



**Polish Professional Women**  
Silicon Valley

**2022**



**SUSTAINABLE  
GROWTH**

# SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

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# Dear Members and Partners

We are thrilled and excited to celebrate the PPWSV 3rd anniversary. Want to thank our dedicated, creative and diligent PPWSV Team. We have seen much collaboration over the past years, and we appreciate all your motivation, excellent work, and initiative. We also want to thank our dear members, allies, and friends for supporting our mission and development. Your help in making our network stronger helps us grow! Thank you for creating such a positive experience together.

Last year, due to the Pandemic, we decided to focus all our activities on re-envisioning our careers, lives, and goals. Even though it was a challenging time for us, both privately and professionally, it brought a few significant achievements:

- The PPWSV team grew; we have now 12 members
- We have successfully organized five events to celebrate moments important for our community and build bonds
- Thanks to our flagship A Day In the Life Of (DILo) program, we met with three inspiring Polish professionals
- The Startup Mixer program let us create a group of Polish entrepreneurs who share best practices among each other
- PPWSV officially became a non-profit organization! We encourage everyone to donate [here](#).

**IT'S BEEN 3 YEARS!**



**THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US!**

# Dear Members and Partners

**Our theme for this 2022 year is Sustainable Growth**, a multi-dimensional approach to each area of our lives. When dealing with ambiguity, it is not easy to find balance. Sustainable growth has frequently been a conversation cornerstone our PPWSV members have shared with us. Worldwide, the importance of the topic has stood out so firmly that we feel that we had no choice but to select it for our 2022 theme.

A deep-rooted, sustainability-focused mindset requires more mindset training and everyday discipline. This year's programs and projects will focus specifically on these aspects of sustainable growth:

- **#growth mindset** - It's the only way for a better future
- **#sustainable growth** - What does it mean, and how to do it? Share your thoughts
- **#eco-friendliness** - Is there anything else we can do? Let's brainstorm together!

**More to come! Stay tuned.**



Magdalena Jaworowicz, Joanna Lorincz

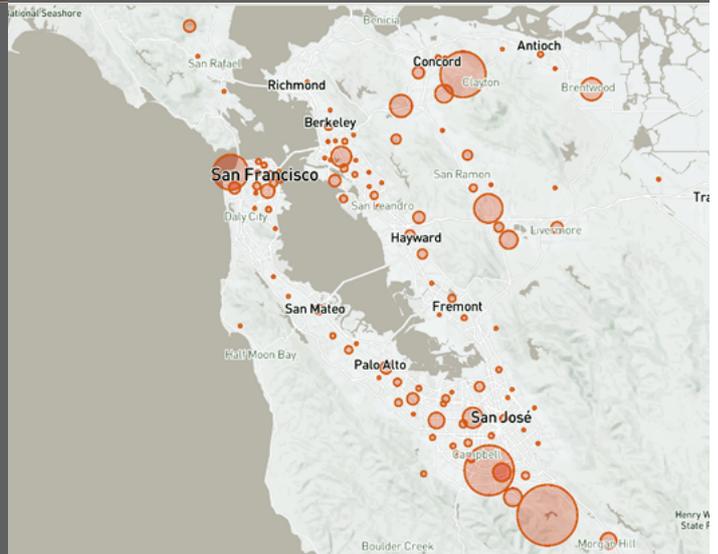
# Who We Are

The Polish Professional Women of Silicon Valley is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower women of Polish descent by providing support, training, and tools to elevate their careers. PPWSV also invites all allies who are willing to support its mission.



Together we are building a network of like-minded women and providing opportunities to connect, share and support each other to further professional growth.

Our members are located in all major cities of the San Francisco Bay Area, California.



# Our Strategy

Starting in the 2022 New Year, we plan to continue our strategy for the next few years. Our main goal is to promote Polish Women in Silicon Valley and highlight their professional achievements by strengthening our bonds in the community and throughout the world.

We are executing it through learning and development programs and events. While the programs are focused on empowering women in their professional development and entering or reentering the labor market, the central role of the events is to inspire and build a unique and impactful network.

