

# Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce: Eugenia Podestá of Synergy Coworking to receive Chamber's 2022 Ground Floor Award for Small Business Leadership

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MADISON – The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce announced today that Eugenia Podestá, co-founder of Synergy Coworking, will receive the Chamber's 2022 Ground Floor Award for Small Business Leadership.

The award, which recognizes true champions for small business both within their business and in the community, will be presented during the Chamber's sold-out IceBreaker event April 13 at the Kohl Center. Previous recipients include Jim Garner of Sergenian's Floor Coverings, Susan Bulgrin of Culver's on Todd Drive and Echo Tap & Grill, Jeff "JP" Patterson of JP Hair Design and Mark Schmitz of ZEBRADOG.

"Eugenia is an innovator and collaborator who has supported so many small business leaders in Greater Madison," said Chamber President Zach Brandon. "Her commitment to empowering women business leaders and making our region the best place for entrepreneurs of color exemplifies why she is the perfect choice for this prestigious honor."

At Synergy Coworking, Podestá spearheads and supports inclusive economic empowerment and leadership initiatives and collaborations. Born in Peru and raised in Madison, she is a social entrepreneur and global connector dedicated to equity through access, creating space and opportunities for women and Black and brown leaders at the intersection of business, leadership and community.

Podestá is also Senior Director of Leadership and Social Impact at Vital Voices Global Partnership, an international women's leadership nonprofit in Washington, D.C. that invests in women leaders who are taking on the world's greatest challenges. There, she oversees programs including the Google Impact Challenge and the VV GROW Fellowship, a reputable global one-year accelerator for women-owned small- and medium-sized enterprises. She also serves on various boards to advance economic development and support underserved communities in Madison including Dane Arts Mural Arts, Wisconsin Latino Chamber of Commerce, Madison Community Foundation and UW-Madison Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies.

"I am honored to be chosen as this year's recipient of the Ground Floor Award," said Podestá. "I share this award with my partner, Spencer Hudson, our family and all our members and supporters over the years for helping us realize this vision. We are committed to supporting Greater Madison's entrepreneurial ecosystem by addressing systemic barriers and providing needed opportunities and a supportive, inclusive space."

In addition to the presentation of the Ground Floor Award, IceBreaker will also bring together more 750 business and community leaders to collectively recalibrate our thinking on the future Greater Madison needs. Featured speakers are Maggie Anderson, CEO of The Empowerment Experiment and author of *Our Black Year: One Family's Quest to Buy Black in America's Racially Divided Economy*; and Alondra Fernandez, a UW-Madison researcher, UW-Green Bay graduate and Dreamer, having participated in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

**For media access to IceBreaker and any questions about media accommodations or interview requests, please contact Erik Greenfield at 608-669-7884 or [erik@madisonbiz.com](mailto:erik@madisonbiz.com).**