



Inspired to Reimagine: Lessons from a THRIVE-Filled Day

Kathleen Walsh

As I look around my office, I cannot help but reimagine things after my inspirational day at the THRIVE Summit. I am a creature of habit. Shoes go to the right of the door, laundry is folded within 30 minutes of the dryer stopping, my roots get colored every six weeks (yep, my root color is not natural 😊). But after leaving the Marriott, I thought.... Should I start to shake things up a little? Take a risk (within reason). Say yes to something out of my comfort zone (again, within reason) and make new connections?

Unbelievably, I am relatively shy. Walking up and introducing myself to a stranger is not in my comfort zone. But listening to Susan Brady (CEO for Inclusive Leadership at Simmons University) and Amy Latimer (EVP and COO, Delaware North) I walked out with a new swagger. To top it off, after attending the Bold, Brave and Badass session with Ginny Eramo, Nancy Caswell, and Mabelyn Lopez, I contemplated changing my YMCA business card from President and CEO to President and BadA**.

THRIVE is not just a term, it is a movement. We have over two hundred connections to meet, nurture and grow. It is an opportunity for all of us to lean into each other's talents and treasures to become the best version of ourselves, both personally and professionally!

A huge thank you to our sponsors, the event committee and of course, our fearless leader, Karen Andreas!

Happy Summer!

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Summer Reads

Books to consider reading at the beach!

- **Arrive and Thrive** by Susan MacKenty Brady
- **The 30-Second Guide to Coaching your Inner Critic**
by Susan MacKenty Brady
- **Likeable Badass** by Alison Fragale
- **You are a BadAss** by Jen Sincero
- **She Thinks Like a Boss: Leadership** by Jenna Roedel



THRIVE Summit 2025

Educate. Elevate. *Empower.*

Recapped!

If you were not one of the lucky two hundred women and two males that attended the Summit, put it on your calendar for 2026! The theme EDUCATE ELEVATE and EMPOWER left all of the attendees with ENERGY, EXCITEMENT and EAGERNESS!

Thank you for the hard work of the THRIVE committee led by **Mary Anne Clancy**, and the presenting sponsor Institution for Savings. The six-hour event captured the attention of college students through senior executives, alike!



INSTITUTION FOR SAVINGS
BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER SINCE 1820.

Susan MacKenty Brady and **Amy Latimer** were keynotes for the day. While most of us were just getting into our second cup of coffee, Brady worked the stage as she shared her learning as a female leader and accomplished author. Her most recent book, *Arrive and Thrive*, focuses on seven practices that all leaders can use to rise into greater positions and empower others along the way. Amy Latimer emphasized the importance of supportive networks for women as one of her keys to success.

Breakout sessions were well-attended and topics included Financial Confidence; Listen, Learn, Lead; Be Bold, Brave and Badass; and Managing Difficult Conversations. All information presented was applicable and timely.

Thank you also to our incredible speakers and panelists that included, in addition to Ms. Brady and Ms. Latimer, professor, author and facilitator Dr. **Kenann McKenzie-DeFranza**; Port Wealth Management managing partner **Sheila Stehlin**; TQM Wealth Management founder **Marcel Quiroga**; Beauport Financial associate **Kate Glidden**; Interlocks MedSpa owner and director **Ginny Eramo**; Caswell Restaurant Group owner **Nancy Batista-Caswell**; 4Insurance LLC owner **Mabelyn Lopez**; and team effectiveness coach **Michelle Kempskie**.

The Summit also featured a Marketplace and surprise giveaways throughout the day! So many sponsors made the day successful, but once again the Institution for Savings stepped up as the presenting sponsor. Thank you to all the sponsors! The day could not have been possible without your support.

And finally, the attendees walked away with awesome swag bags, sponsored by **Darcia Tremblay** and Silver Lining Solutions; b12 shots from Ginny Eramo; and succulent plants from North Shore Bank. It certainly does not get much better than that!





Getting To Know The THRIVERS!

Please meet ...

Gayla Bartlett
Store Marketer
Texas Roadhouse

Tell us about your professional journey and how you landed where you are today?

I started my professional journey at the age of fourteen as a tour guide—a role I held all the way through college. I loved it. It taught me public speaking, how to control a crowd, and how to work a room.

From there, I moved into a key mid-management position in a retail chain, where I got my first taste of planning events and handling human resources. I also had the opportunity to explore on-air radio work and sales. Over the years, I've done marketing for several small businesses and managed a storage facility. Eventually, I became a marketing director for a well-known quick-service restaurant and helped build two locations that successfully operated for seven years.

