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Promena Wraps Milestone Atlanta Conference With Leadership, Innovation and a Community Built for What's Next

20th annual national conference drew a few hundred participants representing nearly 100 companies and expanded Promena's 30-year legacy through ERG leadership, publishing, AI learning, recognition and cross-industry problem-solving.

ATLANTA (Aug. 31, 2026) — Promena concluded its 20th Annual National Business Leaders & Recognition Conference after a milestone gathering in Atlanta that brought a few hundred leaders and professionals through the conference and represented nearly 100 companies, along with nonprofit, academic and entrepreneurial communities. Held Aug. 17-19, the live conference followed Promena Media's virtual publishing summit and marked a major moment in Promena's 30-year enterprise journey and its first conference in Atlanta.

Hosted with presenting sponsor GE Vernova and executive sponsor Reggie Miller, the conference convened CEOs, individual contributors, corporate leaders, authors, innovators and emerging voices across generations. The intentionally focused gathering created an energetic environment for substantive learning, collaboration and relationship-building, with conversations continuing well beyond the formal sessions.

> *"The strength of this conference was the extraordinary mix of leaders, professionals and organizations in the room. Nearly 100 companies were represented alongside nonprofit, academic and entrepreneurial communities, creating the kind of connection, thought leadership and shared learning that moves this work forward."*
>
> **— Pamela A. McElvane, founder and CEO, Promena**

The expanded conference experience included approximately 60 speakers and thought leaders and programming designed to move participants from conversation to application. The inaugural live ERG Leadership Summit brought together executive leaders, ERG leaders, ERG members and professionals for a business-impact conversation on the next era of employee communities. The summit drew about 70 participants and focused on the maturation of ERGs as strategic enterprise partners, including leadership, workplace culture and actionable business impact.

Promena Media's fifth annual National Virtual Publishing Summit broadened the conference's thought leadership platform with about a dozen authors and a mixed-media publishers panel. The summit examined the changing publishing industry, the continued relevance of print and emerging opportunities for authors and media organizations. Author sessions spanned leadership, business, inclusion and wellness and included children's literature, expanding the range of voices represented in the summit.

The conference also introduced new formats for executive learning. An invitation-only think tank brought approximately 35 to 40 leaders and thought leaders across industries together around executive accountability and solution-building. Promena's AI certificate programming addressed the rapidly changing role of artificial intelligence in the workplace, while industry business solution roundtables created smaller,

facilitated conversations where participants could exchange perspectives across sectors rather than remain confined to their own industries.

A young inventors and entrepreneurs panel added a strong next-generation voice to the conference. Gen Z founders and innovators shared their work, entrepreneurial journeys and approaches to technology and business while remaining engaged throughout the broader conference experience. The response helped shape plans for expanded Future Ready Voices programming focused on young inventors and emerging leaders.

National recognition remained a centerpiece of the conference. The Top 25 Awards Luncheon honored established leaders of impact and featured Hall of Fame speaker Pegine Echevarria as keynote speaker. Best-selling author and former Fortune 500 executive Keith Wyche delivered a keynote on uncommon leadership, challenging attendees to distinguish servant leadership from self-serving leadership and to consider how trust, character and people-centered leadership translate into practice.

The conference closed with the Top 100 Elite Trailblazers celebration, bringing past honorees back into the room and highlighting the career journeys of leaders recognized across nearly two decades. Organizers said the return of legacy honorees created full-circle moments that demonstrated the long-term impact of Promena's recognition platform.

Promena Board Chair Andres E. Gonzalez also helped anchor the conference's leadership conversation, bringing a board-level perspective centered on community, collaboration and care. During the Leaders Leading Leaders discussion with current and former Promena board chairs, the conversation explored board service, character, competency and consistency, as well as the responsibility leaders have to move from simply critiquing people and ideas to championing their growth and impact.

> *"We are excited to be partners with Promena."*
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> **— David Bubas, UPMC, co-chair, Promena Editorial Board**

Conference organizers also pointed to partnership as central to the event's success. GE Vernova served as presenting sponsor and host, UPMC as a champion sponsor, Froedtert ThedaCare Health and Advocate Health as executive sponsors, and Dynasty Media as presenting sponsor of the publishing summit. Bank of America, Principal Financial Group and other organizations also supported the conference.

The post-conference conversation is already extending beyond Atlanta. Promena plans to repurpose conference thought leadership through its media platforms, podcasts, publishing content and future learning experiences, including continued conversations with authors, board leaders, young innovators and industry experts. Promena also announced an Oct. 29 health care design thinking summit in Chicago and said details about the location of its 2027 national conference will be announced later.

For McElvane, the conference represented both a celebration and a forward-looking moment for the organization. After 30 years as an entrepreneur and 20 years of national recognition programming, she said the work is moving into its next phase with renewed momentum, a growing community and an expanded commitment to helping leaders and organizations set the standard.

ABOUT PROMENA

Promena, a P&L Group company, is a leadership, talent development, insights, learning and media enterprise that helps organizations strengthen leadership effectiveness, workforce performance, inclusion, culture and business impact. Promena builds on a 30-year legacy of research, benchmarking, professional development, recognition and executive engagement. Its platform includes Promena Insights, Promena Learning, Promena Media, signature events and national recognition programs. Promena's brand promise is simple: Set the Standard.

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