



Greetings!

This quarter, we wanted to provide you with the highlights from the sixth annual Pennsylvania Governor's Conference for Women, which was held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. Despite dreary weather outside, the atmosphere inside the conference was filled with amazing energy from women of all ages and walks of life.

In keeping with the theme of this year's conference (Rethink, Resolve, Renew), the opening keynote speakers (Career expert Tory Johnson, seen on Good Morning America; leadership consultant Marcus Buckingham; and Judge Glenda Hatchett, whose show is in its eighth season) challenged the audience to reflect on and answer the following:

- What do you want to accomplish?
- Are you hiding your sun dials in the shade? (B. Franklin)
- What is your purpose and passion?

Additionally, they encouraged the audience of over 4,000 women to rethink their career goals, resolve to make this year (and next) the best years ever, and renew their mind, body, and spirit. Leslie Stiles, executive director of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women, which co-hosts the event, urged women to take the information from the day and embrace fresh ideas and apply them to their own lives.

The conference offered a variety of break-out sessions for attendees, a career fair, and an evening networking session.

The highlight of the day for many was being able to see financial expert Suze Orman speak live. Holding nothing back, Orman's message was what some might call a stern talking-to.

"Ladies, we are too nice and considerate. Our nature is to take care of everyone else including pets, plants, husband, children, and friends instead of ourselves. We have to put ourselves first. We have become a woman's nation. Women make up 50% of the workforce and the only thing that keeps us down is our vision of ourselves".

Orman challenged the audience to "give to yourselves as much as you give to others. To say yes to you and not worry about what others think."

Of course, America's #1 personal financial expert couldn't have left the stage without offering some financial advice. While Orman is the first to admit that she used to preach that the number one priority was to get out of credit card debt before saving for retirement, she believes the changed economy calls for new rules. Suze recommended the following strategy:

1. Save an 8 month emergency fund
2. Pay off credit card debt
3. Save for retirement

Plus, she recommended buying real estate to take advantage of the bargain prices and first-time homeowners tax credit, but only if you have 20% to put down!

The conference provided women with tools, positive role models, and confidence to face the downturned economy with new vigor. Next year's conference is slated to be held in Pittsburgh.

As a supplement to this year's conference, The Chester County Women's Commission is offering a workshop on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 10am: Women Mean Business! For event details and registration information, visit <http://www.chestercountywomenscommission.org/>

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