

ON THE LEVEL

BALANCING INDUSTRY & ASSOCIATION NEWS

On The Level - February 2018

Upcoming Events & Deadlines

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Be on the lookout for the Winter issue of The Leader magazine, "Women in Safety," hitting desks soon!

Trends to Expect for Women in the Workplace in 2018

2018 is still fresh as we breeze through February, and we will see if any New Year's predictions come to fruition. Georgene Huang, a writer for *Forbes*, predicted the [top five trends for women in the workplace](#) this year. The predictions include:

- Continued scrutiny about sexual harassment culture.
 - Statistics suggest that 40 percent of women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. Women have started speaking up more about incidents in a variety of fields, from the restaurant industry to manufacturing.
- Expanded employer-sponsored training on sexual harassment and new policy adoption.
 - As a result of more women speaking up about their experiences, companies will have to adjust current policies. Facebook and Microsoft have already started making these changes.
- Improved parental leave policies - including gender neutral or primary caregiver policies.
 - With more women earning college degrees now than their male counterparts, and 40 percent of households with children under age 18 having female breadwinners, employers are being forced to adjust policies. Women's economic parity cannot move forward if they have to choose between being child-bearers and caretakers at home and earning a living in the way they choose.

- Greater work flexibility.
 - Huang predicts that flexibility will be increasingly adopted in order to attract new employees - both millennials as well as the sandwich generation tasked with taking care of aging family members.
- Disclosure of diversity data.
 - Shareholders are demanding greater transparency about employee diversity and gender pay gap information. This trend is driven by the evidence that diversity strengthens business performance.

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Personal Protective Equipment For Women

Creating personal protective equipment (PPE) for women is one way to ensure that women feel welcomed and comfortable in an industry. Many fields still lack women's participation, but there are companies aiming to get women involved.

Hot Stuff™ Safetywear, designs flame resistant clothing that is safe, comfortable and stylish. The company hopes to encourage more women to choose STEM fields. All components are UL certified to NFPA 2112 and garment designs are UL compliant to NFPA 2112 and 70E standards.

The United Kingdom is also making strides in PPE for women. **Amblers Safety** features over 15 different styles of safety footwear specifically crafted for women, and over 40 unisex workboot designs. Amblers Safety aims to help women working in construction and surveying environments, which are typically male-dominated occupations.

You can read more about Hot Stuff™ Safetywear and Amblers Safety in the Winter issue of The Leader!

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Winter Olympics & Heart Health

This February is not only National Heart Health Month, but also the Winter Olympics! But how are these two events related? For many Olympic athletes, past and present, the passion for their sport has inspired a life that values fitness. Retired freestyle skier, and Olympic medalist, Shannon Bahrke Happe, now runs a corporate motivational company that teaches motivation through movement. Happe also brings her daughter to the gym with her to teach her that exercise is a fun thing that can be done with friends. Kikkan Randall, the most decorated skier on the U.S. cross-country team, notes that her parents introduced her to physical activity very early in life - she was skiing the day after her first birthday. Currently, she helps lead a nonprofit organization that encourages girls to stay in sports. Randall is also a **Go Red For Women** heart health ambassador, raising awareness about heart disease, the leading killer of women, and to help women take actions to get healthier.

Most of us will never be Olympians, however, these athletes can inspire us to get moving a little more. Whether we want to lose weight, improve our stamina and fitness levels, sleep better or just keep up with our kids and/or grandkids, we can all implement a little extra exercise into our daily routine.

To read more about the American Heart Association and the work of these Olympians, check out [this article](#).

A few Olympic Game highlights:

- Chloe Kim, gold medal, women's snowboard halfpipe.
- Mirai Nagasu, first American female figure skater to land a triple axel at the Olympics, and third woman in the world to land the jump.
- Jamie Anderson, gold medal, women's snowboard slopestyle. The first woman to win

- multiple Olympic gold medals in snowboarding.
- Marissa and Hannah Brandt, American sisters each competing in hockey. Marissa for the unified Korean team and Hannah for Team USA.

