



Women's Business Center of California
El Centro de Mujeres Empresarias de California
Supporting the Successful Growth of Entrepreneurs
Ayorando el Crecimiento Exitoso de Empresarios



Michelle is an entrepreneur at heart inspired by finding challenging and cutting-edge projects and turning them into reality. Michelle has founded a number of unique ventures, including being among the first to enter into legal and direct trade between the U.S. and Cuba.

Michelle's goal is to help others, particularly women, achieve their entrepreneurial goals and reach their full potential in regards to business ownership

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¡Hablo español!

- 2007 40 Under 40 Honoree, San Diego Metropolitan Magazine
- 2007 BRAVO! Advocate of the Year, National Association of Women Business Owners
- 2006 Best Small Business Advocate, San Diego Supplier Development Council

Michelle holds a Master's of International Relations from the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California San Diego. She also graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in Communication and Spanish from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

While working as a freelance marketing consultant, Michelle noticed the untapped potential for U.S. companies in the Cuban market subsequent to the easing of the U.S. embargo toward Cuba in 2000. She pursued this unique business opportunity and became among the first to export directly and legally from the U.S. to Cuba and went on to lead the first official trade delegation to Cuba on behalf of the state of California.

Michelle then became a full partner and CEO in the Navarretta Group, specializing in facilitating trade between the U.S. and Cuba. Navarretta Group was responsible for bringing numerous U.S. companies successfully into the Cuban market with annual sales volume in the multi-millions. Michelle has collaborated with members of the U.S. Congress on trade policy with Cuba and has been a guest speaker and interviewee for various print, radio, and television media regarding U.S. - Cuba relations in addition to hosting numerous trade shows and events in Cuba for various U.S. firms.

Michelle also established the WBCC as an independent organization after discovering the WBCC as a grant-funded program in desperate need of repair due to fiscal mismanagement and an un-unified Board of Directors. She then founded it as an organization, recruited a new Board of Directors, and completely revamped the program, running it like a business, as non-profits should be run. Michelle looks forward to continually contributing to the growth of the WBCC.