

IWIRC NEWSLETTER

Member News



Connecting Women Worldwide



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2026 IWIRC Flagship Conference

Laureen Ryan's Closing Remarks

The inaugural Flagship Conference concluded with inspiring remarks from one of IWIRC's founders, Laureen Ryan, that served as a meaningful reminder of the values that continue to unite IWIRC members around the world. In her remarks, Laureen reflected on IWIRC's evolution, celebrated its members' accomplishments, and challenged us all to continue building on the organization's legacy. We are pleased to share her remarks with you here.

Thank you, everyone, for the opportunity to say a few words. I am Laureen Ryan, a Managing Director with Alvarez & Marsal in New York, and one of the co-founders of IWIRC. I was born, live, and work in New York, but thanks to my family heritage, I am also proud to hold Irish residency. Because of that special connection, it is a true privilege to welcome you to Dublin. I am also thrilled to share that Alvarez & Marsal has a major presence here this week, with ten attendees representing six of our global offices.



Standing here today, looking out at this incredible room, my heart is exceptionally full. When Selinda, Martha, and I first sat down over thirty years ago to build the foundation of IWIRC, we had a vision. We wanted to create a space where women in the insolvency and restructuring professions could connect, promote one another, and achieve unparalleled success.

But to be standing here with you in Dublin, celebrating **IWIRC's very first stand-alone Flagship International Conference**—this is a historic milestone that far exceeds even our wildest dreams. From our initial small gatherings to this magnificent assembly at Trinity College and The Shelbourne, we have officially solidified our footprint as a truly global powerhouse. I want to give a special thank you to the **IWIRC Ireland and Europe Networks** for hosting us so spectacularly in this beautiful city.

The Founders Awards are deeply personal to us. They were designed to honor the exact traits that keep this international organization alive: relentless commitment, global vision, and local community building. This year's honorees embody those values perfectly.

- To **Aisling Dwyer**, our 2026 Melnik Award recipient—thank you for your exceptional career achievements and your long-standing contributions to the Hong Kong Network. Your dedication across the globe is the bedrock of what keeps our international membership so vibrant.

- To **Kathlene Burke**, our 2026 Fetner Award recipient—your relentless efforts with the Europe Network are a shining example of how we continue to expand our mission across borders. You have truly fueled our international growth and made this European gathering possible.
- And to the **IWIRC Greater Philadelphia Network**, the winners of the award that carries my name, the Ryan Award—congratulations! You have shown us all what an outstanding, impactful network looks like. Your dedication to fostering community and supporting our shared mission is deeply inspiring.

To Aisling, Kathlene, and the entire Greater Philadelphia Network team: you are the hands and hearts driving IWIRC into the future. Selinda, Martha, and I may have lit the spark, but you are the ones fanning the flames and keeping this organization burning bright.

As we close out today's presentation and look forward to the rest of this historic conference, I want to leave you with one charge. Keep opening doors for each other. Keep mentoring the next generation of women entering this field. And keep showing the restructuring world exactly what women can achieve when we stand together globally.

Thank you, congratulations again to our 2026 winners, and please enjoy the rest of our inaugural international conference in Dublin!





Member News

Rachel Albanese (New York Network) recently moderated a panel at ABI's New York City Bankruptcy Conference. Her panel explored a range of topical ethical issues in the practice of bankruptcy law, both evergreen and emerging, such as the type and scope of judicial involvement in cases, the ethics of so-called "debtor-friendly" jurisdictions, how to navigate fiduciary duty issues when representing multiple constituents with an interest in the same matter, navigating the role of a litigation trustee, best practices for disclosure in the professional retention context, and considerations as practitioners and pro se litigants alike incorporate AI into their bankruptcy workstreams and filings. Rachel also recently served on a panel with Judge Lisa Beckerman (Bankr. S.D.N.Y.) about mentoring and sponsorship at the Discovering Restructuring Expertise and Mentorship Symposium (DREAMS) Program presented by the American College of Bankruptcy and ABI.

Rachel Albanese (New York Network) and **Emily MacKay** (New York Network) recently co-authored an article published in the June edition of the ABI Journal titled "Powered by Private Credit: Guidance for Lenders Navigating AI Data Center Capex Investments." The article provides an overview and a reference for advisors monitoring these investments for distress. Read it [here](#).

Leslie Berkoff (New York Network), Chair of Moritt Hock and Hamroff's Dispute Resolution practice, has been appointed as a Fellow-Elect for the College of Commercial Arbitrators. This distinguished honor is reserved for experienced commercial arbitrators who have demonstrated exceptional skill, integrity, and leadership in the field of commercial arbitration.

Melissa Dardani (New Jersey Network) was named *America's Best-In-State CPAs* by Forbes, confirming her standing among the finest active certified public accountants. Forbes's exclusive list is sourced from a universe of several thousand candidates, and selection to it signifies recognition by respected associations of CPAs of Dardani's expertise, innovation, thought leadership, experience, and service to the community and her profession.

Judith Elkin (New York Network, past Chair of IWIRC International) of Pachulski Stang Ziehl & Jones Judith Elkin moderated a panel at III 26th Annual International Insolvency Conference (June 14-16) in Montreal entitled "Best Laid Plans: When Good Restructurings Go Bad" discussing the lessons and pitfalls of failed liability management transactions and prepackaged plans in the US, Canada, Europe, and Latin America.

