



**For Immediate Release
September 11, 2018**

Media Contact:
Katherine McLane
kmclane@conferenceforwomen.org
512.538.4606

Tennis Champion Serena Williams, Legendary Activist Gloria Steinem, and #1 Best-Selling Author Brené Brown Join 2019 Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley

Registration opens Wednesday for West Coast's largest gathering of women

SAN JOSE, CA – [The Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley](#) announced that the 2019 event on February 22 will feature keynote speakers including world-renowned athlete [Serena Williams](#); legendary political activist and feminist organizer, [Gloria Steinem](#); and [Brené Brown](#), courage and vulnerability researcher, #1 *New York Times* best-selling author and one of the top five most viewed TED speakers in the world. Thousands are expected to attend this annual sold-out event at the San Jose Convention Center. Additional keynotes to be announced.

With more than 6,500 attendees, the Conference is the largest of its kind on the West Coast. It offers a day of energizing inspiration and networking, in addition to its powerful lineup of speakers who are influential champions for women. Named a "Top 100" event in the San Francisco Bay Area by BizBash for its "buzz, innovation, and prominence," the Conference offers an unmatched spectrum of speakers on topics including gender equity and inclusion, pay parity, and social media strategy. Registration opens Wednesday, September 12 at 9 a.m. EST on the Conference website:

<https://www.watermarkconferenceforwomen.org/>.

"We are so proud to have women of Serena, Gloria and Brené's caliber help lead the discussion at this year's conference," said Ann Barlow, Chair of Watermark and West Coast President of Peppercomm. "Their strength, kindness and tenacity are inspiring, and we are confident these outstanding women will motivate our attendees to be innovative, thoughtful, fearless leaders in their workplace and communities."

As one of the most recognizable global icons in the world, Williams has won a record-breaking 23 career Grand Slam singles titles and 14 Grand Slam doubles titles. Williams' most recent Grand Slam win came at the 2017 Australian Open while pregnant. In the summer of 2016, she won the Wimbledon Championship in both singles and doubles alongside her sister, Venus. In 2015, she won four Grand Slams including Wimbledon, the French Open, the Australian Open, and the 2014 US Open, a feat affectionately known as the "Serena Slam," and completed the year on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* as the magazine's Sportsperson of the Year.

Off the court, Williams is passionate about fashion, acting, dancing and philanthropy. She was named a Fashion Trendsetter by *Vogue* for her HSN Signature Statement collection, and in 2018 released her own self-titled clothing line. Over the years she has graced the covers of countless notable magazines including *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar UK* and *InStyle* in 2018. Additionally, Williams is a global Goodwill ambassador for UNICEF and started the Serena Williams Fund in an effort to promote equity through education, gender, race and disability. In the fall of 2018, she and her sister, Venus, established the Williams Sister Fund. The first endeavor was the launch of the Yetunde Price Resource Center in Compton, named after their eldest sister who was killed by senseless gun violence. Williams has also partnered with the Helping Hands Jamaica Foundation and funded and opened two schools in Africa that are currently in operation.

Steinem is a distinguished writer, lecturer, political activist, and feminist organizer. She travels in this and other countries as an organizer and lecturer, and is a frequent media spokeswoman on issues of equality.

She is particularly interested in the shared origins of gender and race caste systems, in non-violent conflict resolution, in the cultures of indigenous peoples, and in organizing across boundaries for peace and justice. In 2013, President Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, this country's highest civilian honor. Her most recent book is [My Life on the Road](#).

Brown is a research professor at the University of Houston, where she holds the Huffington Foundation – Brené Brown Endowed Chair at The Graduate College of Social Work. She has spent the past two decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame and empathy and is the author of four number one New York Times best-sellers: [The Gifts of Imperfection](#), [Daring Greatly](#), [Rising Strong](#) and [Braving the Wilderness](#).

Brown's new book [Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.](#) is scheduled for publication in October 2018. Her TED talk – *The Power of Vulnerability* – is one of the top five most viewed Ted talks in the world with over 35 million views.

The 100+ speakers include: Jess Lee, an investor at Sequoia Capital and former CEO of the fashion app Polyvore; Ann Miura-Ko, a founding partner at Floodgate and one of the first investors in companies such as Lyft and Task Rabbit, who was named “the most powerful women in startups” by Forbes; neuroscientist Tali Sharot; Poker Hall of Famer Annie Duke; Silicon Valley veteran and bestselling author of *Radical Candor* Kim Scott; MM.LaFleur founder Sarah LaFleur; and Joy Cho, founder and creative director of Oh Joy!

For the first time this year, the Watermark Conference for Women is adding a Workplace Summit, the day before the main conference, on February 21. Designed for mid-level managers of all industries and functions – both women and men – the Summit brings together the nation's top strategists on gender partnership, communication, trust and equity in the workplace to discuss actionable tools and advice on creating great workplaces for everyone. Keynotes for the Summit to be announced soon.

The Watermark Conference for Women Silicon Valley is generously underwritten by presenting sponsor [Prudential Financial](#); co-chair partners [Gilead Sciences, Inc.](#) and [Juniper Networks](#); official lifestyle sponsor [Target](#); official networking sponsor [Cisco](#); along with the following sponsors: [Alaska Airlines](#); [Arm Ltd](#); [Boston Scientific](#); [Dell](#); [Johnson & Johnson](#); [Mastercard](#); [Applied Materials](#); [google](#); [Harvard Business School Executive Education](#); [Nutanix](#); [Pure Storage](#); [Qualcomm](#); [Salesforce](#); [Shutterstock](#); [VMware](#); [Amgen](#); [BeiGene](#); [Bristol-Myers Squibb](#); [Counsyl](#); [Medallia](#); [Merck](#); [Munger, Tolles, & Olson LLP](#); [Osram](#); [State Street Corporation](#); [Thermo Fisher Scientific](#); [TripAdvisor](#) and media sponsors [KFOG 104.5 San Francisco](#); [KGO 810](#); and [NBC Bay Area](#).

ABOUT WATERMARK

Watermark is the leading community of top women executives, emerging executives and entrepreneurs in the San Francisco Bay Area whose mission is to increase the number of women in leadership positions. Celebrating its 25th anniversary, Watermark connects, develops and advocates for the advancement of women in the workplace by offering regular leadership development programs and networking opportunities and promoting gender diversity and equality initiatives. Watermark supports girls' leadership programs, as well, to help build a well-qualified workforce for the future.

Follow us on Twitter: [@wtrmrk](#)
Like us on Facebook: [@wearewatermark](#)

###