## Programs:

- A Day In the Life Of ... (DILO)
- Startup Mixer
- Job Aid
- PPWSV Academy

## Events:

- International Women's Day Celebration
- Special Guest Events
- Networking Events
- Holiday Celebrations



# Meet Our Team



**Joanna Lorincz**  
Co-founder



**Magdalena Jaworowicz, PhD**  
Co-founder



**Piotr Jaworowicz, PhD**  
Strategic Advisor  
& Creative Director



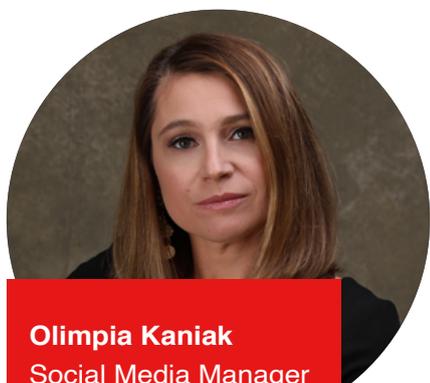
**Izabela Stepniewski**  
Digital Marketing  
Manager



**Karolina Mazaheri**  
Program Manager



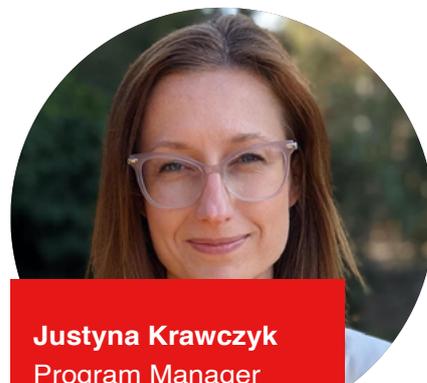
**Agnieszka Pradhan**  
Event Program  
Manager



**Olimpia Kaniak**  
Social Media Manager



**Eliza Wysokiński**  
Treasury & Finance  
Manager



**Justyna Krawczyk**  
Program Manager



**Monika Evje**  
Talent Consultant



**Joanna Broda-Schunck**  
Translator



**Marlena Guderska**  
Graphic Designer,  
UI/UX

# Our Successes

**102**  
Members!

**11**  
Meetings  
and Events

**135**  
Event  
Participants

# Our 2021 Events

## MY JOURNEY TO BECOMING A CEO

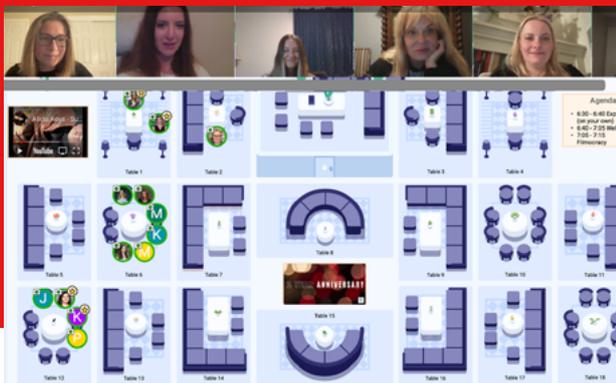
AN INTERVIEW WITH ANIA SMITH,  
THE CEO OF TASKRABBIT



PPWSV presented an exclusive interview event with Ania Smith, the CEO of TaskRabbit. Ania is a seasoned leader with deep expertise across a variety of multi-sided marketplaces. She has more than 20 years of experience in global business operations and strategic planning in the eCommerce, transportation, travel, and retail industries. Ania joined TaskRabbit as CEO in August 2020

and is passionate about helping other women break the glass ceiling. Ania moved to the US from Poland as a child and witnessed how hard her parents worked to provide for her family. It has become her second nature to excel in everything she does provide a happy life to her own family.

MONIKA BURZYŃSKA-EVJE,  
A PPWSV MEMBER FACILITATED THE INTERVIEW.



## CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

WITH FILMOCRACY

**Women's History Month:**  
[100 remarkable women](#)  
from Polish history to celebrate  
100 years of women's suffrage.  
Visit Filmocracy [here](#)

PPWSV organized an online networking event to celebrate International Women's Day. This year we partnered with Filmocracy, a film and film festival streaming platform to gather in a casual format. Our event and discussion focused on:

- This year's #InternationalWomensDay "Choose to Challenge" theme
- Unconscious bias
- Actions we can take to create a more equitable world

# Our 2021 Events

## LAWRENCE LIVERMORE NATIONAL LAB

NATIONAL IGNITION FACILITY  
- VIRTUAL TOUR



The National Ignition Facility (NIF), located at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, invited our organization for a virtual tour of the world's largest and highest-energy laser system. We learned about NIF's 192 powerful laser beams that are housed in a 10-story building the size of 3 football fields.

The facility can deliver nearly 2 million joules of ultraviolet laser energy in billionth-of-a-second pulses onto a target about the size of a pencil eraser. The virtual tour was unique, presenting parts and views of the facility that wouldn't be possible to view in person.

