

Natalie Allen, CNN International Anchor and Correspondent, Returns to Host 2017 WLC

The conference, which offers workshops on career advancement, entrepreneurship and tips on work/life balance, has sold out for the past three years.

LAS VEGAS, April 18, 2017 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Award-winning broadcast journalist Natalie Allen will return as host of the MGM Resorts Foundation's 11th annual Women's Leadership Conference (WLC) Aug. 7-8 at MGM Grand Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, NV.

Sponsored by the nonprofit MGM Resorts Foundation, the two-day conference strives to provide women with the developmental tools they need to advance their lives and careers. Each year, the event's proceeds, after costs, are donated to a local nonprofit that is devoted to the welfare and development of women and girls.

This will be Ms. Allen's fourth year hosting the conference. Organizers say her energy and stage presence have added depth to the popular event, which has attracted sell-out crowds for the past three years.

"Natalie is dynamic on stage," says conference organizer Dawn Christensen, director of National Diversity Relations for MGM Resorts International. "Whether she's sharing a personal anecdote from the podium or moderating a panel, she does a great job of connecting with the audience. We're thrilled that she's hosting again."

Last year, registration for the conference sold out days in advance, with more than 1,000 signing up to attend. Organizers encourage early registration to those who plan to attend in 2017.

"I love hosting this conference," Ms. Allen says. "It's incredible to connect with hundreds of women who are all coming together to learn how to grow their careers and to support each other. Every year, I leave WLC feeling inspired and energized. I'm really looking forward to this year."

Women continue to lag behind men in leadership roles Corporate America, according to the latest statistics from Catalyst, a nonprofit organization that tracks worldwide gender representation in the workforce. Women held 23 percent of senior roles in American businesses last year, the highest recorded level since 2007. However, the percentage of U.S. businesses with no women at all in senior roles rose to its highest recorded level since 2011: almost a third or 31 percent.

The conference, first established as the Women of Color Conference in 2007, was meant to address some of these inequities by providing women from all walks of life with education and development opportunities, organizers say. Over the past decade, it has grown in size, scope and reputation, drawing a devoted following. In recent years, men have played an increasingly important role in the conference, as supporters and attendees.

The 2017 Women's Leadership Conference theme is "Women Inspiring Women." The conference will offer a wide range of learning opportunities, career guidance and personal growth tools, including:

- Exposure to diverse and nationally recognized speakers and accomplished women role models.
- Two days of career-oriented workshops that will give women hands-on opportunities to develop skills based on their career needs.
- Three distinct learning tracks: Emerging Leaders, Emerging Executives and Executives.
- Workshops for entrepreneurs who are well-established or just thinking of starting their own businesses.

An award-winning journalist, Ms. Allen has more than 25 years of experience in broadcast news. Before becoming an anchor and correspondent for CNN International, Ms. Allen was an anchor for CNN from 1992-2001. She also served as news anchor for MSNBC.

Ms. Allen started her career at WREG-TV in Memphis, Tenn., becoming the first newsroom intern elevated to General Assignments Reporter while still a student. Three years later, she was named Co-Ancor of WREG'S 10 p.m. News.

In 2010, Ms. Allen videotaped, produced and wrote a three-part "Freedom Project" special for CNN International on child trafficking from Vietnam and Cambodia, primarily focusing on one community in the Mekong Delta. As a correspondent for NBC, she appeared on "The Nightly News," "The Today Show" and CNBC.

Beginning in 2007, Ms. Allen served as The Weather Channel's first full-time environment and climate correspondent. As Primary Anchor for the network's weekly news program, "Forecast Earth," she traveled the country interviewing environmental pioneers and leaders in sustainability.

The conference is open to women of all ethnicities, professions and social backgrounds, locally and nationally, and men who support them. The MGM Resorts Foundation is the conference's presenting sponsor. Each year, proceeds from the conference after costs are donated to one or more local nonprofit agencies devoted to the welfare and development of women and children. Southern Nevada Children First, a nonprofit organization that provides support to homeless and pregnant youth, recently received a \$30,000 gift from the 2015 conference.

Registration costs \$485 and includes the full conference and all workshops and lectures, a networking reception, and continental breakfasts and lunches catered by MGM Grand. Time is also allotted for attendees to build key professional relationships with other women attending while enjoying the hospitality and entertainment of MGM Grand and other MGM Resorts International destinations.

Participating sponsorships are available to organizations or companies who share the vision and goals of this conference. Current sponsors include: The Coca-Cola Company, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Southwest Airlines, Bank of America, R&R Partners Foundation and McCarran International Airport.

For more information about WLC, please visit www.mgmresorts.com/womensleadershipconference.

About MGM Resorts International

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About The MGM Resorts Foundation

The purpose of The MGM Resorts Foundation is to collect and distribute monies and assets donated by

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For further information: Sonya Padgett, MGM Resorts International, 702-692-6807, spadgett@mgmresorts.com, Callie Driehorst, MGM Resorts International, 702-692-6814, cdriehorst@mgmresorts.com

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