

The Leading Women Express Network of ABWA Woman of the Year

The Leading Women Express Network of the American Business Women's Association honored six outstanding ladies who were nominated by members of the group as a candidate for Express Network Woman of the Year. Each year at this time, they recognize members who have made notable contributions to the American Business Women's Association. From this group of outstanding women one is selected as Express Network Woman of the Year, a great honor and one that is highly respected throughout ABWA.

In order to be a nominee, these ladies must possess the following qualities:

- **an active member in good standing;**
- **one who demonstrates leadership qualities in ABWA (serving as officer, committee chair and/or committee member) ;**
- **sponsors ABWA members;**
- **demonstrates career advancement in her chosen field/career;**
- **seeks opportunities for self-advancement through formal education, continuing education and /or professional development;**
- **contributes to her community through volunteerism;**
- **and is perceived by the chapter as a positive role model or mentor for others.**
- **winners of this group can represent your chapter for the National ABWA Award of Woman of The Year**

Below are each years Nominees and Winners,
Congratulations to each for their hard work and achievement.

2008 Express Network Woman of the Year

Tina Gandy



Tina Gandy graduated from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree with an emphasis in Graphic Design and Marketing in 1994. Immediately afterwards, Tina started her career with C.C. Creations, the largest screen-printing and embroidery company in Texas, as an Senior Designer. She worked on corporate accounts such as Frito-Lay with Chester the Cheetah, Walt Disney, Garfield, Looney Tunes, ESPN, X-Games and many more.


In 1998, Tina began working for First American Bank as the Senior Marketing Coordinator. She organized and designed promotional campaigns for the Bryan/College Station market and over 85 branches throughout Texas. On August 1, 2002, Tina left First American Bank with the vision of starting her own business, Twinz Co. Marketing and Graphic Design with her twin sister, Lina Lawson. With over 75 clients, their business continues to grow.

Service is vitally important to Tina. "Service is caring, sharing, mentoring, leading, volunteering, supporting and giving." she says. Tina is involved with numerous organizations and continually donates creative services to many charitable events throughout the year.


Tina was recognized nationally as one of the ten 2005 Top Ten Business Women for the American Business Women's Association and currently serves as a role model, a mentor, and an Ambassador to all members of the association.

Tina is a nine year member, belonging to ABWA's Leading Women Express Network and Women in Motion Express Network in Navasota.


**The American Business Women's Association's (ABWA)
2008 LWEN
Network Woman of the Year Nominees**



Beverly Turek while holding 6 different certifications in the technology field, is the owner and operator of 3 growing businesses. Turek's Computer DR, the small but lovingly growing computer company, where you can get custom built computers, repairs, and parts for your every computer need. Twice Around Sales a family friendly on-line auction house, where you can go to sell your treasures so that others may enjoy them as much as you did. Computer Training Access, home of "Show the Man in the Box who's BOSS!!", an intimate setting where anyone can come and learn about computers from the beginning and up to the A+ certification classes. Beverly has been in business for 4 years and shows no signs of slowing down. In 2004, she married her "knight in shining armor" Randy, who rescued her from the "Tower of Doom." As a member of ETA, CompTia associations and a member of the community, she donates time with Hospice, March of Dimes and many other organizations. Of course, we can not forget someone who truly LOVES computers and sharing that knowledge with others.



Kris Ann Martin has become extremely active in LWEN & ABWA since she joined two years ago. She served two terms as the Vice President of Education & Resources. Kris Ann regularly attends the Houston Area Council serving as delegate for LWEN, has attended two ABWA National Conference, and plans on attending her second Spring Conference in April. Kris Ann is also involved in the Bryan College Station Charter Chapter of ABWA. A 1995 graduate of Texas A&M University, Kris Ann has had many varying careers, including retail management, insurance sales, property tax specialist, commercial & residential loan analyst, and most recently entrepreneur. Kris Ann started her own company, Eyes **Alert**, a teenage driver monitoring program, after assisting with the transition of First American Bank to CitiBank. Kris Ann is now actively seeking a full time career and exploring various opportunities. Kris Ann also helped with the formation of Student Bonfire, a corporation dedicated to keeping the tradition and knowledge of building bonfire safely and currently serves as Secretary on their board of directors.



