



A Women's Conference

Friday April 24
Workshop Choices

No need to decide today. Let your curiosity lead the way –
Come create your own special day!

First Session (10:40–11:50 am)

Jersey Girls: Rebels, Rulebreakers, and Legends

Lesley Schierenbeck, MA history, founder of the History Chick Tours

Explore the lesser-known history of the Jersey Shore through the lives of women who challenged social norms and were often labeled “infamous.” From boardwalk entrepreneurs to figures tied to crime and controversy, these women navigated systems that limited their power while still shaping their communities. Discover how gender, reputation, and survival intersected along the Shore—and reconsider what it meant to be a “Jersey Girl.”

From Sketch to Style: Inside the World of Fashion Design

Sheridan O’Hea, instructor & Annmarie Hughes, associate professor, Fashion Design & Merchandising, Brookdale Community College

Discover how an idea becomes a wearable design. Go behind the scenes of fashion—from inspiration to finish - including a live illustration demonstration. Explore how today’s designers are incorporating sustainability in creative, meaningful ways. Whether drawn to fashion or simply to creativity, gain fresh insight into design, expression, and the evolving world of style.

Smart & Savvy: Navigating Today’s Media with Confidence

Olga Polites, Media Literacy Now

Make sense of today’s fast moving digital landscape with greater clarity and confidence. Explore how news, social media, and online content are created, shared, and sometimes distorted. Gain practical strategies to recognize reliable information and avoid common pitfalls. Walk away with simple, effective tools to feel more informed and in control when engaging with media in everyday life.

Breaking Bread: Women, Tradition, and the Stories We Share

Rachael Goldman, PhD

Explore how bread connects culture, memory, and tradition across generations. Examine the role women have played in preserving recipes, rituals, and shared experiences. Reflect on how these traditions shape both everyday life and meaningful celebrations—and how they continue to evolve. Top it all off with a tasting of breads and dips—and plenty of friendly conversation.

Strong, Not Silent: The Art of Assertiveness

Martin McDermott, MA, author, associate professor, Brookdale Community College

Communicate with clarity and confidence in a world that often rewards aggressiveness. Gain practical strategies for asking for what you need, setting boundaries, saying no, and expressing disagreement with ease. Strengthen both personal and professional relationships while staying true to your voice. Leave feeling more empowered and confident in everyday interactions.

Second Session (12:35–1:45 pm)

Her Voice Rising: Women Who Shaped American Poetry

Brian McGackin, MFA, poet & writer

Trace the powerful evolution of women's poetry in America, from Anne Bradstreet to contemporary voices like Tracy K. Smith. Explore the work of influential poets including Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, Audre Lorde, and Mary Oliver. Examine how their writing reflects identity, experience, and cultural change while shaping American literature. Celebrate the enduring impact of women's voices in this engaging and thought-provoking session.

Women Warriors: American Revolution & Civil War

John Miraglia, instructor, Kean University

Uncover the remarkable and often overlooked women who shaped America's earliest wars. Step into stories of courage, espionage, and defiance from the Revolutionary War through the Civil War. Meet figures like Deborah Sampson and Sybil Ludington and examine how women moved beyond traditional roles to influence history. Celebrate resilience, ingenuity, and the lasting impact of women in wartime.

Breathe & Be: A Gentle Introduction to Meditation

Julie Egbert, wellness coach & health educator

Reconnect with yourself through the power of breath. Experience simple, accessible meditation and breathing techniques designed to relax the body and calm the mind. Discover ways to reduce stress, improve focus, and support overall well-being. Whether seeking better sleep or more balance, take away practices that bring greater ease into everyday life.

Wellness That Works: Simple Practices for Everyday Balance

Lauren Grogan, holistic health counselor

Discover practical wellness strategies that support energy, focus, and calm. Explore accessible practices—including breathwork, mindful movement, and simple daily habits—that fit easily into real life. Find meaningful support for navigating midlife changes while easing stress and promoting overall well-being. Leave with techniques that help you feel more balanced, grounded, and energized.

Third Session (1:50–3:00 pm)

A Woman's Touch: Impressionist Art of Berthe Morisot (90 minutes)

Michael Norris, PhD

Explore the life and work of Berthe Morisot, a pioneering French Impressionist who captured modern womanhood with vibrancy and sensitivity. Trace her artistic journey, her connection to Édouard Manet, and her role in Parisian culture. View works from major museums while gaining deeper appreciation for her influence and legacy in the world of art.

Calm in the Chaos: Protecting Your Inner Peace

Diane Lang, MA, therapist & author

Cultivate emotional balance in uncertain times through practical, effective strategies. Explore ways to manage stress, reduce anxiety, and create lasting inner peace. Identify sources of negativity and develop habits that support resilience and well-being. Leave feeling more grounded, centered, and equipped to navigate life with greater calm and control.

Your Next Chapter: Discover What's Possible

Jacqueline Robinson, Second Act Inspiration

Step into the possibilities of what comes next. Reflect on what energizes and inspires you while identifying strengths and interests that guide your direction. Engage in guided exercises and practical tools including a simple introduction tousing ChatGPT for idea generation to spark new ideas. Gain clarity, renewed motivation, and one actionable step toward shaping your next chapter.

Plant-Based Living: Simple Steps to A Healthier, Happier You!

Alice Kessler, licensed health services professional, vegan lifestyle educator

Curious about plant-based living? Explore the benefits of a whole-food, plant-based lifestyle in a welcoming, approachable way. Discover how small, sustainable changes can support long-term health and well-being. Gain practical ideas for meal planning, shopping, and everyday choices that make healthy eating enjoyable and realistic. Feel inspired, informed, and ready to take simple steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

The Sonic Reset: Renewal Through Sound

Janet Woods, reiki master

Experience the restorative potential of sound in a science-informed, engaging environment. Discover how sound frequencies support relaxation, balance, and overall well-being, and explore the fascinating field of cymatics—where vibration creates visible patterns in matter. Gain insight into how sound may help release tension, sharpen focus, and restore a sense of calm. Leave with simple, practical techniques to recharge, refocus, and restore harmony.