[VISIT THE NIF WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE](#)



McAfee® Online  
Safety Program

For Parents



## #BECYBERSMART: HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY ONLINE

McAfee Cyber Security Researcher, Joanna Negrete, a PPWSV member, helped us understand online safety and what actions we can take to protect those we care for. With October being Cybersecurity Awareness Month, Joanna focused on what parents can do to keep their kids safe online. Her action plan for parents is:

- Create strong passwords with numbers and symbols.

- Disable geotagging on photos and videos to keep your family's physical location private.
- Parents and kids should think twice before posting. Could it become risky or embarrassing for the child later in life? If yes, or in doubt, it's better not to share.
- Review and update your privacy settings.
- Use security software to protect your devices.

# Our 2021 Events

## CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY ZOOM EVENT



Pandemic times are difficult for everyone. Finding a safe space where we can share our struggles and successes is vital. At our virtual holiday event, PPWSV invited members to a casual community gathering to share their experiences related to holidays and memories from the whole

2021 year. As our meetings are always inspirational and uplifting, this one was no different. We learned more about each other and what helps us cope with current circumstances while enjoying cocktails and wine.



## POLISH TECH DAYS

Polish Professional Women of Silicon Valley joined as a partner the Polish Tech Days which is the biggest project of PLUGIN FOUNDATION, a non-profit organisation that brings together an international community of "POLES WITHOUT BORDERS" who work all over the world in tech and innovation industries. The fundamentals of this fruitful collaboration was shared goals: to connect, inspire and empower the community members. PPWSV was represented by

Magdalena Jaworowicz, who took part in a panel discussion together with Eva Hussain (CEO at Polaron), Sebastian Tyrakowski (Deputy Director at Emigration Museum in Gdynia) and Adam Formanek (Senior Partner Management at Digital Agency Berlin). Magdalena presented the ways PPWSV realizes it's mission, which is giving back, creating a safe space to exchange best practices and building strong network of like-minded Polish professionals.

# Our Programs

## ■ A Day In the Life Of...

Surrounded by Silicon Valley's Fortune 500 companies, Polish women's unique challenges and successes are rarely shared. This live virtual event series highlights three professionals' exciting career journeys, industry insights, challenges in their roles, and achievements.

We met with McAfee's patent-holding **Joanna Negrete**, a Cyber Security Researcher, to learn about the growing malware threats in mobile, Internet Of Things (IoT), and Office documents. She applies machine learning in the data analysis of malware work. **Ewa Suliga** is Meta's (formerly Facebook) Senior Leader of Technical Project Management in the data center space. She advised about how to move up into leadership roles and professionally recover from project failure. **Kinga Nowak-Gruszka** brought us to the crux of innovation and supply chain at The Clorox Company. The difficult personalities of plant owners resistant to change couldn't stop her from launching a new bleach product to the market. Since August 2020, PPWSV has held six "Day In the Life Of" interviews concluding one year of the program. We are taking a short break before we restart another interview year. Click the website link below to see the program with the complete list of notable women we've interviewed.



# A Day In the Life Of...



## INNOVATION PROJECT MANAGER

WITH KINGA NOWAK-GRUSZKA,  
THE CLOROX COMPANY

09/23/2021

Kinga shared what transformational growth looks like from the inside of The Clorox Company. Her startup experience and expertise at Clorox's large-scale operations, manufacturing, and supply chain complexities across multiple divisions made her a successful and awarded Supply Chain Leader and Project Manager.

Operating her department as a startup means that speed is the priority. She applies the concept of "Being BOLD" to both her work and in life. Experimentation, building on ideas, taking thoughtful risks, and feedback are core to driving innovation.

Manufacturing is a well-established older organization with solid traditions, is efficiency-focused, and male-oriented. In the interview, we were curious about business challenges in the innovation space, so Kinga shared how she was tasked to create smaller, concentrated packets of bleach products. She described being new to her role: speaking with an accent, a blonde, and a soft yet curious voice. Plant owners were resistant to change, claiming they didn't want to introduce chaos. Starting with setting up many one-on-ones, she established relationships digging deep, asking, "Why can't we do things a different way?" The core of her effort to get buy-in was emphasizing to plant owners that she also cares about customer needs — just as they care about manufacturing quality products.

The lesson learned in her career is not to be afraid to ask. That means asking for a promotion, asking to be connected with someone, or negotiating. If we don't ask, we never know what the answer is. Don't assume you know. If you don't have total clarity, you'll waste your time and others' time. You can build a professional relationship just by asking questions. She encourages her kids to do the same. The kids hated the taste of the ice cream scoops they bought from a clerk. She encouraged them to ask to exchange their ice creams for another flavor. The clerk happily accommodated them.

