

UNIVERSITY DEAN CHAIRWOMAN OF 2009 BUSINESS WOMEN'S FORUM SEPTEMBER 29

WATERBURY, DANBURY, HARTFORD, CT, September 10, 2009 – Ellen D. Durnin, Ph.D., Dean, Graduate Studies and External Programs at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury and Waterbury, and Central Connecticut State University at Waterbury, and a supporting member of the Business Women's Forum (BWF®), has volunteered as Chairwoman of the 2009 Business Women's Forum (BWF®), Connecticut's largest and longest-running full-day annual conference for women (www.2009bwf.com). The 27th annual BWF® will be held Tuesday, September 29th at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford under the theme, "Bouncing Back: New hopes, New dreams, New ways". Robin Roberts, a 20 year veteran television broadcaster with ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" and ESPN, will be the afternoon's keynote speaker.

"It's a fabulous event", stated Dr. Durnin. "We anticipate more than 1,200 business people from across Connecticut will attend this full day of presentations, workshops, speakers and networking. For the past 27 years, BWF® has provided attendees with access to phenomenal speakers, networking opportunities and diverse training. Each year, the Forum has featured such prominent, high-profile keynote speakers as Goldie Hawn, Jamie Lee Curtis, Suze Orman, Jane Seymour, Susan St. James, Chris Madden, Ann Curry, Jack Ford, and Faith Popcorn."

A program of the Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce Foundation for the past 26 years, The Business Women's Forum has generated more than \$100,000 in scholarship funds for female Post University students to pursue a business education. Sponsored by numerous Connecticut-based companies, this year's BWF® will honor Carlie Serif, a sophomore in Equine Business Management at Post this fall. "The mission of BWF®," explained Dr. Durnin, "is our commitment to equality of opportunity and advancement for women in business."

As Chairwoman, Dr. Durnin stated that she is involved in ensuring the overall success of this notable Forum, "Everything from securing our speakers, workshop presenters, fundraising, and public relations to the menu. At each step, I have been working very closely with Lynn Ward, president and CEO of the Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce. There is truly no way this event would be successful without Lynn Ward and her staff. They've been doing the event for a long time, and now I am benefitting from their expertise. The attendees will see the payoff from participating in the conference, and their employers will benefit from the enthusiasm and new ideas they potentially bring back to the workplace."

Dr. Durnin took on the role of this year's Chairwoman, "Because I've served on the BWF board for nine years with a wonderful group of women business leaders, and it's my turn to give back. This is the Forum's 27th year and it's now being held in Hartford due to its phenomenal success. It has become a state-wide event versus prior years when it was focused on the Waterbury region. Now it has grown from 450 participants to over 1,200 during the past several years, and I believe I can help attract businesspeople from the western region of Connecticut."

In 2000, Dr. Durnin was named Dean of Western Connecticut State University and Central Connecticut State University at Waterbury, and she created an offsite location delivering bachelor degree-completion programs on the campus of Naugatuck Valley

Community College. She accepted the newly-created position of Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs in 2002, where she works closely with the school deans to ensure the academic integrity of all graduate programs, including the university's new Ed.D. program in Instructional Leadership.

"The 2009 Business Women's Forum is different this year," explained Dr. Durnin, "because of its size, as well as the current economic climate. This year we recognized that we are in a difficult economy compared to even one year ago. Our theme of "Bouncing Back" is very deliberate, as is our selection of Robin Roberts as our keynote luncheon speaker. She has been on both a professional and personal journey, which exemplifies the theme of this year's conference, as well as our hopes for businesswomen across Connecticut and our economy nationwide."

Robin Roberts' personal connection to the "Bouncing Back: New Hopes, New Dreams, New Ways" theme is a result of being a survivor of breast cancer since 2007. Since that time, she has been an outspoken advocate for increasing awareness of breast cancer and the importance of early detection, and "Think Pink" will be the subject of one of the September 29th Forum's morning workshops.

"Connecticut's business women will also come back strong", exclaimed Dr. Durnin. "We will bounce back, and this Forum will provide strategies and some of the best practices to work through the current challenges. We recognize that there is a huge difference in how we conduct our professional and personal lives from last fall to this fall. We did not ignore that reality in planning the 2009 BWF®, but rather, we are placing focus on what people are doing so that they can succeed in business right now and into the future."

2009 BWF® workshops will include: "Social Media Spaghetti: Untangle It All"; "Mind Mapping the Next New You"; "10 Biggest Mistakes Presenters Make"; "Fundamentals of Launching and Running a Business"; "Motivated Follow-up: The Secret to Networking Success"; "Developing Your Competitive Edge"; "Lead More With Less"; "Grow Your Gusto"; "Managing Stress and Not Letting It Manage You"; "How to Manage Your Boss". Supporters of the 2009 BWF® include Anthem, Comcast Business Class, The Worx Group, Wachovia Bank, Barker Specialty Company, Webster Bank, and the "Hartford Business Journal".

Tickets for the 2009 Business Women's Forum are \$175/person, which includes continental breakfast, lunch, a closing wine and cheese reception, all workshops, networking, prizes and gifts. All tickets can be obtained by visiting www.2009bwf.com.

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PHOTO ATTACHED: BWFDrDurninLWard.jpg

CAPTION: WESTCONN DEAN, Dr. Ellen Durnin (left), chairwoman of the September 29th Business Women's Forum (BWF) in Hartford, recently met with members of the Business Women's Forum including Lynn Ward (right), president and CEO of the Waterbury Chamber of Commerce, sponsor of the Forum for the past 27 years. Dr. Durnin, Dean of Graduate Studies at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury and Central Connecticut State University in Waterbury, volunteered for the role of chairwoman for this year's BWF which annually attracts over 1,200 businesspeople from across the state. The fundraising theme of the 2009 Business Women's Forum, a program of the non-profit Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is "Bounce Back: New Hopes, New Dreams, New Ways", and Robin Roberts, anchor

of "Good Morning America" will be the keynote speaker. More information and ticket orders can be obtained at www.2009bwf.com

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