

# President's Corner

## President's Advisory Committee Meeting

On June 30, 2025, the President's Advisory Committee met to discuss the 2025 theme and goals, three discussion questions, and involvement with the Annual Professional Development Conference and the Holiday Luncheon.

Attendees included:

### **EWTG Representatives:**

- 1 Coleen McCarthy, 2025-2026 EWTG President
- 2 Terri Peirce, 2025-2026 EWTG President-Elect
- 3 Tricia Schulze, 2025 EWTG Operations Director
- 4 Alida Bennett, 2025 EWTG Conference Director
- 5 Chan McDermott, 2025 EWTG Engagement Director

### **President's Advisory Committee Members:**

- 1 Amanda Crawford, Executive Director & State Chief Information Officer, TX Department of Information Resources
- 2 Courtney Arbour, Executive Director, TX Department of Licensing & Regulation
- 3 Dr. Jennifer Schuford, Commissioner, TX Department of State Health Services
- 4 Imelda Garcia, Chief Deputy Commissioner, TX Department of State Health Services
- 5 Cassie Brown, Commissioner of Insurance, TX Department of Insurance
- 6 Brian Francis, Retired from TX Department of Licensing & Regulation
- 7 Heidi Murray, Chief Operating Officer, Leadership Women
- 8 Theresa McShan, EWTG Past President, City of Elgin Mayor
- 9 Regina Durden, EWTG Past President, Bradshaw Consulting
- 10 Susan Biles, Principal Deputy Inspector General, TX Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General

Coleen welcomed everyone and expressed gratitude to the committee members for their participation and commitment to leading the organization over the next two years. The EWTG representatives and committee members provided a short introduction of themselves.

Coleen discussed the 2025 theme: *Unite, Empower, Elevate!* The theme was inspired by the closing panel she moderated at last year's Annual Conference titled, "Elevate and Empower: The Journey of Women in

Leadership.” The panel included Amanda Crawford, Courtney Arbour, Imelda Garcia, Susan Biles, and Theresa McShan. Coleen chose this theme because it focuses on fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where our members can collaborate, grow, and succeed. The theme intends to unite and empower our EWTG members in leadership spaces and elevate the organization and its members to new heights. Read more by clicking here.

Coleen also discussed how the theme aligns with the priorities and goals she set for her term as President. Over the next two years, her primary focus is to modernize our organization, strengthen partnerships, increase membership, expand outreach to affiliate chapters, and enhance member engagement. One of her top priorities is to foster a stronger connection between our members, partners, and communities. The committee’s input and participation are vital to our success. Together, we can identify opportunities, address challenges, and celebrate achievements to make our vision a reality. Read more by clicking here.

Coleen then led the committee in a discussion focused on three questions to determine the best ways to collaborate with the organizations to build a stronger, more vibrant EWTG and how EWTG can help the organizations grow and succeed. She noted that these topics will help inform future EWTG programs and presentations. Below is a summary of the questions and responses:

1. What topics/issues are important to develop women leaders?

- 1 Communication – public speaking, strategic communications, Toastmasters
- 2 Delegating and managing
- 3 Networking and navigating in male-dominated environments
- 4 Finding your voice and style in male-dominated environments
- 5 Managing up and across
- 6 Mentoring next generation of leaders\*
- 7 Change management
- 8 Resiliency, confidence-building
- 9 Encouraging/supporting other women leaders
- 10 Building executive presence

\*Coleen highlighted the new Peer Mentoring and One-on-One Mentoring programs initiated by EWTG this year. Read more by clicking here.

2. What skills are needed for today’s leaders?

- 1 Emotional intelligence
- 2 Communication: written and verbal
- 3 Negotiation skills
- 4 Influence abilities

- 5 Crisis management
- 6 How to have difficult conversations
- 7 How to build teams with intention
- 8 Artificial intelligence implementation\*
- 9 Balance (work-life integration, rather than balance)
- 10 Self-care
- 11 Executive coaching

\*Heidi noted that women may be more hesitant to adopt AI technologies. Amanda explained that while there are existing data security laws, the state is encouraging AI use with upcoming guidelines and a 10-year moratorium on new AI regulations.

3. What events or conferences are you sending your leaders to?

- 1 EWTG Annual Conference
- 2 Leadership Women
- 3 Texas Conference for Women
- 4 Governor's Center for Management Development
- 5 Leadership Academies
- 6 National Conference of State Legislators\*

\*Brian suggested building relationships with legislative agencies that currently underutilize EWTG. Coleen discussed plans to increase EWTG participation/membership from county, city, and legislative office employees.

Coleen closed the meeting with a discussion about the committee's involvement with the EWTG Annual Conference and Holiday Luncheon. The conference will include luncheons on both Sunday and Monday, with agency leaders sitting with attendees to facilitate networking and discuss leadership topics. EWTG also plans to hold another panel discussion with leaders to close out the conference. There will be another opportunity for networking with leaders during the Holiday Luncheon in December.

Next Steps:

- 1 EWTG Conference Committee to continue brainstorming ideas for both conference luncheons and the closing panel.
- 2 EWTG Engagement Committee to continue brainstorming ideas for holiday luncheon and determine date/location.
- 3 EWTG representatives and the President's Advisory Committee will finalize details for the Conference and Holiday Luncheons during the next meeting on September 8.

**Submitted by Coleen McCarthy**  
EWTG President, 2025-2026