She is now at Clif Bar & Company, taking on the role of Senior Supply Chain Integration Manager, Expand.

# A Day In the Life Of...



## SENIOR LEADER OF TECHNICAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

WITH EWA SULIGA, META

04/22/2021

Ewa Suliga gave us a rare glimpse into Meta's (formerly known as Facebook) employee culture and how that translates into managing a team of 24 project managers in the data center space. In her 7th year at Meta, she has loads of autonomy to set goals and define solutions. She holds a Master of Computer Science and Management with a specialization in Business Management. Bringing 16+ years of experience in technical project management roles (including Apple and Hewlett Packard roles), Ewa shared recommendations for working as a project manager and leading teams.

In order to learn how/if interview candidates learn from their failures, she asks them about a time they have failed. Projects going wrong or failing are bound to happen, yet never are people taught how to recover from a catastrophe! Interestingly, in the martial art of Judo, practitioners intentionally practice falling safely (by letting the arms break the fall) so that the impact doesn't cause injury. She discussed her project failure experience at Meta, where she thought she'd get fired. She assigned a technical project manager to a project for which the employee wasn't ready. It caused a major outage. Her advice is to be open about the mistake and share genuine feelings about the challenges and risks you didn't anticipate. Next, show resiliency. Come up with a recovery plan, ask for help, partner closely, and show gratitude for other people's efforts, work, and knowledge.

### **Her advice for others that want to be in her role is to:**

- 1)** Build your leadership skills. Even if you don't have a chance to manage people directly, take the lead on a larger project or mentor junior team members. Sign up for challenging work that takes you out of your comfort zone.
- 2)** Be bold – come up with ideas and go strong with gaining the buy-in and implementing them. Build confidence in your abilities and manage ambiguities.
- 3)** Build a strong network of supporters and allies. Cross-functional and leadership roles are not easy; hence, you'll need to build a group to support and help you through difficult moments.

She's also a parent. She stays resilient by setting healthy boundaries in her work time. She shared that people will always judge — focus instead on staying true to your values. She believes that happy parents grow happy kids.

# A Day In the Life Of...



## CYBER SECURITY RESEARCHER

WITH JOANNA NEGRETE, MCAFEE

02/04/2021

Joanna Negrete brings 10+ years of experience in the cyber security software industry. She's personally worked on designing and implementing one of McAfee's first technologies for malware detection using artificial intelligence. She's also designed multiple models that detect malware and keep McAfee customers safe. And she's the co-author of two patents in predictive modeling. She presented the research behind them at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE) conference in 2020.

At our event, Joanna informed us about the growing malware threats in mobile, Internet Of Things (IoT), and Office documents. She helped us understand the concept of machine learning and how she applies it in her data analysis of malware. Her work includes training new classifiers, researching new features, and deciding if existing models drift or require retraining. When we interviewed her, she was still trying to master data storytelling skills (converting data findings into valuable insights so that a stakeholder can take action).

She began her McAfee career with a part-time role performing content categorization of Polish websites. A few desks away, her colleagues were researching sites based on the security risk (phishing vs. spam). Her curiosity asking "how" things work soon led her to take college courses to learn HTML, network analysis, SQL, and Python.

The pandemic has taught us to adjust to working from home. Joanna has been working almost exclusively from home for over eight years. At 5 PM, she closes the door to her office. She doesn't open it until the following day (unless emergency circumstances require it).

# Our Programs



## STARTUP MIXER

Polish Professional Women hosted a second meeting in the series "Startup Mixer." All attendees shared their experiences, successes, challenges, and plans for the upcoming year. Check out the founders and co-founders of some unique startups [here](#).



## JOB AID

The past two years have changed the job market significantly. Remote work, which used to be exotic and uncommon, has become the new standard. Some industries and professions are no longer as sought after as they used to be, which has resulted in many people shifting the direction of their careers. In response to this, we have been working on a program dedicated to our members, those looking for new career opportunities or planning a career change. The pilot of the Job Aid Program is launching in Q1 2022.

Ready for new professional challenges?  
Email us at [programs@ppwsv.com](mailto:programs@ppwsv.com)

# Join Us

**We are ecstatic  
that you have  
read our  
publication!**

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to hear from you!

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today!**

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it valuable, you can help us develop  
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should talk to? Please make an  
introduction to connect us!

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**THANK YOU**

