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“Nifty Fifty” Women Entrepreneurs Leads Spikes in Sales and Growth

The Women Presidents' Organization and American Express OPEN Name Top 50 Fastest-Growing Women-Owned/Led Companies

VANCOUVER, B.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [The Women Presidents' Organization](#) (WPO), in partnership with [American Express OPEN](#), the small business division of American Express, today released the fourth ranking of the 50 Fastest Growing Women-Owned/led companies in North America. The Top 50 generated a combined \$4.1 billion in 2010 revenues (mean of \$82.7 million) and collectively employed 24,650 in 2010 (projected average for 2011 is 557 employees).

BrightStar, a home healthcare and medical staffing company based in Illinois, rose from the number two spot last year to top the list in 2011. Shelly Sun, president and chief executive officer, who plans to take her business public, saw her nine-year-old company revenue quadruple in two years from \$24,413,433 in 2008 to \$99,142,249 in 2010. Shelly attributes BrightStar's use of social media as a significant factor in her company's rapid revenue growth.

Sierra Nevada Corporation, a Nevada-based electronic systems provider, is new to the list and comes in second both in growth and longevity (the business was founded in 1963). The company has nearly doubled revenues (\$690,000,000 in 2008 to \$1,201,000,000 in 2010) and employment (1,183 in 2008, 2,067 in 2010 and 2,170 projected for 2011).

Rose International, Inc., a contingent workforce services and IT solutions company based in Missouri, is the third fastest-growing company and also a newcomer to the annual ranking. Himanshu Bhatia, owner and chief executive officer, has seen her business employment skyrocket (1,500 in 2008, 5,000 in 2010 and 6,500 projected for 2011) in addition to the company's rapid revenue growth (\$117,000,000 in 2008 to \$230,000,000 in 2010).

“The Top 50 list includes a group of trailblazing women entrepreneurs that represent a variety of industries ranging from staffing to electronic systems providers, language services to security,” said Marsha Firestone, Ph. D., president and founder of the WPO. “We are pleased to partner with American Express OPEN to honor these powerful women and recognize their triumphs.”

In order to help the Top 50 continue to seize even more business opportunities, each of the honored business owners will be offered a [Business Platinum Card](#) from American Express OPEN. The card will include 100,000 Membership Rewards® points, which may be used on capital investments including: the funding of employee recognition programs, business travel or the purchase of office equipment and supplies.

“Based on American Express OPEN's ‘State of Women-Owned Businesses’ report, there are an estimated 8.1 million women-owned businesses in the United States, generating nearly \$1.3 trillion in revenues and employing nearly 7.7 million people,” said Nancy Hood, Vice President at American Express OPEN. “We at OPEN are honored to support this elite group of women who diversify the full spectrum of industries and have become leaders within the women business community.”

All eligible companies were ranked according to a sales growth formula that combines percentage and absolute growth. From this list, the 50 Fastest were selected. To be qualified for the ranking, businesses are required to be privately held, woman-owned/led companies in the U.S. or Canada and have reached revenue of at least \$500,000 by the first week of 2006 and \$2 million in 2010.

More about the 2011 Top 50:

- Founded the Business: 90%
- Current CEO is actively involved in the day-to-day operations: 100%
- Average years in business: 16
- Average age: 47
- Average Number of Projected 2011 Employees: 557

All 50 companies will be honored at a special event hosted by American Express OPEN at the 2011 WPO Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on April 28, 2011. The awards reception will take place from 6:30PM to 9:30PM at the Fairmont Vancouver Hotel.

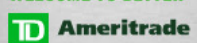
Top 50 Fastest-Growing Women-Owned/Led Companies Include:

1	Shelly Sun	BrightStar	IL	Healthcare staffing
2	Eren Ozmen	Sierra Nevada Corporation	NV	Prime systems integrator
3	Himanshu Bhatia	Rose International, Inc.	MO	Contingent Workforce Services
4	Carolyn Doerle	Doerle Food Services, LLC	LA	Wholesale foodservice distribution
5	Theresa Daytner	Daytner Construction Group	MD	General Contracting Management
6	Rebecca Minkoff	Rebecca Minkoff LLC	NY	Fashion Brand
7	Ranjini Poddar	Artech Information Systems LLC	NJ	IT Consulting
8	Elizabeth Elting	TransPerfect	NY	Language services provider
9	Amy Walden	Walden Security	TN	Contract security service

