr offices, Sue served on the advisory board for the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired, and is a past board member of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce. She is the recipient of several prestigious honors including, Vision Monday's 2011 Most Influential Women in Optical honor, the 2012 smart CEO award for Entrepreneurial spirit and the 2015 ACG Corporate Growth Award.

Sue lives in Northern Virginia with her two sons, and husband, PJ, and has no plans to slow down – ever!



## ANN ENGLERT

Ann E. Englert is the owner and sole proprietor of Solutions, a concierge style business dedicated to working with wholesalers, retailers and ECP's in the eyewear industry. A full service management resource, the company develops proprietary solutions to achieve performance improvement throughout the client company's sales organization. Prior to starting the company in 2001, she held senior leadership positions at some of the industry's top optical and sunwear companies. She was selected as one of Vision Monday's Most Influential Women in Optical in the Executive Suite (2013). An expert at finding and developing talent, Ann believes her affinity for efficiency and positive outcomes stems from a long line of supportive mentors.



An active OWA member since 2001, Ann has served on the board and chaired multiple committees. During her term as president of the OWA, in partnership with her board and administrative staff, she initiated the campaign to refresh the OWA brand, launched the Digital Marketing Committee and collaborated with industry partners to maximize OWA programs.

Ann remains committed to the OWA's mission of advancing the leadership role of women and she enthusiastically connects with industry professionals to invite them to share their time and talent. "The OWA is a dynamic platform to work with the industry's best and brightest. Together with OWA members who volunteer their time and our Professional Development Sponsors, the OWA is expanding meaningful services such as educational workshops, webinars, leadership tools and networking opportunities."

Ann resides in Naples, Florida with her husband, Tom and enjoys sunny outdoor activities.





## SHERIANNE JAMES

Born in England, Sherianne James grew up in Jamaica and Trinidad. Sherianne earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Florida and her MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern. Sherianne's personal and professional journey to her current position as the vice president of marketing at Transitions is both unique and inspirational. With a background in chemical engineering, Sherianne worked in R&D at Kraft before deciding to move in a totally new

direction... marketing. Today, Sherianne leads her team in developing and executing trade and retail marketing programs, as well as maintaining and developing relationships with Transitions Optical's business and research partners. She has been active in integrating insights into the development of Transitions Optical's brand strategy and campaign, and has also led efforts that have enhanced consumer and eye care professional segment insights.

Like any good marketer, James knows that the underlying appeal of a brand is based as much on emotion as on reason. "I'm inspired to connect people to the world on a deeper level, to be a facilitator of magical moments," she said. "You can't develop technology for technology's sake. I look at that sweet spot between a product's technical strength and what consumers need and like."

Sherianne is married to a Trinidadian American who she had dated since they were both teenagers. In life, two things that are most important to her are her integrity and her family. "One of my greatest motivations is to be a role model for my 9-year-old daughter – and I look at my pursuit of success and sense of passion in my career as a very tangible way to do that."



## CHRISTIE WALKER

Christie Walker has always been a journalist of one kind or another. As a child she was in charge of journaling the family vacations, as a teenager she was on the high school newspaper staff that became infamous for their underground paper The Wow Wow (It was the early 70s!). This love of writing continued, leading to a job as a photojournalist for the Daily News, the publishing of five fictional novels, and a job in the optical industry in 1997 as editor for Frames Data, a Jobson company.



As one of the founding members of the OWA, Christie has seen and helped the organization grow from a dozen women to over 300 members in 19 years. Christie has held almost every position in the organization, including president, but enjoys working behind the scenes best, "getting stuff done." A past OWA Pleiades Award honoree and Vision Monday Most Influential Woman, Christie gives credit to her work with the OWA for introducing her to the people of the optical industry. "My career growth and the growth of the OWA have walked hand-in-hand. I'm thrilled that the OWA is thriving and will continue to grow, long after I have retired."

Christie lives in the Southern California mountains of Big Bear, in an all-electric solar/wind home with her husband Robbie, and enjoys introducing her five grandchildren to the joys of the great outdoors.





connect.  
inspire.  
lead.

**MISSION:**

To enhance and promote the leadership role of women in the optical industry through networking, education, and peer support.

The Optical Women's Association, a nonprofit organization, was founded in September 1997 with the mission of supporting and promoting the professional development of women in the optical industry. As the vision of the OWA evolves and expands, we maintain the focus of the OWA's founding principles and core mission.

[www.OpticalWomen.com](http://www.OpticalWomen.com)

OWA thanks its 2016 Professional Development sponsors for their belief in and generous support of its mission to enhance and promote the leadership role of women in the optical industry through networking, education, and peer support.

