

# Women in *Finishing*

POWERED BY  CHEMICAL COATERS  
Association of Professional Finishers

# 2026 FORUM

**May 4 - 6 | Hilton Garden Inn Toledo/Perrysburg | Toledo, OH**



**PROGRAM & REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

## ABOUT THE WOMEN IN FINISHING FORUM

The Women in Finishing (WiF) FORUM is a unique event designed to support and inspire women across the finishing industry. The program blends professional development with industry-focused learning through a mix of engaging sessions, a plant tour, team building activity, thought-provoking discussions, and meaningful networking opportunities that foster lasting connections.

Participants will walk away with fresh strategies to enhance effectiveness, navigate challenges with confidence, and strengthen their leadership skills while also gaining insight into innovations and trends shaping industrial finishing. Open to women at every stage of their career, from the finishing line to executive management, the WiF FORUM is a powerful opportunity to learn, connect, and grow.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### MONDAY, MAY 4

- 3:30 PM Complimentary Business Portraits
- 5:00 PM Welcome Reception & Networking Activity
- 7:00 PM Dinner on your own

### TUESDAY, MAY 5

- 8:00 AM Plant Tour
- 10:45 AM **Welcome**  
**Sheila LaMothe**  
VP Strategic Initiatives  
CCAI
- 11:00 AM **Building Internal Teams to Break Down Silos**  
**Julie Collins**  
Owner/Coach  
KnotMagic
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM **Practical AI: Strategies to Save Time and Work More Efficiently**  
**Donna Peterson**  
President  
World Innovators, Inc.
- 2:15 PM **Charged for Change: Electrifying the Future of Finishing**  
**Aaron Hughes**  
Executive Vice President Sales & Marketing  
GAT Finishing Systems
- 3:00 PM Team Building Activity
- 6:15 PM Networking Dinner

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

- 8:00 AM **Two Decades, Countless Lessons**  
**Courtney Jungjohann-Deemer**  
GM Packaging Coatings  
PPG
- 9:15 AM **My Journey to Leadership Panel**  
**Laura Abad**  
Quality Manager  
Orion Industries, Ltd.  
**Melissa Escobar**  
Technical Business Development Manager  
SERFILCO  
**Robin Deal**  
Product Manager  
Hubbard-Hall, Inc.  
**Rhonda Joslin**  
Marketing Director for the Americas  
Sames
- 10:45 AM **Topic-Based Round Table Discussions**
  - » AI Strategies
  - » Company Culture
  - » Work/Life Balance
  - » Executive Management
  - » Presentation Skills & Effective Communication
  - » CCAI Programs & Initiatives
  - » ...and more
- 12:00 PM Closing Lunch
- 1:00 PM **WiF FORUM Concludes**

\*Schedule subject to change.



# FEATURED PRESENTATIONS

## Building Internal Teams to Break Down Silos

**Julie Collins**

*Owner/Coach  
KnotMagic*



Breaking down functional silos to form effective internal teams is essential for cultural success. This session will provide practical strategies for building an internal customer-centric organization. Attendees will learn how to develop metrics that are used to empower teams to work collaboratively across the walls of the organization and will apply the process to create ideas for their own department and organization. We will explore organizational models that create cross functional teams to increase effectiveness at every touchpoint. During the session, we will engage into a deep dive and role play activity with crucial conversations, a communication model that will help foster more productive communication to improve relations and team performance. By the end of the session, attendees will have actionable insights that prioritize team development across departments.

## Charged for Change: Electrifying the Future of Finishing

**Aaron Hughes**

*Executive Vice President, Sales & Marketing  
GAT Finishing Systems*



Sustainability continues to drive innovation across the finishing industry—and the move to all-electric systems is a powerful example. In this session, Aaron will share insights from his company’s role in developing Siemens’ first all-electric paint line.

He will discuss what motivated the transition, the steps it took to design and install the system, and the impressive results it delivered—including a dramatic reduction in natural gas use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. You will also hear how the team optimized other aspects of the process, such as powder chemistry and heat reuse.

## Practical AI: Strategies to Save Time and Work More Efficiently

**Donna Peterson**

*President  
World Innovators Inc.*



You do not need to be a tech expert to start using AI in meaningful ways. In this session, Donna will share practical strategies to help you save time, work more efficiently, and strengthen how you show up professionally. Through real-world examples, you’ll see how AI can support everything from streamlining research and polishing communications to managing your workload with more ease. Whether you’re on the plant floor, managing projects, or leading a company, you’ll walk away with simple, actionable tools you can put into practice immediately. This session is about helping you do your best work with less stress and more impact.

**AI Tools Highlighted:** ChatGPT, Descript, Canva, Seamless.ai

## Two Decades, Countless Lessons

**Courtney Jungjohann-Deemer**

*General Manager Americas,  
Packaging Coatings  
PPG*



What can two decades in the finishing industry teach you? More than you might imagine. In this candid and energizing session, Courtney draws from her 20-year career to share practical strategies to help women succeed professionally and personally.

She’ll explore why failure is a critical steppingstone to growth, how to advocate for yourself and gain visibility, and will share tactics to accelerate your career path. Attendees will also hear real-world insights on navigating career transitions, leading with resilience in the face of adversity, and balancing a demanding career with family life.

Whether you’re launching your career, aiming for the next level, or preparing to pass the torch to the next generation, you’ll leave with fresh perspectives, actionable tools, and the reminder that every challenge is an opportunity in disguise.



