

InnovateHER 2017 Cover Page

Winning Individual: Caroline Wesnitzer (Project Lead)
cmalkin@trustingconnections.com
(520) 544-6612

Company Name: Trusting Connections, LLC

Company Address: 3390 N. Campbell Avenue #100
Tucson, AZ 85719

Company Phone: (520) 544-6612

Place of incorporation: Oro Valley, AZ 85755

Product/Service website: www.trustingconnections.com

Phone Number: (520) 544-6612

Host Organization: Women's Business Center of Southern Arizona (WBC)

Address: 525 N. Bonita Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85745

Website: www.ywcatucson.org/WBC

Point of Contact (POC): Victor Mercado
Director
Women's Business Center of Southern Arizona
vmercado@ywcatucson.org
(520) 884-7810

Joiner #: A-87

Description of Product or service:

Trusting Connections, LLC is a full-service nanny placement agency and sitter service that connects families with exceptional nannies, sitters, and family care professionals.

Total # of applicants in Host organizations'

InnovateHer Competition: 24 submissions, 8 participants, 1 winner

June 19, 2017

Dear InnovateHER Selection Committee,

My name is Victor Mercado. I have the pleasure of serving as the Director of the Women's Business Center of Southern Arizona, an S.B.A. Resource Partner, a program of the YWCA Southern Arizona. This letter is to certify the winner of the Southern Arizona InnovateHER Competition, **Trusting Connections, LLC**. The selection panel for InnovateHER consisted of four women. Two of them in the retail industry, one startup influencer, and one member of the arts non-profit community.

Trusting Connections is a nanny service agency that began in 2011 when two college best friends—Caroline Wesnitzer and Rosalind Prather—joined forces to pursue their passion for supporting working moms by taking their side-gigs as nannies to the next level. What started as a tiny startup is now a thriving, million-dollar company with offices in Tucson, Arizona and Dallas Fort-Worth (DFW), TX. Trusting Connections provides working women and stay-at-home moms with access to sitters, newborn care specialists, doulas, personal assistants and other family care professionals.

While doing customer development, Caroline and Rosalind discovered there was a market need for occasional or temp work for families looking for a regular nanny without the legal and financial entanglements of hiring a household employee. Out of this need, their next revenue stream, *Flex Memberships* was born. The company soon learned that it wasn't just moms who needed a 'solution'; *nannies* were also feeling the need for more support, structure (and most importantly, a W-2). *Then came a breakthrough idea.*

As the two partners built processes to manage clients, schedule nannies, conduct background checks, and run payroll—at the enterprise level—they quickly realized the scale of their integration problem. More families requesting nannies meant more revenue, but without a software platform to connect clients to nannies...background checks to profiles...payroll systems to employees, meeting the challenge of serving more clients was impossible. Trusting Connections is seeking \$40,000 to invest in an integrated software application, appropriately dubbed "LogistiGal" to scale services and better serve women and families across the country.

Trusting Connections' software application idea was selected the winner of our local InnovateHER Competition due to three important factors: 1). The potential for commercialization 2). The potential impact on the lives of millions of working mothers and families and 3). The potential to replace *urbansitter.com* and *care.com* as the safest alternative to finding trusted nannies and caregivers. Also important in the decision of the panel was the level of industry knowledge that both partners bring. Caroline sits on the Board of Directors of the International Nanny Association and is the current president for the Tucson Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO).

LOGISTIGAL'S IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND FAMILIES

Women in the workforce are the norm, not the exception. As women have families, and as these families are composed of two income households, the demand for childcare services is rising. Trusting Connections has identified industry trends that show that companies who want to attract better

employees and mitigate loss of workplace productivity are partnering with agencies to provide back-up care for employees in the event children are sick. Access to childcare affects women in two critical ways: It affects working women in the workplace who would otherwise miss work and lose real wages, or miss out on potential opportunities to network. This impacts both low-wage earners (who have limited sick time) and professional women (whose careers are built on networking). According to the American Association of University Women, the gender gap is larger at higher levels of education. In a recent study by the American Bar Association's Task Force on Gender Equity, "female equity partners in the 200 largest firms, who do comparable work to men, earn 89 percent of the compensation of their male peers." Therefore, the simple act of having children and taking time away from the office to care for kids puts women on a different career trajectory than men.

POTENTIAL FOR COMMERCIALIZATION

Nanny and babysitting services is a \$16B a year industry. Developing a software solution is the next evolution of Trusting Connection's business model as they target nanny agencies and providers of human capital. Survey data show that families would rather have a third-party processor pay babysitters so they don't have to make them household employees. The relatively low cost of developing this software compared to the number of agencies across the country facing similar pain points makes its potential for commercialization compelling. Nanny agencies are facing an increased demand for placement, yet the systems that power virtually every agency in the country (ADP, Salesforce, QuickBooks) don't have a scheduling algorithm nor a user interface that matches families to nannies based on a series of key questions. Caroline and Rosalind's goal is not to build a better payroll app or a CRM. Their objective is to build a platform for the nanny industry that integrates enterprise solutions under one brand.

FILLS A NEED IN THE MARKETPLACE

The mission of the Women's Business Center of Southern Arizona is to level the playing field for women and minority entrepreneurs. In selecting Trusting Connections, LLC. our panel of judges overwhelmingly agreed that this product fills a critical need in society.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of mothers with kids under the age of three are working or looking for work. This means that both working women and stay-at-home moms have pressing needs for temporary or long-term childcare. A sick child, a business meeting, or even a fun night on the town—have the potential for disrupting family life. Women continue to be the *de facto* provider of childcare in two-income households and the primary caretaker for aging parents. So long as women's potential for earning is interrupted by unexpected life events, we will continue to see stalled progress in wage growth and equal pay. Trusting Connections might just be the solution we have all been waiting for.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Victor Mercado

Victor Mercado
Director, Women's Business Center of Southern Arizona