

'Wonder of Women' gala to have new featured speaker; here's how to attend

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@brianjohnsonBP

BRISTOL –The Main Street Community Foundation will have a new speaker at its “Wonder of Women” gala Sept. 8 at the Aqua Turf Club – Patti Russo, executive director of The Campaign School at Yale.

The Wonder of Women Gala will be held starting at 5:30 p.m. at the banquet facility at 556 Mulberry St. It will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Main Street Community Foundation’s Women & Girls Fund. The fund supports programs, projects and initiatives that improve the conditions and opportunities for women and girls in the communities of Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott.

Susan Sadecki, president and CEO of the Main Street Community Foundation, said the previous speaker for the event, author Gina Barreca, had to cancel due to unforeseen circumstances with her husband falling ill. She selected Russo, who is featured in her books, to fill in.



Patti Russo, executive director of The Campaign School at Yale. -Photo submitted by the Main Street Community Foundation

For more than 25 years, Russo has held numerous leadership positions in public, private and not-for-profit organizations centered on women’s leadership. She has also held leadership positions on federal, state and local political campaigns. Currently, she serves as executive director of The Campaign School at Yale, a nonpartisan, issue-neutral political campaign training program for women interested in running for public office, as well as for women interested in campaign management.

“We’re honored to have her speak at our event,” Sadecki said. “She brings a lot of experience in helping women not only nationally but internationally enter into political campaigns. We’re very fortunate in the U.S. to have a system where anyone can run for office. But in other countries it’s not as easy. Strategies that she teaches at Campaign School at Yale create opportunities for women around the world.”

Sadecki also noted Russo can be quite funny and said those who attend the gala can expect some good laughs.

Barreca, who previously spoke at the Wonder of Women event 20 years ago and 10 years ago, said Russo is a “brilliant leader” and “dynamic force of nature.”

“Patti, being the empress she is, as well as a pal of mine and also a fan of the Women & Girls’ Fund’s work, agreed with alacrity and enthusiasm to step in and step up,” Barreca said. “I compare Patti replacing me on the ticket to Amy Schumer replacing a local comic on the bill. My new book, *Fast Funny Women*, the new collection of funny essays, contains a hilarious piece by Patti Russo which, I am sure, you will all enjoy.”

Seats at the Wonder of Women gala are \$60 per person.

For more information, visit mainstreetfoundation.org or call 860-583-6363.

Brian M. Johnson can be reached at 860-973-1806 or bjohnson@bristolpress.com.