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Women In Steel, Women Of Steel: Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow



Karin J. Lund
G-Power Global Enterprises

Karin J. Lund, Founder of G-Power Global Enterprises, works with corporations, universities, and non-profit groups that want to embrace a compassionate, culture-empowered workplace environment. She is the Amazon.com Best Selling author of *Women In Steel*, *Women Of Steel: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* and *Compassion Is the Competitive Edge: Leading with Compassion while Delivering Results*. Prior to founding G-Power, Lund was one of the first “women in steel,” managing operational and regional sales for major steel companies in the US and Canada.

Serena Williams just announced her retirement from the international tennis world. A commentator who followed her 20-year career stated that both she and her sister, Venus, are credited with encouraging new players to tennis, including many young Black girls and boys. Much like what Tiger Woods did for golf.

Women In Steel, Women Of Steel: Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow was written for much the same reason. Through the stories featured in the book, it was my goal to create an awareness about the various career opportunities that are available in the steel industry and provide women with the opportunity to visualize themselves becoming successful in this industry. The book was designed to be a business card for teachers, professors, students, and parents. It was also written for manufacturers and other non-traditional industries such as construction and the trades that have fewer women in management, production, technical/quality control, or sales, and help them recognize that women are an untapped resource.

Three years ago, I attended a Women In Steel Roundtable discussion in Pittsburgh at the annual convention for the Association for Iron and Steel Technology (AIST) – the largest steel technology group in the world, located in Warrendale, Pennsylvania. I was seated between two women, Mary Ann Merriman, CEO of WK Merriman Inc., and Dr. Sarah Hornby. Between the three of us, we had 113 years in the steel industry. As the other women at the meeting introduced themselves and discussed their positions, I realized that many of them would not have been considered for their jobs when I first started in the industry. Women in the industry had evolved.

As a result of this meeting, the idea of capturing these women’s stories and experiences in the industry over a 50-year time span – creating a living history – was born.

I approached AIST and, through their Women In Steel steering committee, which was assessing barriers to entry for women in the industry, the committee agreed to support the project. Within 24 hours after AIST sent out a blanket inquiry to female members to be interviewed, I received 26 replies and went on to interview over 60 women from South Africa, Slovakia, Italy, England, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, and the US. The book was launched in May at the AISTech Convention. Even now, after AIST featured an article about the book in their August 2022 magazine, a young engineer in Finland contacted me and is excited about the book’s message. She agreed to be interviewed for Volume II. You can see the impact and appeal that this project has created globally.

“The steel industry is not the industry our fathers and grandfathers built.”

As I listened to these leaders and emerging leaders I interviewed, I learned about journeys of courage, challenges, non-linear career paths, the importance of mentoring, saying “YES” to new opportunities, choices, successes, the acceptance of failure and what it teaches us, career advice, personal branding, life lessons, inclusion, diversity, and retention.

The interviews are inspirational, thought-provoking and bear witness to an industry where the terms family, brothers, and sisters are used synonymously with trust, respect, and success.

The women I interviewed aren't waiting for opportunities and challenges. They are pressing their managers with ideas and unique ways of problem-solving. While one woman I interviewed had a goal to decrease costs at the mill by \$5-10 million, another young engineer's goal was to decrease costs by \$1 million. These are women who want to make an impact.

Diversity and inclusion mean different things to different people. I have heard presidents who encourage diversity and inclusion because it means acknowledging new ideas; unique ways of thinking, processing, and communicating; accepting cultural differences, which leads to understanding; and, finally, respecting age differences.

We need to ask management if we are making sure employees are included in every vertical and process within the company. One company I spoke with told me their employees approached management and said they "wanted to bring their whole selves to work." Given the situation around COVID and the life events surrounding this invasion means that even this concept is interpreted differently by individuals and companies, but isn't this the bridge we want to cross together?


How do we make our work environment so inclusive that we continue to foster the earlier description referencing family, brothers, and sisters?

The steel industry is not the industry our fathers and grandfathers built. It has been replaced with an

industry that speaks openly about sustainability, energy, recycling, learning centers, high-tech, cybersecurity, inclusion, and diversity.

Women In Steel, around the world, in Southwestern Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio, have become an increasingly stronger and greater part of this dialogue and the success of this industry. As one of the interviewees in the book said, "Many women want to be

part of something important, something that is bigger than we are as individuals. We want to continue to build and redefine this industry and contribute to its prosperity and relevance."

If you are interested in workshops and discussions that openly explore some of the topics mentioned above, contact us via email at KJLund@G-PowerGlobal.com or visit our website at www.G-PowerGlobal.com. 

WOMEN IN STEEL

WOMEN OF STEEL

Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Volume I

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