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10	Heidi Ganahl	Camp Bow Wow	CO	Dog Day/Night care
11	Carol Koffinke	Beacon Associates, Inc.	MD	Management consulting
12	Rachna Agarwal	Expedien, Inc.	TX	Business Intelligence
13	Cynthia Kaye	US Market Logical Choice Technologies	CA	Education and security technologies
14	Jennifer Schoenhofer	Axis Teknologies	GA	Wireless infrastructure engineering
15	Amy Gonzales, Kelly Caldwell	AK Environmental, LLC	NJ	Project Management Consulting
16	Gloria Rajkumar	SIMAC Canada Inc.	ON	Coordinate Independent Medical Assessments
17	Pamela O'Rourke	ICON Information Consultants, LP	TX	Human Capital solutions
18	Rumia Burbank	Vendor Managed Solutions, Inc.	MI	Integrated Materials Management
19	Jill Becker	Cambridge NanoTech	MA	Atomic Layer Deposition
20	Carole Borden	C.B. Transportation, Inc	PA	Distribution solutions
21	Kiran Gill	PARS Environmental, Inc.	NJ	Environmental consulting firm
22	Vicki Raport, Dr. Linda Whitaker	Quantum Retail Technology, Inc.	MN	Optimization platform and solutions
23	Sue Butler, Tracy Till	Butler/Till	NY	Media agency
24	Elaine Osgood	Atlas Travel International	MA	Travel agency
25	June Ressler	Cenergy International Services, LLC	TX	Oil and gas industry staffing
26	Anjali "Ann" Ramakumaran	Ampcus Inc.	VA	Consulting services
27	Laurie DeJong	LDJ Productions	NY	Event Management Company
28	Paige Lentz	Monarch Site Services	CO	Environmental construction
29	Lisa Bair	The Hobart Group	NJ	Healthcare communication services
30	Claudine S. George	ICONMA LLC	MI	Staffing
31	Roz Alford, Nancy Williams	ASAP Solutions Group, LLC	GA	IT Consulting
32	Kathleen Benson, Susan Lynd	Office Remedies, Inc.	VA	Full-service survey research firm
33	Anita Eloff	Boost Technologies	OH	Employee performance tracking
34	Joan Bialek	Bialek Environments	MD	Modular interior construction
35	Dr. Lydia Bock	Geodetics, Inc.	CA	Civilian and military products
36	Cassandra Sanford	KellyMitchell Group, Inc.	MO	Technology staffing
37	Sonu Ratra	Akraya, Inc.	CA	IT & Marketing staffing
38	Cynthia Pasky	Strategic Staffing Solutions	MI	IT development center
39	Gail Whittenberger	Tyndale Company, Inc.	PA	Flame resistant clothing
40	Wendi Goldsmith	Bioengineering Group	MA	Ecological engineering
41	Bonnie Laiderman	Veterans Home Care, LLC	MO	Veterans home care
42	Lisa Weber	Timeless Decor	NY	Custom framing
43	Danielle Waske	DNT Environmental Services, Inc.	GA	Environmental Firm
44	Rebecca Cenni	Atrium Staffing LLC	NY	Staffing
45	Tanya C. Matthews	TMG Construction Corporation	VA	Government general contractor
46	Vickie L. Wessel	Spirit Electronics, Inc.	AZ	Superior supply-chain solutions
47	Francine Farkas Sears	Fabrique, Ltd	CT	Technology Case Manufacturer
48	Elise Mitchell	Mitchell Communications Group, Inc.	AR	Strategic communications
49	Jennifer Smith	Innovative Office Solutions	MN	B to B provider of office supplies
50	Beatrice P. Key	Key & Associates, P.C.	MD	Certified public accounting firm

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About the Women Presidents' Organization (WPO)

The WPO is the premier peer advisory organization connecting women who own multi-million dollar companies. In monthly meetings across four continents (North America, South America, Europe, and Africa) chapters of 20 women presidents – from diverse industries– invest time and energy in themselves and their businesses to drive their corporations to the next level. Local WPO chapters are coordinated by a professional facilitator and meet monthly to share business expertise and experience in a confidential setting. For more information, call 212-688-4114 or visit www.womenpresidentsorg.com.

About American Express OPEN®

American Express OPEN is the leading payment card issuer for small businesses in the United States and supports business owners with products and services to help them run and grow their businesses. This includes business charge and credit cards that deliver purchasing power, flexibility, rewards, savings on business services from an expanded lineup of partners and online tools and services designed to help improve profitability. Learn more at www.OPEN.com and connect with us at openforum.com and twitter.com/openforum.

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1 Based on approvals

Source: American Express OPEN

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