Today, I'm proud to serve as the Local Store Marketer for Texas Roadhouse in Danvers. This role is a perfect fit—it keeps me rooted in the community I live in and allows me to give back. I love being able to provide food donations and raffle baskets to organizations that help so many. It's incredibly rewarding.

Throughout my career, I've always made time to be active in the community. I've been involved with groups such as North Shore Women in Business, DEEP (Danvers Educational Enrichment Partnership), Essex County Habitat for Humanity, and the Danvers Kiwanis Club. I've also served in leadership roles at the district level of Kiwanis, including Past President, Lieutenant Governor, and Governor of the New England and Bermuda District. Now, I'm proud to be involved with Thrive! No matter where I've worked—whatever the city or state—I've always made it a priority to join the Chamber of Commerce.

What was the most challenging professional obstacle that you overcame and how?

One of the most difficult professional obstacles I've faced came early in my career. A female trainer told me I'd be the ideal candidate for a training position—if I hadn't just gotten married and wanted to have children. Hearing that from another woman was devastating. I was young, shocked, and heartbroken.

But I didn't let that stop me. I spoke with the district manager, who happened to have her office in our store. I expressed my desire to be part of store openings and work with training teams. She gave me that opportunity—and that's where my love of training and mentoring began. If I had given up then, I wouldn't be where or who I am today.

What are your guiding principles as a female leader?

Being a female leader and a mentor to young professionals is a responsibility I take seriously. I've been lucky to have amazing mentors who encouraged me to push the envelope and stand tall in challenging moments.

Now, I aim to be that same source of support for others. There are so many young people beginning their careers who simply need someone to believe in them. It brings me so much joy to stay connected with the people I've mentored—to celebrate their wins, whether it's a text about a new promotion or a call to share their latest success.

What would you tell your 18-year-old self?

If I could tell my 18-year-old self one thing, it would be: Don't take yourself too seriously. Laugh. Love. Live each day with compassion and integrity. Life will bring challenges, but you are stronger than you think. Don't try to fit into someone else's mold—just be you. And remember: vulnerability is a strength. Growth happens when you're uncomfortable.

What is in your physical and emotional self-care tool kit?

Physical and emotional self-care are essential. I believe you can't pour into others if your own cup is empty. Long walks with my husband and our dog keep me grounded and connected to nature. Even simple things—like standing barefoot in the grass—help me reset emotionally. I even keep a self-care emergency kit in my car, complete with a giant bubble wand. Blowing bubbles makes me smile and brings back happy childhood memories. Taking time to breathe deeply and open my heart helps me stay balanced.

Name three things that bring you GREAT joy outside of work?

- Quality time with family and friends
- Volunteering with my Danvers Kiwanis Club
- Serving as Church Moderator at Maple Street Church and participating in our community outreach efforts

If offered \$1,000,000 to use in anyway but for yourself & family, what would you do with it?

I would finally pursue my dream of opening a nonprofit dedicated to supporting single mothers and their children. I was raised by an incredible single mother who sacrificed so much for me. Growing up without a father was hard, and I know how vital it is to have support. My vision is to create a safe, supportive space where moms can access resources, build community, and work toward their goals. A place rooted in compassion and opportunity

Odds and Ends



We're ready for Round 2! We had such a great time at our **THRIVE golf lessons** that we're working on two foursomes for the Chamber's annual golf tourney on July 21 at Ipswich Country Club. Please email Karen Andreas if you'd like to play. (Don't worry, beginners are welcome! No judgement, just FUN!)
karen.andreas@northshorechamber.org

Mark your calendars for the Chamber's **Red, White & Blue Summer Party** set for Thursday, July 31, 5-7 p.m., at the beautiful Beauport Hotel in Gloucester. We'll enjoy light bites and cocktails on the deck overlooking the ocean. THRIVE will be collecting items for a good cause, so stay tuned for more details.



Nominations are open! The Chamber celebrates outstanding women of influence and leadership at its annual **Diamond Awards** breakfast on Aug. 21, 7:30-9 a.m at the Salem Waterfront Hotel. The honorees are chosen for their commitment and passion for leading with purpose, empowering women, serving others and making an impact. Please visit northshorechamber.org to nominate a deserving woman leader.



Have an idea for content for the THRIVE monthly newsletter? Please email **Kathleen Walsh** at kwash@metronorthymca.org.

Be sure to share this newsletter with your network, and encourage others to sign up for THRIVE! It's free!