NAWBO
CHARLOTTE
National Association of Women Business Owners

November 2026

My dear NAWBO Sisters, Corporate Sponsors, Community Partners, and Future Members,

Eight years ago, a woman named Jodi invited me to attend a NAWBO Miami meeting.

I was in the very early days of starting my business, and like so many women new to entrepreneurship, I quickly realized that I KNEW. NOTHING. So I "built the parachute" as I free-fell through the sky.

Friends, I had nooooo idea what Jodi's invitation would lead to. I certainly had no idea that eight years later, I'd be sitting here writing to you as the President of NAWBO Charlotte!

And of course, I still have a photograph from that first NAWBO meeting. I had a mohawk back then – and that thing opened a lot of doors for me too LOL!

Looking at this photo today, I see something I couldn't possibly have realized back then.
I had just walked through a door that would change the course of my life, and I had NO idea.

Through NAWBO, I met women who would encourage me, mentor me, challenge me, and become lifelong friends.

When my family moved to Charlotte in May 2020, I had no idea how those relationships would continue to grow, despite the miles.

Eventually, I would have the opportunity to keynote for NAWBO Charlotte, speak on the NAWBO National stage, serve on the Board of Directors, and ultimately become your Chapter President. **I'm still pinching myself!**

The relationships that began years ago in South Florida are STILL bearing fruit today!

For example, in September, Julia Aquino, Past President of NAWBO Fort Lauderdale (and now a member of our ever-growing Chapter), delivered the keynote at our ***first*** NAWBO Charlotte retreat.

Think about that for a moment.

One invitation. Eight years. Multiple cities. Countless relationships and opportunities.

And it all started because ONE WOMAN, Jodi, opened that door for me, and I walked through it.

Now, here's what has been on my heart as we enter this season of Thanksgiving.

How often do we stop to consider the people whose simple acts of kindness, encouragement, or generosity helped shape the lives we're living today?

We get so busy running our businesses, fighting fires, chasing deadlines, and solving problems that we can easily forget to look back.

NONE of us got where we are right now entirely on our own.

Someone encouraged us, believed in us, made the introduction, gave us an opportunity, or opened a door.

And sometimes, that person had absolutely NO IDEA how significant that simple act would become.

Jodi certainly couldn't have known what her invitation would mean to me almost 9 years later.

Ladies, that's what I find so remarkable. We don't always get to see the full impact of the seeds we plant in other people's lives.

Last month, I challenged you to become “DOOR OPENERS.” To use your relationships and influence to create opportunities for other women.

This month, I want us to look at those doors from another perspective: I want us to remember the women who opened them *for us.*

Because gratitude isn't simply about appreciating what we have. It's about recognizing the people who helped us get here.

And legacy? Legacy is what happens when we take what someone invested in us and use it to make a difference in someone else's life. That investment leads to one powerful ripple effect.

As I look at what we're building together, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude.

For our members who show up, participate, and invest in one another.

For our board of directors who give so very generously of their time and talents.

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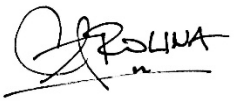
For our corporate partners who believe in our mission.

And for every woman who has ever said to another woman, "*Come with me. You need to be in this room, too.*"

Please don't underestimate the power of a simple invitation. It just might change someone's life. I know one changed mine.

Keep on shining,



Carolina Marrelli
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2026–2027