

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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An Australian first for Women in Science and Technology

In an Australian first, I.T. whiz Sonja Bernhardt, has been selected as one the top 50 influential women in the world in science and technology.

WITI (Women in Technology International), has announced today, that Sonja Bernhardt, Qld based CEO is the first Australian woman being inducted into the WITI Hall of Fame.

WITI 's Hall of Fame is considered the most prestigious award given to women who have made significant contributions in the fields of science and technology. In celebration of its tenth year anniversary, this year's event will honor Bernhardt along with her fellow 2005 inductees and the 55 past recipients.

WITI, a global organization dedicated to advancing women in technology careers, established the Hall of Fame in 1996 to recognize outstanding women for their research contributions and achievements in science and technology. As professional women in the technology industry, award recipients are on the cutting edge of innovation in their respective fields and are committed to mentoring women and girls in order to promote careers in technology. Bernhardt will join some of the most prestigious women in technology including Chieko Asakawa, who has developed technologies for the blind; Stephanie Kwolek, who developed the technology behind Kevlar, the material used in bulletproof vests and the ENIAC programming team, the groundbreaking, six woman team appointed by the U.S. Army during World War II to program the first all-electronic digital computer.

Ms Bernhardt said, "I am thrilled to be honoured as part of such an outstanding group of women who are avid pursuers of science and technology as well as being passionate about furthering the career of women in advanced technology fields".

Bernhardt is considered a leading I.T. entrepreneur within the industry and holds a diverse range of executive board and committee appointments; state, nationally and internationally. Some key appointments are chair and co founder of AWISE – Australian Women in IT and Science Entity, founder of WIT Women in Technology (Qld) , and strategic advisor to GIDGITS – Girls Into Doing Great IT Society and member of Minister Coonan's Advisory Group nationally and Minister Cummin's Advisory Group within Queensland. In the USA for the induction and celebration later this year, Sonja will be joining an elite group who inspire future generations of women to see science and technology not only as a good career choice, but as an opportunity to make a positive difference in the world.

Bernhardt, a small business owner and mother of 3 says, "Inductees will be the role models for the next generation of young women and women on the cutting edge of improving our world and our future. I firmly believe that science and technology are the building blocks of our future and women have and can continue to play a significant role in these fields".

"This year's diverse group of Hall of Fame inductees are some of the best and the brightest professionals in the technology sector," said Carolyn Leighton, CEO, chairwoman and founder of WITI. "Their induction not only honors their individual achievements, but sets a stellar example for other women to follow. They are now a part of a select group of women who WITI has been honoring during the past ten years for their exemplary examples and contributions."

The awards ceremony will take place at the WITI Silicon Valley Conference on December 8, 2005. Bernhardt will be inducted alongside Barbara Bauer, vice president software engineering and development, Sun Microsystems; Sandra E. Burke, Ph.D, manager of Cardiovascular Systems Research at Abbott Vascular Devices; Melendy Lovett, President, Texas Instruments Educational & Productivity Solutions; Amparo Moraleda Martinez, president, IBM Spain, Portugal, Greece, Israel and Turkey and Neerja Raman, director, Imaging Systems Lab of HP.

For more information, visit www.witi.com/center/witimuseum/halloffame.

About WITI

Since 1989, WITI is the premiere global trade professional association for tech-savvy women who acquire wealth, power and influence in the business marketplace. With a global network of smart, talented women and a market reach exceeding 2 million, WITI has established powerful strategic alliances and programs to provide connections, resources, and opportunities within a supportive environment of women committed to helping each other. WITI's mission is to empower women worldwide to achieve unimagined possibilities and transformations through technology, leadership and economic prosperity.

About Sonja Bernhardt

Leading CEO of boutique consulting organization, Thoughtware Australia where expertise is in providing Project Management, HR Systems and Implementations, Qualitative Research and Surveys, and Software Development.

For more information, visit www.thoughtware.com.au and AWISE – www.awise.org.au

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