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Debbie Waskow is the co-owner of Superior Auto Service. She is also the owner, CEO and President of Express Rent-A-Car. She has her AAM certification in automotive management, and she recently received her “HUB” Certification for Xpress Rent-A-Car. Debbie was the first woman President of the Automotive Service Association of Brazos County and one of a handful of women in the nation who hold an office of President in ASA.

Debbie has also been in the legal for 23 years. She is a paralegal and office manager for a local law firm and has been with the same firm for 12 years.



Cindy was born in Coffeyville, Kansas, on December 21, 1968. She moved to San Antonio, Texas, with her family at the age of 9 where she lived until she moved to College Station. Cindy graduated from San Antonio College in 1992 wherein she earned three Associate degrees in Record Management, Legal Secretarial Technology and Word Processing. After graduating from college, Cindy moved to College Station in 1993. Cindy has 14 years of experience in the legal field and is presently working for West, Webb, Allbritton & Gentry, P.C. As of this January, Cindy was promoted to the Assistant Office Manager. While living in the Brazos Valley for the past 14 years, Cindy has volunteered her time with many organizations. She was the Secretary for the Brazos Valley Chorale in 1994, and a Board member of Brazos Valley Younglife in 1995. Cindy has been a member of the Junior League of Bryan-College Station since 1995, and has served on numerous committees over the years. In 2004 Cindy served on the Cattle Baron’s Ball Committee for the American Cancer Society, and from 2004-2007 she was the Treasurer of the College Station Soccer Club. From 2000-2006 Cindy also served as the Team Mom of her son’s soccer team. Cindy is also a Charter member of the Leading Women Express Network and was the Vice President of Programs from 2003-2004, the Vice President of Marketing and Arrangements from 2004-2005, President Elect from 2006-2007, and the current 2007-2008 President. Cindy is happily married to John May, and she is the proud mother of Collin (11 years old), Brooke (3 years old), and Addison (11 months old). Cindy and her family are members of Christ United Methodist Church.



Lina Lawson, Co-Owner and Senior Designer of Twinz Co. Marketing & Graphic Design. Lina Lawson is the 2007 – 2008 National President for the American Business Women’s Association. She was named the 2007 ABWA Women of the Year in Anaheim, California at the 2006 National Leadership Conference.

Lina was asked, “How do you communicate the value of ABWA?” Her answer signifies who she is. She says,” Communicating the value of ABWA is an important role of my everyday life. It’s truly an inspiring and exhilarating way to live each day by assisting in the success of others, mentoring, teaching, listening, networking and exemplifying the association’s mission. I communicate the value of ABWA by helping women shape their dreams, achieve their goals and assist in their personal and professional growth. I share the powerful information, the incredible excitement, and the empowering camaraderie of ABWA.”

**AMERICAN BUSINESS
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION'S
2007 NATIONAL
WOMAN OF THE YEAR
LINA LAWSON**



LWEN sends their hearty congratulations to Lina Lawson on her double victory at the 2006 ABWA National Women's Leadership Conference held in Anaheim California, September 28 – 30, 2006. Supported by the L2 Campaign Team consisting of Tina Gandy and Terri Tolson (campaign managers), Teri Adamson, Kaye Matejka, Rilene McCord, Kris Ann Orts, Beverly Turek, and the Tomball Chapter, Lina Lawson was successful in her bid for National Vice President.

All geared up in the PINK and BLACK campaign colors, Lina and the Campaign Team quickly spread the news of a NEW ENERGY about to change the face of the American Business Women's Association. From the amazing Candidate's Booth in the Exhibit Hall displaying a video with Lina's vision for ABWA, along with smartly designed business cards, brochures and L2 t-shirts that were the envy of everyone, through the General Session and Annual Meeting to the "Meet the Candidates" reception and final voting, a pink and black haze of L2 supporters continued to spread the word and cheer our next National Vice President on to victory.

