Women’s Roundtable names six new Incredible ECU Women

Award-winning journalist and best-selling author Jean Chatzky was the keynote speaker at “Investing for the Future: Strategies for Sound Financial Management,” the third event in the Women’s Roundtable at ECU’s Incredible ECU Women Series, held on Oct. 14, 2010, at the Greenville Convention Center. More than 350 people attended the event honoring six new Incredible ECU Women. Proceeds of more than $35,000 will support the Roundtable and the Access Scholarship program at ECU.

The six honorees were chosen for their achievements in the fields of public service, performing arts, fine arts, business and industry, sports, education, health sciences, media, professional and research. They join the 100 Incredible ECU Women recognized in 2007. The six new Incredible ECU Women are:

Dr. Sylvia T. Brown, ’75, 78 (Greenville, North Carolina)
Dr. Sylvia T. Brown, dean of the ECU College of Nursing and a widely-published scholar, considers her greatest accomplishment to be her role in preparing future nurses. She helped to develop the nursing education concentration in the ECU master’s program to prepare future nurse educators, and she was instrumental in the development of the doctoral program in nursing. Dr. Brown has served as president of the Dream Factory of North Carolina and as a board member of The National Dream Factory. She also has been president of the Beta Nu Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, an honor society for nurses.

Holly M. Garriott, ’01, ’05 (Greenville, North Carolina)
Holly M. Garriott, founder and executive director of Emerge Gallery, which became the Pitt Co. Arts Council at Emerge in 2009, is a ceramics artist who was invited to create an ornament for the White House Christmas tree in 2008. Garriott developed an internship and professional development course for the ECU School of Art and Design. She is secretary of Uptown Greenville, an organization dedicated to revitalizing downtown and has helped coordinate PirateFest, an arts and music festival that draws more than 20,000 people to Greenville.

Dr. Mary Helen Hackney, ’88 (Richmond, Virginia)
Dr. Mary Helen Hackney, assoc. professor in the Div. of Hematology Oncology in the Dept. of Internal Medicine at the Virginia Commonwealth University Massey Cancer Center, specializes in the treatment of all stages of breast cancer. She was recognized as one of the top doctors for medical oncology and women’s health/breast cancer care in “Richmond Magazine” for several years. She is director of the cancer center’s Rural Cancer Outreach Program, which provides oncology care in rural Virginia, and provides support at the Crossover Ministries Clinic, which serves uninsured Richmond residents.

Margie Johnson ’69 (Virginia Beach, Virginia)
Margie Johnson is president of Shop Talk, a retail and research consulting firm concentrating on the retail, hospitality, health care, and financial industries. A speaker, trainer, author, and consultant, she equips entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills for higher profitability and performance. Her accolades include the Fred Lazarus National Retail Federation Award; the NC Employer of the Year Award; the Inside Business 2006 Women in Business Achievement Award; and the 1998 Outstanding Women of Hampton Roads Award. She received coverage in “The Washington Post,” WHRO Public Television, and NBC’s Today.
Dr. Dorothy G. Pruitt ’56 (Oxford, North Carolina)
Dr. Dorothy G. Pruitt, retired principal and educational consultant, was the first woman elected to the Granville Co. Board of Education, serving as vice-chair and chair. She was principal of the C.G. Credle Elementary School when it was recognized as a National School of Excellence and accepted a model school award from President George H.W. Bush, one of two public schools in NC to be recognized that year. Other honors include a two-time winner of the Granville Co. Wachovia Principal of the Year, the National Assoc. of Elementary School Principals Award for Excellence, Governor’s Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service, and the Granville Co. Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Award for Education/Community Service.

Lynn M. Schubert ’77 (Washington, D.C.)
Lynn M. Schubert is president of the Surety and Fidelity Association of America, a trade association of insurance companies that write fidelity and surety insurance. She was the first woman and youngest chair of the Fidelity and Surety Law Committee of the Tort and Insurance practice section of the American Bar Association. Schubert was the founding executive director of the International Surety Association. Recognitions include the Women Builders Council Champion Award and the Private Sector Leadership Award of the Jamaica Business Resource Center in 2008. Both were for leadership in assisting women and minority contractors to come bondable businesses.
The Women’s Roundtable has been reaching out to East Carolina University’s women alumnae since 2003 to encourage involvement with their alma mater. The Roundtable aims to support leadership and philanthropy by women while also leaving a lasting legacy for future graduates. Women’s Roundtable board member Tonya Cockman, chief executive officer at Clear Defense, believes that leaving a legacy is one of the most crucial responsibilities of the Women’s Roundtable. She lives by the words, “It doesn’t matter how well you do in life, but what kind of legacy you leave behind.”

Cockman found her way to ECU from a small town in Virginia with a plan to stay one semester and then transfer to UNC-Chapel Hill. Luckily, some things do not end up going according to plan. The unexpected happened--she fell in love with ECU. She did not expect Greenville to capture her heart, but the town surprised her with its captivating school spirit, culture and people. Tonya pledged to the sorority Tri Sigma her fall semester, along with well-known actress Emily Proctor, and double majored in fashion merchandising and business administration. She graduated from ECU in 1991 and began working for Ralph Lauren spending time in New York City. With Ralph Lauren, she launched the Safari Line in North Carolina before eventually settling in Greensboro.

