

# PLEN Conference: Women Unlocking Nonprofits

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Meet Erin Platt! She is a senior interested in sustainable urbanization who attended the Women Unlocking Nonprofits conference.

**Describe yourself and why you wanted to attend the PLEN Conference.**

I am a senior double majoring in Environmental Studies and International Development with a minor in Economics. I feel passionate about protecting the environment and helping others. I wanted to attend the PLEN Conference because I am really interested in working in the nonprofit sector to achieve my personal and career goals and I particularly appreciated the focus on women's empowerment.

**Describe your favorite parts of the conference.**

My favorite part of the conference was meeting the other young women who were participating. There were women of all different backgrounds from all over the country with different academic focuses. They all cared about contributing positively to their communities. To hear their questions and comments for the speakers helped me to think from a different perspective and everyone was so supportive of one another. In just a few short days I feel as though I was able to connect with other amazing young women in a motivational, powerful, and long-lasting way.

**What was your favorite job site that you visited?**

I was particularly impressed by the work that is being done at Martha's Table. What began as a food pantry/kitchen has expanded to include an education program for children and a thrift store, in addition to the hundreds of fresh and hot meals that are prepared on site every day. The people who work at Martha's Table really care about giving back to their community, and contributing to the capacity-building process that is necessary to break the poverty cycle that is so present in Washington DC. I was really pleased that we had the opportunity to contribute at least a few hours of our time to the organization.

**What do you hope to never forget?**

There is no right way to reach the point where we will end up. We can spend all of our time and energy attempting to plan each and every step in detail about how we can end up in the perfect job doing exactly what we want to be doing. What hearing from the women of the PLEN panels taught me is that opportunities that you could never plan for will arise, and you need to grab them when you get the chance. It is impossible to know exactly how we will get from point A to point B, but it is important to keep your priorities in mind and never to lose your authenticity.

**Why should other students attend a PLEN conference?**

Other students should attend a PLEN conference if they are interested in hearing from inspiring professional women and meeting other inspiring female students.

Does this sound like something you might be interested in? Tulane undergraduate students can apply to NCI for funding to attend PLEN conferences. Email Betsy Lopez at [elopez@tulane.edu](mailto:elopez@tulane.edu) for more information.

*Responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.*