



Monday, January 30, 2012

Boca Raton, FL (PRWEB) January 30, 2012

ION Welcomes Women for Economic and Leadership Development (WELD) as Fifteenth Member, Provides Ohio Nonprofit with National Resources

WELD Advisory Council Member and Institute on Women CEO Julie Graber Joins ION Board

The InterOrganization Network (ION) today announced that the Ohio-based nonprofit [Women for Economic and Leadership Development](#) (WELD) has joined ION as its fifteenth regional executive women's member organization. WELD members interested in serving on a public corporate board of directors, or who are concerned about boardroom gender diversity, now have access to ION's national resources, including the recently released status report of women directors and executive officers of public companies in 14 U.S. regions, "[Gender Imbalance in the Boardroom: Opportunities to Change Course](#)." WELD members also have access to a comprehensive [Investor Toolkit](#) and a new [board director database](#). Additionally, WELD Advisory Council Member and Institute on Women CEO Julie Graber will join the ION Board of Directors.

"The addition of WELD as ION's fifteenth member brings us one more region closer to transforming the landscape of corporate leadership. We look forward to providing WELD members with national resources, and encourage all Ohio women to join us as we continue to develop strategies that cultivate change," said ION President Charlotte Laurent-Ottomane. "Julie's dedication to improving the lives of women and girls through The Institute on Women speaks volumes about her character. She is a welcome addition to ION's board."

WELD provides women in Central Ohio with tools and skills to enhance their economic status. The organization's efforts help mobilize women to become more active participants in the leadership of regional businesses, civic organizations and government. With professional women members from a variety of corporate, entrepreneurial and small business backgrounds, WELD advocates for corporate strategy and public policy supporting women's economic equality. The organization's ongoing communications reach more than 1,000 business, community, and civic leaders every other week.

"Joining this network of like-minded organizations and gender diversity advocates is a powerful step for WELD. ION's national resources, coupled with the regional influence of WELD's strategic partners, Otterbein University and The Institute on Women, will surely build momentum for women's leadership," said Ms. Graber.

Ms. Graber is the CEO of [The Institute on Women](#), an independent research institute focused on improving the lives of Ohio women and girls by serving as a data-rich resource for individuals and organizations working for strategic change. Previously, she was president of Brains for Business, a consulting firm providing strategic planning and organization development to the nonprofit community. She remains active in her community and has served as a board member and officer of numerous organizations, including serving as WELD president. In 2007, Ms. Graber was recognized by the Columbus, Ohio YWCA as a "Woman of Achievement" for her lifelong commitment to research and advocacy of women. She is a frequent speaker on women's leadership and power. Graber received an M.A. in Women's Studies from Antioch University, McGregor and a B.S. in Retail Marketing from Ohio State University.

About Women for Economic and Leadership Development

Founded in 2003, WELD is a nonprofit organization that strives to increase the number of women serving in leadership positions in business and government in Central Ohio and raise visibility of their accomplishments. WELD builds programs, events, and a community to support women's leadership development and business growth, provides both personal and professional development advice, and advance the dialogue around women's issues, challenges and opportunities.

About ION

ION, the InterOrganization Network, is a national nonprofit organization representing more than 10,000 women dedicated to increasing the number of women on for-profit boards and in executive suites. ION creates a national voice for its 15 regional member organizations to influence, build awareness and expand opportunities and connections. ION's founding partner is KPMG LLP, the audit, tax and advisory firm and U.S. member firm of KPMG International Cooperative ("KPMG International"). ION recently published its [eighth annual status report](#) of women director and executive officers of public companies in 14 regions of the U.S., highlighting opportunities for both organizations and individuals to diversify the composition of national corporate leadership.

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