

[NOLA4WOMEN honors International Women's Day](#)

March 10, 2016 12:00 PM Mary Ann Travis
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Ashé Cultural Arts Center executive director Carol Bebelle, left, sets the stage for conversations about education and economic opportunity, health and violence against women on Tuesday (March 8). The discussions were part of the official launch of NOLA4WOMEN, whose mission is to improve the lives of women and girls while celebrating the tricentennial of New Orleans. (Photo by Ryan Rivet)

[NOLA4WOMEN](#) has ambitious plans to celebrate the tricentennial of New Orleans in 2018 with a global summit on women and girls.

But first, the group saluted [International Women's Day](#) this year on Tuesday (March 8) at a gathering of more than 80 community leaders at the [Ashé Cultural Arts Center](#) on Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

"We are absolutely delighted by the response," said Kathy Seligman, a founding member of NOLA4WOMEN, "because we have been talking about it for two and a half years. And it's

heartening and wonderful to see so many people interested in the future of women and girls in this city.”

NOLA4WOMEN is the brainchild of Seligman, Florence Andre, Martha Sullivan and Sylvia Frey. (Seligman, Andre and Sullivan are Tulane University graduates and former administrators. Frey is professor emerita of history.)

The goal of NOLA4WOMEN is to “change the narrative of women’s place in New Orleans history — and be a catalyst for change,” said Frey.

Participants — representing organizations like the National Council of Jewish Women, the Urban League and Junior League — at the International Women’s Day event divided into breakout sessions on education and economic opportunity, health and violence against women.

“It’s the beginning of the two-year journey to the global summit on women and girls,” said Carol Bebel, co-founder and executive director of Ashé. “We are part of an international network of people working on behalf of women.”

Other NOLA4WOMEN initiatives are Heroes of New Orleans, a middle school and high school curriculum to build awareness of local women and their impact on the city; and Women of New Orleans: Builders and Rebuilders, a series of exhibitions “celebrating generations of women who have built and rebuilt the city.”

NOLA4WOMEN already has more than 50 community partners, including nine of Tulane’s libraries, museums and archives.

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Sylvia Frey, emerita professor of history