Nandhini Ganesan (Western Pennsylvania Network) received the M&A Advisor's 16th Annual Emerging Leaders Award in September. In April, Nandhini was promoted to Director at Ravinia Capital. She recently authored an article titled "Why Predictable Revenue Can Still Complicate a Sale," which was published through Ravinia Capital. The article discusses how recurring or predictable revenue can still create complexity in a sale process, particularly around customer concentration, contract quality, pricing dynamics, and buyer diligence. She also co-lead a challenging bankruptcy patent sale process involving Li-Fi technology.



Neil Gordon (Georgia Network) has formed a new law firm of Gordon & Pettie, LLC.

Marie-Ann Greenberg (New Jersey Network) has been named to the Board of Directors of the American College of Bankruptcy. In addition, she chairs the Grant Committee of the National Data Center and the Consumer Sub-Committee of the Lawyers Advisory Committee to the Board of Judges, District of New Jersey.

Akeya Herbert (British Virgin Islands Network) was recently admitted to the BVI Bar and is officially admitted to practice law as a Barrister in the BVI.

Faith James (Midlands North of England Network) was promoted to legal director at Pinsent Masons LLP.

Sara M. Keith (Houston Network) received the Association of Corporate Counsel Houston Chapter and The Texas Lawbook 2026 Harry Reasoner Pro Bono Advocacy Award.

Susan Poll Klaessy (Chicago Network) was named Chair of Foley & Lardner's Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice Group.

Alexis Leventhal (Western Pennsylvania Network) published the 2025 Third Circuit Review in the Norton Bankruptcy Law Adviser, 2026 Ed., Issue No. 3. Check it out for case summaries of the most impactful Third Circuit bankruptcy decisions of 2025.

Ailbhe O'Dwyer (Ireland Network) was promoted to Director at Interpath.

Kate Magee (Ireland Network) joined Alvarez & Marsal as Senior Director at their Dublin office.

Jaclynn McDonnell (New Jersey Network) joined the Stevens & Lee Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Department.

Jennifer Meyerowitz (Georgia Network) joined KCP Advisory as Senior Managing Director and General Counsel.

Áine Murphy (Ireland Network Co-Chair), McCann Fitzgerald LLP, co-authored with her colleagues the Irish Chapter of Restructuring & Insolvency 2026, reproduced with permission from Global Legal Group. Read it [here](#).

Juliana Rocha (Brazil Network) was recently promoted to REDD's head of Brazil coverage.

Milena Sandeen (Houston Network) has been promoted to Director, Turnaround and Restructuring at Alix Partners.

Maria Aprile Sawczuk (Delaware Network) joined Esbrook P.C. as Restructuring and Bankruptcy Partner in Delaware.

Sarah E. "Shay" Tomlinson (Midwest Network) recently joined Rosenblum Goldenhersh, P.C. in St. Louis, MO.

Shula Sbarro (Cayman Islands Network) recently joined the dispute resolution team at Harneys.

Laura Slater (Midlands North of England Network Member) of Interpath was shortlisted for Finance Professional of the Year at Insider Media Northwest Young Professionals Award.

Hon. Elizabeth S. Stong (New York Network) moderated a video program for the Practising Law Institute on civility featuring an all-women panel of senior in-house women attorneys. In June, Judge Stong traveled to Ulan Bataar, Mongolia, for a judicial training program on business dispute resolution and arbitration, a joint effort of the US government and the Mongolian Judicial Academy.

Nancy Valentine (Northeast Ohio Network) was ranked in the 2026 edition of Chambers USA, a publication of Chambers & Partners, in Bankruptcy/Restructuring.

Erica Weisgerber (New York Network) recently moderated a panel at the Women's Private Credit Summit hosted by With Intelligence at the Four Seasons in Chicago. Her panel, titled "Ready to Pounce? Are Opportunistic Investors Set to Truly Thrive?," focused on considerations for distressed investors within today's volatile economy.



Vicky White (Midlands North of England Network) was promoted to director at Savills.

Yuhua Yang (China Network) was recognized as “Commercial Lawyer of the Year - Highly Commended!” as part of the 2026 Women and Diversity in Law Awards.

Share Your Story!

Have you received or made a successful referral through your IWIRC network? Do you travel with other IWIRC members? Do you have passions and interests? Do you have a charity that you would like to highlight? Have you written a book?

IWIRC would love to hear about your referral success stories with fellow IWIRC members, as well as your hobbies, passions, and interests! Share your story to be featured in our member spotlights on IWIRC’s social media, including:

IWIRC Connects and IWIRC Cares: IWIRC is highlighting its global network and members who dedicate their time to building connections and supporting their communities.

IWIRC Referral Success Stories: IWIRC is sharing success stories from members who have referred work to other IWIRC members or have received referrals from fellow members.

Beyond Work and IWIRC: IWIRC is gathering insights from its members to explore their interests outside of work and the IWIRC community.

[Click here to contribute!](#)

Congratulations on these fantastic achievements!

Have you recently changed jobs? Been published? Written an article? Received a promotion? We'd love to share and celebrate your professional news!

[Click here](#) to submit news to be featured in future IWIRC member news communications.



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