

JULY-AUGUST 2021

New Gettysburg Program Focuses on Women Leaders



The Gettysburg Leadership Experience has launched a new program focused on the professional challenges faced by women leaders. First experienced by Compeer Financial, which sent 23 of its women leaders and individual contributors to the inaugural session, “Women of Distinction” teaches leadership lessons from the courageous and resilient women who rose to the challenge of the Battle of Gettysburg and applies them to the experiences and hurdles women leaders face today.

“Women of Distinction offers leadership lessons specific to the special challenges women leaders face, things like trusting our own voices, self-advocacy and alliance building,” says Shannon Trine, Senior Learning and Development Specialist with Compeer. “It offers a safe environment for open discussion and relationship building, and our group came back rejuvenated and empowered, and feeling connected with fellow women leaders.”

As with other Leadership Experiences in Gettysburg, the 3-day Women of Distinction program combines classroom instruction, illustrative visits to the battlefield, small group discussions and ample time for reflection and networking. Expert facilitators and guides offer lessons on anticipatory leadership, transactional and transformational leadership, predictable surprises and the dual role of leader and follower.

“In addition to these key leadership lessons, another key goal is helping women build professional networks, leveraging relationships they already have in powerful and helpful ways, and developing and expanding their networks to support the future they’re seeking,” says Lisa Cavanaugh, FCCS Vice President of Leadership Development Experiences and instructor of transactional and transformational leadership and networking for Women of Distinction.

The program also included a talk with Janet Riggs, past president of Gettysburg College, who shared her experience working with a primarily male board and the resulting tension points, as well as the challenge of balancing her personal and professional lives. Local guide Diana Loski led a tour of the town of Gettysburg while sharing stories of some of the many women who stepped into leadership roles during and after the battle, such as Jennie Wade, the only civilian killed in the battle, who was stricken while baking bread in her sister’s kitchen, having given away her previous batch to starving soldiers; and Elizabeth Thorn, whose husband ran the cemetery, who buried 100 dead and decomposing soldiers by herself, while six months pregnant, over the course of three weeks; and Carrie Sheads, a schoolteacher who exhausted herself caring for the wounded and dying and was bedridden when visited by Abraham Lincoln with his thanks.

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COMPEER FINANCIAL

"This program highlights the accomplishments of individual women who stepped up to solve problems in a time when they didn't even have the right to vote, which inspires me to continue to grow my own leadership and networks so I can pave the way for others," says Rachel Dux, Vice President of Core Markets for Compeer. "I walked away from the program filled with gratitude, reaffirmation and excitement for what this group of woman can achieve in the future."

Registration is now open for the Women of Distinction open enrollment session from November 1-4, 2021. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged. [Register now](#) for Women of Distinction.

"Women of Distinction was an amazing opportunity to connect with history and with female colleagues while learning about courageous women involved in this key Civil War battle," says Dallas Schultze, Compeer's Vice President of Lending Operations. "Our group included women of different backgrounds with direct or indirect leadership experience, and the facilitators encouraged each of us to share our experiences, insight, laughter and companionship. It was a great experience."



Watch this video to see how Women of Distinction transformed female leaders

For more information about Women of Distinction or other Gettysburg Leadership Experiences, contact [John Regentin](#) at 717.752.0495. For questions about other leadership development programs offered through FCCS' Accelerate Center, contact [Lisa Cavanaugh](#) at 303.721.3270.