# FEATURED PRESENTATIONS

## My Journey to Leadership Panel



**Laura Abad**  
Quality Manager  
Orion Industries, Ltd.



**Melissa Escobar**  
Technical Business  
Development Manager  
SERFILCO



**Robin Deal**  
Product Manager  
Hubbard-Hall, Inc.



**Rhonda Joslin**  
Marketing Director for  
the Americas  
Sames

A signature session of the Women in Finishing FORUM, this engaging panel brings together women who embody leadership in many forms across the finishing industry. Representing a wide range of roles, from technical experts to team leaders to organizational influencers, our panelists share their unique journeys, challenges they've navigated, and the lessons that shaped their career. With time for open discussion and Q&A, this session is designed to help every attendee see a piece of their own journey reflected in the panel and leave with practical insights to apply to their career.

## Topic-Based Round Table Discussions

Dive into dynamic discussions led by subject matter experts on topics selected directly from past WiF FORUM evaluations. Attendees may join up to three sessions and will choose their preferred topics during registration.



## HEAR FROM PAST FORUM ATTENDEES:

"A great experience. I met a lot of great women and enjoyed all the speakers. The topics were vast and covered many aspects of what makes up a woman's career - personal and professional growth."

"Excellent presentations and networking events. I always enjoy coming to the WiF FORUM."

"This is hands-down one of my favorite conferences ever! I truly enjoy the connections I've made that have turned into lifelong friends. When I'm here, I'm not a 'blue collar unicorn' anymore."

# ACTIVITIES

## Networking Events

### Welcome Reception and Networking Activity

The WiF FORUM kicks off with a welcome reception paired with an interactive networking activity. This engaging icebreaker offers a fun and creative way to get to know your fellow participants. Continue the conversations and connections during the reception.



### Networking Dinner

After the team-building activity, join us Tuesday evening for a networking dinner. This relaxed setting is the perfect chance to unwind, share insights from the day's sessions, and continue building connections with fellow attendees.



## Complimentary Business Portraits

There are many situations where a selfie just won't do. A professional photo is a must-have regardless of your job function. If you don't have one, or if it's time for an update, have a complimentary business photo taken at the WiF FORUM on Monday afternoon.

## Plant Tour

Tuesday morning, we will tour PPG Coatings Services. The facility features electrocoat, powder, pretreatment, and liquid coating lines as well as state-of-the-art systems for aluminum adhesive bonding and robotic applications. The site is also home to PPG's Equipment Solutions Division which delivers coating equipment and service solutions from custom engineered lines to fully managed operations.



## Team Building Activity

Experience team building with purpose. Instead of competition, this year's activity focuses on collaboration and compassion as participants come together in a spirit of generosity, teamwork, and purpose. More than an activity, it's an opportunity to grow relationships while giving back—an experience that promises to stay with you long after the conference ends.



Register now at  
[womeninfinishing.org/FORUM](https://womeninfinishing.org/FORUM)



# REGISTRATION INFORMATION

## Registration Fees

**CCAI-WiF Member:** \$525

**Non-Member:** \$675

**Group Discount:** Register two or more people from the same company at the same time to receive the group discount. The first registrant pays the full registration fee, and each additional attendee receives a 10% discount.

### Fee Includes:

- Welcome reception & networking activity
- Business Portrait (optional)
- Transportation to/from tour facility
- Admission to all event presentations
- Refreshment breaks
- Lunch & dinner on Tuesday
- Team building activity
- WiF FORUM t-shirt
- Closing lunch on Wednesday

## Cancellations & Substitutions

Cancellations received 30 days prior to the start of the event will receive a refund of registration fees less a \$50 processing fee. Registrations cancelled within 30 days are non-refundable.

Name substitutions are always accepted at no cost.

## Not a Member?

Join today and save money on your registration fees. An individual CCAI membership is just \$125 and includes your Women in Finishing membership!

[CLICK HERE](#) to join!

## Hotel & Travel

### Hilton Garden Inn Perrysburg/Toledo

6165 Levis Commons Blvd.  
Perrysburg, OH 43551

**Room rate:** \$149/Double Queens or Standard King

**Rate includes:** Complimentary Wi-Fi, fitness center & indoor pool

**Parking:** Complimentary

[CLICK HERE](#) to make your hotel reservation! You will be directed to the CCAI – Women in Finishing FORUM 2026 reservation page. Click on “Book a Room” and the WiF FORUM group rate will be displayed.

Hotel cut-off date is **April 3, 2026**. Our group rate will only be available until this date or until our block sells out.

**Airport Options:** Eugene F. Kranz Toledo Express or Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County

## Complete Event Details

Full event details can also be found on the Women in Finishing website. [CLICK HERE](#) to review the details online.

## How to Register

[CLICK HERE](#) to register now!

## Elizabeth Teska Women in Finishing FORUM Scholarship

Established to honor the memory of one of WiF's first official members, the Elizabeth Teska Women in Finishing FORUM Scholarship aims to support women in the industrial finishing and coatings industry by expanding their opportunity to participate in WiF programs. Specifically, the scholarship will enable more women to participate in the annual WiF FORUM by covering registration fees and accommodations costs for successful applicants. Recipients are selected by the CCAI Finishing Education Foundation Board of Directors.

### Eligibility:

- Must be a woman currently involved in the industrial finishing and coatings industry. Priority consideration given to first time attendees and CCAI/WiF members.
- Submissions from individual applicants and nominations accepted.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information and to apply or to nominate someone.

**Application deadline is March 16.**

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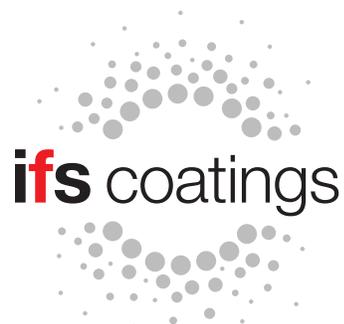
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