

MONEY MATTERS



Helping Women Succeed In The Financial Services

(NAPSA)—Women in the financial services industry might not have to work quite so hard at breaking the glass ceiling if they knew how and where to network and make the most of their net worth, found a recent study.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 7.6 million Americans work in the finance, insurance and real estate industry. Of those 7.6 million, 4.8 million—or 63 percent—are women. Yet, while women make up the majority in the financial services industry, only a small percentage are executives. Because women are underrepresented in upper management, few proceed to top spots.

A recent study conducted by the Financial Women International (FWI) Foundation found that in the 100 largest, publicly held, U.S. commercial banks only 16 percent of the executive management is female, with eight of the banks surveyed having female CFOs and two banks having a female CEO.

“It appears that women have a way to go in the commercial banking arena,” says Michele Ryan, chair of the FWI Foundation.

While, the study found that there are many obstacles to the top—including preconceptions about women and a lack of management experience—one of the



Networking with other women in the financial services industry may help more women work their way to the top.

easiest to remedy may be the lack of an informal network of communication among women.

Fortunately, women can help to remedy this situation and benefit from the expertise of thousands of women in the financial services industry by joining a professional organization.

For example, Financial Women International, founded in 1921 by six women bankers, offers women resources to acquire the skills needed for career advancement, access to relevant programs and the opportunity to connect with thousands of women in the financial services industry.

FWI's members include professionals from banks, finance companies, credit unions, securities firms, thrifts, insurance companies, consultants and service providers in the U.S., Canada and Russia.

For more information, visit www.fwi.org.