Already extremely honored to be supporting a candidate like Lina Lawson, the L2 Campaign Team could not hide how proud they were of her and their heartfelt support when she stated at the conclusion of her campaign speech, *"I appreciate the opportunity to serve on the National Board this year and have created memories and friendships that will last a lifetime. There is no WRONG choice today. Each of these women is very capable of moving our organization forward. Whether we gain a title or not, we will all finish this race together and that is what defines the American Business Women's Association."* What inspiring words these were to everyone present.

With four extraordinary candidates in the running for National Vice President, a runoff election was eminent. When the votes were counted, the runoff was officially announced between Lina Lawson and a prominent attorney from another district. The outcome of the runoff election culminated with Lina Lawson being elected National Vice President.

The "double whammy" came Saturday evening at the Dinner Banquet and Show when all 2006 Top Tens were called to the stage and Lina Lawson was announced as the "2007 Woman of the Year." The shock on Lina's face was overwhelming and, as her eyes filled with tears, so did the eyes of the L2 Campaign Team and many other L2 supporters.

Cheers were heard throughout the banquet room and a lot of celebrating followed. Lina Lawson has made a lasting impact on the lives of many women in the association and that was never more obvious than it was at this momentous time in her life – the smiling faces and extended arms meant more to Lina than the recognition itself.

Lina has made LWEN extremely proud. She has had a rewarding and diverse career in marketing, graphics design, and business. She has dedicated the past seven years of her life to the mission of ABWA, its growth and its members. She is devoted to improving women's lives, one woman at a time – in ABWA and in other professional groups.

LWEN appreciates the opportunity to share this year with Lina as she grows personally and professionally and as she extends her hand even further to help others grow through Leadership and Learning in this great organization. Success is not a destination; it's a journey - and what a journey Lina will have this year! She can find comfort and satisfaction in the fact that she has a tremendous support group and we're all behind her 100%.

Go Lina!!

AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION'S
2007
NETWORK WOMAN OF THE YEAR
Denise Pineda



Denise Pineda was born in Fort Worth but grew up in Houston where she attended Catholic schools for 13 years. Her parents relocated to Caldwell in 1975 at which time she met David, married him a year later, and lived in Bryan. In 1990, they relocated to Chriesman where they live on a cattle ranch. With three grown daughters who are 28, 26, and 24 and five grandchildren, she stays active. Denise enjoys traveling with her husband, reading, playing sudoku, and quilting as time permits.

Denise is a Senior Research Services Administrator for the Texas Transportation Institute where she has worked for the last 25 years and has received several awards including a life-time achievement award. Denise is also a part time Independent Fashion Coordinator for Weekenders Fashions. Her belief in life-long learning and giving back to her community is apparent. She has completed courses at Blinn and the University of

Phoenix as well as through the National Council of University Research Administrators and the ABWA. While residing in the Brazos Valley for the last three decades, she has volunteered extensively for the Bluebonnet and Lonestar Girl Scout Councils, the Catholic Youth Ministry, Little Diggers Volleyball, United Way, and for St. Mary's Catholic Church. As an ABWA member for the past 5-1/2 years, she has held the offices of LINC Chapter Vice President, LWEN VP of Marketing and Arrangements, and LWEN VP of Finance. In 2004, she received the LINC Chapter Protégé Award and in 2007 was named the LWEN Woman of the Year.