In 1999, Cockman’s father called her with a proposal – he wanted her to join him at his company, Clear Defense. The company mainly worked in athletics, working with the NCAA and the NBA to create the glass for basketball backboards and hockey arenas. Her father believed that coupling his business with her marketing skills would be a profitable business move. She took the offer and never looked back. Clear Defense also had defense contracts with the military, including one with the Pentagon where their glass was used in some areas of the building. Little did anyone know this contract would change the entire dynamic of the company a few years later.

On September 11, 2001, a plane crashed into the Pentagon. In the parts of the building where the plane hit, Clear Defense glass was part of the structure and protected the people inside the building.

“People have come up to me and told me that they stood behind our glass for protection against the melting walls and extreme flames…and it saved their lives,” said Cockman. “That means so much to me, that we could help in this way.”

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, changed the world’s view and security was everyone’s first priority. After Clear Defense glass withstood these extreme elements, the company’s focus on sports was altered. Their main expertise became providing defense contracts to the U.S. government and military. These types of contracts revolutionized their business and they now provide all the glass used in the military, including all vehicles. Cockman feels honored that they can help those who sacrifice so much for our country to remain safe.

“It may seem small in retrospect, but we help them see clearly through those windows, and it feels good that we can help them in some way, no matter how small or big,” she said.

Cockman has always been committed to giving back to her community. She is exceptionally passionate about empowering women and has worked with several different women’s rights foundations, including Women to Women in Greensboro.

With this community spirit, Cockman also wanted to get involved with East Carolina, but didn’t know where to begin. She joined the Pirate Club and her sister-in-law, Caroline Cockman, invited her to the Women’s Roundtable Legacy of Leadership event in 2007. She came with an open mind and was enlightened. Tonya Cockman knew several women attending the event and enjoyed it so much that it was easy to decide she wanted to be a part of the Women’s Roundtable’s mission to encourage and empower female students and future graduates of ECU.

Cockman is passionate about leaving an enduring legacy for future generations of women and is committed to improving ECU’s current endowment; she has pledged to see it grow and develop. She is proof that women can accomplish great things, and believes that success and giving back to the community is a responsibility of those who can.

“There’s nothing better than doing good while we’re doing well,” said Cockman.

This is the type of mentality the Women’s Roundtable embraces and encourages and hopes to pass on to other women alumnae and future graduates. Cockman is thankful that there is a group of women who realize the potential of other women and is proud to be laying a foundation for future graduates and creating her own legacy at ECU.

--Lauren Williams ’11

CONGRATULATIONS

- Women’s Roundtable board member Mary Schulken has been named the director of public information for ECU. She began work Jan. 4, 2011.
- Women’s Roundtable member Sarah Evans ’01 and her sorority sister are featured in Alumni Spotlight in East Magazine. Read the article at www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/mktg/east/winter_2011_class_notes.cfm#B.
PHILANTHROPIC GIVING BY WOMEN

- Female-headed households are more likely to give to charitable organizations than male-headed households in each income group analyzed for “Women Give 2010,” a study by the Center for Philanthropy at Indiana University.
- Female households earning more than $43,500 and less than $67,532 contributed $728 annually to charitable giving, compared to their male counterparts, who gave $373.
- Women have had an incredible impact on ECU’s Second Century Campaign. More than 8,600 individual gifts by women account for approximately $3 million of the $185 million raised to date.
- Women were involved with 6 percent of total giving to the Second Century Campaign, or $12,250,000.
- Women also account for more than $3.5 million in planned gifts to ECU, adding 13 new members to the Leo W. Jenkins Society since the launch of the Second Century Campaign.

JOINING THE WOMEN’S ROUNDTABLE

The Women’s Roundtable acknowledges the contribution of women to East Carolina University’s legacy and encourages new levels of commitment by women to the university’s future. Through its network of women graduates and friends of the university, the Women’s Roundtable is creating a culture of giving at ECU by focusing its efforts on raising funds for the Access Scholarship program; building a strong volunteer base of women committed to advancing the university; and forming a deeper pool of women to be considered for other leadership roles at ECU.

By joining the Women’s Roundtable at East Carolina, you not only encourage the development of leadership and philanthropy at ECU, but you also can make a real difference in the lives of students at East Carolina now and for many years to come.

ECU Access Scholarship program

The Access Scholarship program provides a unique opportunity to assist a historically underserved group of ECU students who demonstrate academic potential but do not have the financial means to attend ECU. Currently, ECU is able to fund only 66 percent of the financial aid requests of its students. The Access Scholarship program seeks private funding to close that gap and help talented students attend ECU. Access Scholarships funded at either the minimum endowment of $50,000 or the full endowment of $125,000 will be named after the person or group funding the endowment.

For more information about joining the Women’s Roundtable, visit www.ecu.edu/womensroundtable or contact Marcy Romary, director of women’s philanthropy, at 252-328-9580 or romarym@ecu.edu. Find us on Facebook!
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