When Philadelphia’s leading female journalists, restaurant owners, consultants, entrepreneurs, and student leaders gathered at Temple University’s Mitten Hall, they hardly expected they’d be blowing bubbles.

Laughing as the bubbles popped, the women embraced the obvious message: Be daring, no matter the setting.

At the 16th annual League for Entrepreneurial Women’s Conference, held Oct. 20, the Greater Philadelphia region’s top female innovators came together to share stories on their respective paths to success, and honored those who have reached professional pinnacles.

Co-founders of the League for Entrepreneurial Women Dr. Elizabeth H. Barber, STHM Associate Dean; and Betsy Leebron Tutelman, Temple’s Senior Vice Provost for Strategic Communications; with Ellen Weber, Executive Director of Temple’s Innovation and Entrepreneurship Institute (IEI), hosted the event.

A packed room of women heard from keynote speaker Lu Ann Cahn, Director for Career Services at Temple’s School of Media and Communication. The face behind the bubbles, Cahn asked the women to think about how blowing bubbles felt. The overwhelming response was empowerment and freedom from judgment. Cahn, who spent 40 years in the broadcast news industry, including 27 with Philadelphia’s NBC10, was familiar with that feeling. After surviving breast cancer, Cahn found herself at odds with her career and challenged herself to try something new each day for a year. Her book, I Dare Me, documents her experiences with rediscovering her spark of individuality and confidence.

“No matter what you’ve accomplished, what you’ve survived, sometimes you forget who you are,” Cahn said. “The hardest first to do is a first that faces a fear.”

Like blowing bubbles, doing something that might be silly or might fail is how success was made, she said.

“I’m here to dare you to go on your own adventure,” Cahn said.

—Lora Strum