

Dear Friends of the Foundation,

I hope you took advantage of the festive season to have a good time with family and friends.

I wish you all a very happy new year, full of with both personal and professional joys.

And of course, I'm convinced that 2020 will be a successful year for WIF as we take on numerous new challenges: pursuing our international development, gaining new donators, and consolidating our teams.

This is also the time for me to thank the team: Jean-Louis, Sibylle, Nolwenn, Anne-Cécile, Annie, Soazig, Célia, Laurence, Marie-Pierre and Béatrice, as well as our active Canadian strategic committee – Anne-Marie Hubert and Christiane Bergevin – and our two major donators, ENGIE and BNP Paribas. Without their support and dedication, nothing would have been possible.

Finally, I should soon be able to announce that other companies will support us.

All of this leads to my combative optimism for promoting women in business as we enter this new decade.

Warmest regards,

Martine Liautaud

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### **The Success story of... Manon Pilon Founder of Derme&Co**

Founder of both spas and a private beauty school in Montreal, Manon Pilon has 37 years of experience in the beauty industry and continues to develop her expertise in both business and clinical development with partners around the world.

Manon is also the author of two books: "Anti-aging, The Cure; Based on your body type" and "Decoding Others: self-recognition, self-understanding".

When she opened her first spa in 1982, Manon Pilon searched for a range of clinically proven natural products for her clients. She discovered the benefits of the premium skincare brand Nelly De Vuyst®, skincare that is compatible with all medical aesthetic practices. She bought the brand in 2008, and manufactures its products since 2013 in one of North America's largest Ecocert Greenlife certified laboratories, Druide® Laboratories, which she bought in 2016. Her growth strategy led to her diversifying her services by creating a division of private label Europelab. Manon also founded Derme&Co., the exclusive distributor of her laboratories worldwide, selling innovative cosmetic skincare products to spas.

At the beginning of her entrepreneurial adventure, Manon Pilon chose to be supported by Quebec Businesswomen's Network (RFAQ): "It was essential for me to be active in such a group, as when you join forces you move forward. I've been enormously supported in my projects, and it's now my turn to encourage Canadian businesswomen."

The RFAQ also introduced Manon Pilon to Martine Liautaud a year and a half ago, as WIF is also active in Canada. "That's when I talked to Martine about my project to set up a laboratory in France – our aim is to further establish our brands Nelly De Vuyst and Druide. France already boasts a rich offering of spas and health resorts, and we would like to share our expertise with them."

Martine Liautaud decided to sponsor her project, with the help of Julie le Cardinal, university professor at CentraleSupélec, who included the project as a case study in a training program at her Industrial Engineering Research Department. Since September, a group of students reading a Masters in Industrial Engineering have been studying every aspect of the feasibility of the project. "I never expected such personalized support, it's really precious. Yet again it shows the incredible

benefits that such a network can generate – I can't wait for the results!" With France as the first foothold in her European development, Manon Pilon is pursuing her internationalization and continues to share her innovative vision of care and wellbeing. Last October she was invited to be one of the panelists at the Women's CEO Summit in Bangkok on the theme of globalization in the fourth industrial revolution.

Click here to access Manon Pilon's LinkedIn page.

Her brands and services: [www.nellydevuyt.com](http://www.nellydevuyt.com) - [www.druidebio.com](http://www.druidebio.com) - [www.europelab.ca](http://www.europelab.ca) - [www.dermeco.com](http://www.dermeco.com) - [www.manonpilon.com](http://www.manonpilon.com)

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## **The France - Canada transatlantic program**

### **3 questions for... Julie Le Cardinal, Professor at CentraleSupélec**

In the framework of the WIF's transatlantic program, Julie Le Cardinal is supporting Manon Pilon, founder of Derme&Co and mentee, in setting up her business in France. She told us more about the project, currently run by 5 third-year engineering students at CentraleSupélec.

#### **Can you tell us more about the role CentraleSupélec is playing in this transatlantic project?**

Having met Manon Pilon in Montreal last February, and once I started mentoring her through WIF, the idea of setting up a Derme&Co laboratory in France soon became a central issue. As I'm used to studying such challenges on the various programs I lead at CentraleSupélec, I proposed the project as a case study on the Industrial Engineering option in the last year of the school's engineering program. Since September, 5 students have been working on this project, called "Feasibility study on setting up a plant extraction laboratory for the cosmetic industry".

#### **How is the study being conducted?**

It's a 6-month project over which the students will address the all major issues enabling them to study the feasibility of the project and build a business plan. They're conducting an in-depth study of the market, the competition, costs, and regulatory constraints. Thanks to the WIF's transatlantic program, the students were able to meet Manon in Montreal and agree on the goals of the study. This March, at the end of the project, they will present their findings and deliverables during their viva. They will say whether or not – from the data they've collected – the project to build a lab is achievable, and how.

#### **What aspect of Manon Pilon's project especially attracted you and persuaded you to include it in your academic program?**

Several features convinced me to have the project studied by a team of CentraleSupélec students. The first is obviously that it's run by a woman entrepreneur. Thanks to WIF, we often have the opportunity to support mentees at the critical stages of their careers, and this is the case for Manon. This also makes it an especially interesting use case to study on an academic program. I also find it praiseworthy that a Canadian SME wants to set up in France and invest in French industry. Finally, the project requires strategic and systemic analytical skills – that my students have developed - to offer the company leader a valuable decision-making tool.

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WIF's first 10 years: a virtuous circle!

WIF is celebrating its 10th anniversary; it's the opportunity to revisit the journey we've taken to promote women in the economy

## **EUROPE**

January 28, 2020: Lunch for WIF entrepreneur mentees

February 2019 - February 2020: WIF European Inter-company mentoring program

February 17, 2020: Closing day of the European Inter-company mentoring program.

March 16 – 17, 2020: Diner and working day, WIF - BNP Paribas Stanford Entrepreneur Program

March 23, 2020: Lunch for WIF - BNP entrepreneurs in liaison with Croissance Plus

Week of June 14, 2020: WIF CentraleSupélec - HaasBerkeley Women's Executive Program (on the CentraleSupélec campus, Paris)

June 22, 2020: Lunch WIF - BNP entrepreneurs in liaison with Croissance Plus

September 2020 - September 2021: WIF European Inter-company mentoring program

October 12, 2020: Lunch for WIF - BNP entrepreneurs in liaison with Croissance Plus

## **UNITED STATES**

September 2019 - September 2020: WIF US Inter-company mentoring program

June 21 to 26, 2020: WIF Scripps College Program (Claremont, California)

February 21, 2020: Lectures on theme "Creating inclusive workplaces & blocking bias in Micro-moments"

March 12, 2020: Breakfast, NYC (Themes to be announced)

June 11, 2020: Breakfast, NYC (Themes to be announced)

2<sup>nd</sup> week of July 2020: Stanford Woman Entrepreneur Program (on the Stanford campus, Palo Alto, California)

January 2021 - January 2022: WIF US Inter-company mentoring program

## **CANADA**

May 3 to 8, 2020: WIF McGill - CentraleSupélec Women Entrepreneur and Leadership Program (Montreal, Quebec)

May 5, 2020: WIF - Ernst & Young evening, "Mentoring entrepreneurs and inter-company mentoring for women executives".

May 6, 2020: WIF evening "Entrepreneurship and the art professions", Arts Museum, Montreal.

## **SINGAPORE**

May 6, 2020: Evening with a presentation of the Women Initiative Foundation and its programs at the Tanglin Club.

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Collective Intelligence, you need to invent it!

Via Madame Figaro

A study demonstrates the effectiveness of mentoring for women's assertiveness

Via L'Express