The American Business Women's Association's

2006 LWEN

Network Woman of the Year Nominees



Mechelle Milliorn - Mechelle is a graduate of Texas A&M University. She began her career at the College Station Hilton and in 2004 she became General Manager of the Homewood Suites by Hilton. Mechelle won the 2005 General Manager of the Year Award of Merit, and the 2005 Top New Hotel Performance Award of Merit. Mechelle has been a member of LWEN since 2005, and is Vice President of Marketing and Membership for 2006-2007

Brandi Ring Cooper - Brandi is a Texas A&M University graduate. Brandi has been a realtor for Coldwell Banker Realtors for four years. She has won numerous awards, including the International Diamond Society Award in 2004-2006. Brandi is involved in the community, giving her time to the American Cancer Society, Habitat for Humanity and the Fun/Run Walk. Brandi has been a member of ABWA since August, 2003. She has worked on numerous committees and has served on the LWEN board for almost 3 years. Brandi is the 2006-2007 President of LWEN.

Wendy Weldon - Wendy graduated from Texas A&M University and is currently the Marketing Director for MicroAge. She is actively involved with the Junior League, Leadership Brazos, Chamber of Commerce, and American Heart Association. Wendy is a charter member of LWEN and has served in many leadership capacities. She chaired two membership drives and has served as VP of Marketing and Membership and President. She is the current VP of Communications and will be our VP of Education and Resources next year. Wendy was also selected as the Network Woman of The Year in 2006!

Kris Ann Orts - Kris Ann is a Texas A&M University graduate. She began her career in retail management, banking, and most recently an entrepreneur, owning her own company, Eyes Alert. Kris Ann helped form Student Bonfire, dedicated to keeping the tradition and knowledge of building bonfire safely. Kris Ann has been a member of LWEN and ABWA for 2 years and is Vice President of Education/Resources for 2006-2007. She attended her first ABWA National Conference last year, and will be attending the ABWA Spring Conference in New Orleans this year.

Denise Pineda - Denise has been employed with the Texas A&M University System for over 28 years. As an ABWA member for the past 5-1/2 years, she held the offices of LINC Chapter Vice President, LWEN Vice President of Marketing and Arrangements, and LWEN Vice President of Finance. In 2004, she received the LINC Chapter Protégé' Award.

Lisa Wantuck - In August of 2006, Lisa joined the C.C. Creations' team as Order Operations Manager. Prior to C.C. Creations, Lisa has been a successful entrepreneur, owning University Flowers, The Floral Center, and Action Plumbing. She is a member of the Bridal Association of Brazos Valley and has been the VP of Finance for 6 years. Her philanthropy work includes the Red Cross, the Heart Association, and the American Cancer Society. Lisa has been a member of ABWA for 3 years and served as VP of Finance for 2 years.

Kaye Matejka - Kaye is an award winning and honored employee of Texas A&M University. She has been an ABWA member since 1991 and is a charter member of LWEN. Kaye's National honors include 2004 Top Ten Business woman, Diamond Star Level of Inner Circle, and National Newsletter Winner. District honors include District II Spring Conference Promotions Chair and 3-time newsletter award winner. Locally, Kaye has been honored as an ABWA Woman of the Year, and has held many offices, including President.

Beverly Turek - Beverly decided at the age of 38, that a career in the technology field is what she wanted. She completed a 2 + year computer course and moved to Bryan Texas with the hopes of starting her own business. In 2002, Turek's Computer DR was born. Beverly wanted to have a business where she could offer her knowledge in customer service and skills, and that special touch that most businesses have lost today. She wanted to especially help women who needed advice and service without pressure to purchase something. Twice Around Sales was born in 2003. Beverly started selling for customers on a national auction site while continuing her computer business as well. In December 2005, Beverly decided to build her own on-line auction house, to compete against another national on-line auction house, in direct competition. Computer Training Access was the next business started by Beverly. At the end of the training program, her students are certified, and also have training and knowledge in running a business. She had now branched out into teaching the General user how to use a computer and increase their knowledge within the technology field. Finally, but not lastly, Beverly is working on a new business called Superhealthmart.com. An online store devoted to health care products. To help you stay healthy and refreshed. Beverly's businesses are truly family owned companies and Beverly is the first to admit she couldn't run her businesses without them. Through her friends and family support she is able to achieve what seems to be the impossible.