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Women Around the Globe: From Line Workers to Supervisors

The greatest contributor to female employment in Bangladesh is the readymade garments industry, but over 3.2 million of its employees live at the bottom of the economic pyramid (people with less than \$10 U.S. per day in purchasing power). Recognizing this, a company called DBL Group is focusing on increasing the number of female workers. In 2012 women made up 35 percent of the DBL Group workforce, but in 2018 that number has risen to about 49 percent. As the proportion of women at DBL Group increases, the percentage of women in middle management positions is also rising. To support these women in their new supervisor roles, DBL Group provides a 165-hour training program that helps to build both soft skills and technical skills needed for leadership positions. The training addresses topics like safety, communication, counseling, self-motivation, motivating others and more.

The company has found that promoting women from within has proven to be beneficial in a variety of ways. Female employee turnover is down to only two percent, absenteeism has been reduced and sewing lines led by females were found to be three percent more efficient than the male-led lines, translating to an added \$624,000 in production per year. The performance of these female supervisors has added a great value to the company, including women's empowerment, discrimination, gender equality and diversity. Read more about the work of the DBL Group [here](#).

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Women in Nontraditional Occupations

Women make up nearly half of the U.S. labor force, yet comprise less than 10 percent of apprentices. If women's participation in these fields increases, it will offer a path toward a variety of new, higher-paying career options.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau, "The Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program provides funding to community-based organizations to assist employers and labor unions in the recruitment, training, and retention of women in apprenticeship and nontraditional occupations. Grantees may work in the full range of industries in which women are traditionally underrepresented or disproportionately concentrated in the lower-wage occupations, including advanced manufacturing, energy, healthcare, information technology, and transportation."

When this program launched in 2016, U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez stated, "Expanding opportunity for women in America means breaking down barriers and changing perceptions about fields where women have been underrepresented for far too long... These grants will help women access these quality, middle-class jobs and ensure that as we grow apprenticeships in America, this earn-while-you-learn model is available to more women."

You can read some of the real stories from women in non-traditional occupations [here](#). Want more information about the WANTO grant program? You can find more information, and read about past recipients, [here](#). Be sure to check back for the upcoming opportunities in 2018.

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VPPA Announcements

Safety+ Workshop Proposals Due TOMORROW

Share your story at Safety+ this year! Proposals are due tomorrow, so don't miss the

chance to speak in Nashville. The symposium will take place at the Gaylord Opryland in Nashville, TN, from August 28-31, 2018. [You can submit your proposal here.](#)

Important Speaker Notes

- Proposals are for 1-hour long workshops.
- Proposals that are sales-focused or promote a commercial product will not be considered.
- Proposals will be reviewed and selected based on several criteria to include topic relevance, practicability, quality of proposal, etc.

Deadlines & Dates

Proposal Deadline: February 16, 2018

Proposal Review: February, 2018

Speaker Notifications: March, 2018

If you have any questions regarding the workshop proposals, please call the National Office at (703) 761-1146 or email conference@vpppa.org.

Safety+ 2018 registration is opening soon! Look out for an email later this month regarding Safety+ registration and a new contest for the first 50 registrants.



Write for a VPPPA Publication

Have you checked out the [VPPPA Blog](#)? Send us an article regarding any safety or health topic, and we might add you to our blog schedule for 2018.

If you would like to write for a VPPPA publication, or know of someone who is interested, please email communications@vpppa.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Leader Magazine

The Spring 2018 issue will focus on profiles in safety and health. Do you have a safety lesson to teach from a personal experience? Share it with our readers. Articles for the Spring issue will be due on March 16.

Membership News

If you have any news or pictures from your site that you would like to share (an award, a VPP approval, a member who went above and beyond, etc.), please send it to VPPPA. We would love to add your updates to the next On The Level newsletter or post it on our social media pages.

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Stay Connected





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