

# Entrepreneurial Education Symposium



## Rebecca Harris

President - RUH Consulting, LLC

Rebecca Harris is an innovator and entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience providing transformative leadership, delivering best practice-driven solutions, and building foundational relationships with multidisciplinary partners. She has expertise in starting and growing companies and has, over the years, worked as a consultant providing a range of professional services for both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. She graduated from Northwestern University as a communications studies major, received her MBA from the Fox School of Business at Temple University, and is a member of the Leadership Pittsburgh XXVII class. Harris is the President and Founder of RUH Consulting, LLC, a firm providing consulting services to develop innovative, strategic and targeted solutions for organizations.

Passionate about helping women start and grow successful businesses, Harris developed strategic programming to benefit women entrepreneurs and those working in regional businesses through the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship at Chatham University where she served as the Executive Director from April, 2009 - September, 2019.

Upon Harris's arrival at Chatham University in 2009, she applied her entrepreneurial skills to change the face of the Center. She parlayed her entrepreneurial skills into becoming an expert in 'intrapreneurship' (the act of behaving like an entrepreneur while working within an organization). Throughout her tenure at the Center she was sought-after to speak and hold workshops on the benefits and importance of embracing intrapreneurship.

It was under her leadership that the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship became an award-winning, highly visible and credentialed center. She designed and introduced a number of new programs, including the Women Business Leaders Breakfast Series, a comprehensive Membership program, and a suite of programs which include: customized mentoring programs for growth-stage women business owners, entrepreneurial training programs for both early-stage and growth-stage women entrepreneurs; a field project program combining students and women business owners to complete business research projects; IncubateHER, a competitive year-long business incubation program for early-stage women entrepreneurs with product or service-based businesses; and she designed and launched Roadmap to \$1MM+, a new innovative program designed for women entrepreneurs with product or service-based businesses in the greater Pittsburgh region that have surpassed the startup phase and are actively seeking to grow their businesses to the \$1 million mark and beyond.

Harris formed a critical part of a team that secured one of the coveted 114 nationwide SBA Women's Business Center Awards from the U.S. Small Business Administration in 2016. The Chatham Women's Business Center, hosted by the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship, was also selected by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as the 2018 Women's Business Center of the Year.

Harris serves on the Forward Cities Inclusive Innovation Council in Pittsburgh. She is on the board of directors of AVENU (formerly StartUptown); is a member of the Advisory Board on Entrepreneurship and Start-ups for the City of Pittsburgh; and served on the Pittsburgh All-In Cities-Equitable Development Steering Committee and on the 74% Kitchen Cabinet at the Bayer/Covestro Center for Nonprofit Management. In the spring of 2019 she was invited to be on the board of directors of 412 Food Rescue as well as on the board of the Pittsburgh Venture Capital Association. She is a frequent speaker at conferences, workshops, and seminars.

In the past several years she has been an active member of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh Loan Review Board; the Technology Commercialization Advisory Board for Innovation Work's Technology Commercialization Initiative; the Host Committee of the Greater Pittsburgh Athena Award Program, the Executive Women's Council board of directors, and the advisory council of STANDING FIRM, The Business Case to End Partner Violence. She has received awards from Women in Communications and the American Marketing Association, the National Association of Women Business Owners of Greater Pittsburgh (NAWBO), the Pittsburgh Business Times, and was selected as the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 2012 Western Pennsylvania and Region III Women in Business Champion of the year. In 2016, Harris received a Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania Award of Distinction and in 2018 was inducted as an honorary member in the Chatham University chapter of Sigma Beta Delta. In April 2019 The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America Western Pennsylvania/West Virginia Chapter honored Harris at their Women of Distinction Awards Luncheon for her work. In September, 2019 she received proclamations recognizing her work at The Center for Women's Entrepreneurship from both the Office of the Mayor and the Pittsburgh City Council.

Harris is committed to supporting initiatives, partnerships and policies which result in genuine and long-lasting economic inclusion.