

Rung for Women Video Transcript

I am Leslie Gill, president of Rung for Women.

Rung for Women is a career accelerator that helps women move into careers where we have been historically underrepresented.

So technology, geospatial, manufacturing, and we are like a curator.

And so we work with employers and we identify women who are intrinsically motivated to want to change their life and, improve their career options. Obviously, all of our research showed that when there was one area of life out of whack for women, everything's out of whack. And so we really wanted to create a space where women could invest in themselves both personally and professionally.

On the heels of COVID, we were finding that many women were living in isolation, playing the role of caregiver and caretaker, teacher.

You name it. We were, you know, home. And so when we opened our doors in March of 2021, people were excited. They're like, I can get out. I can try something new. I can, consider a new career pathway. And so our mission has really been impactful in that way in terms of helping women move up the rungs of the economic opportunity ladder.

Creating space in the community where women can invest in themselves both personally and professionally and really start to chart a path forward for themselves and their families. All of our members, they go through a fairly rigorous interview and application process.

And once they're accepted, they're accepted as part of a cohort. And so that cohort, just like in college, they might all start together, but they don't necessarily finish together depends on their career pathway, what their interests are, how long they need to earn a certification or credential, it really just depends on the career pathway, but the real benefit of the cohort model is they get to surround themselves with a community of likeminded women who are interested in sort of similar things. They go through their professional power skills course together, which Commerce has been really influential.

And helping us design this course around executive functioning and, power skills and so it just ends up being a really great community, a positive community of social influence, and it really helps our and persist through the program.

Our goal around building the ecosystem of workforce is really our commitment to rescaling and upskilling.

So especially post pandemic, so many women in particular are coming out of service industry jobs out of health care, and they want to figure out what's next, and so our focus around technology and manufacturing jobs that you can move into quickly without a bachelor's degree with a little bit of on the job training, you can move into good jobs and have a really successful career. And so, we sort of see our role in this is to identify where there's gonna be growth, which sectors are gonna have growth and make

sure that we're helping to train and reskill the talent pipeline so that they can move into those jobs quickly.

We are so lucky to be rooted in a community that is so generous like St. Louis and to have Commerce in our backyard has just been, such a really transformative experience.

Commerce from the early stages of the wrong development, like just in thinking about mission vision values, Commerce was at the table with us helping us developed this curriculum around customer service. And, you know, what is, great customer service, what is required to develop those customer service skills, and Commerce was really our partner, along with Maryville University and developing a curriculum that we now call professional power skills. It's evolved over time, but, Commerce being at the table was really our thought partner on what does success look like and how do we ensure that members going through this program have the best model for customer service out there and no one better than Commerce.

So our focus at Commerce extends beyond banking and it's really rooted in our purpose statement. It is we help you focus on what matters most. And that's for our customers, that's for our community. It's for our team members.

And so it just makes sense to partner with organizations like Rung who are doing the same for their members. The relationship initially started, as Leslie said, when Rung was first opening their doors and really focusing on that customer service role. Since then, our relationship has really evolved. Our Women's Employee Resource Group has gotten engaged with the member success network here at Brown.

Really serving as, a partner and a mentor to the women, so that they can learn about personal branding, and really practice those professional power skills that they're learning, in the wrong member program, with women who work at Commerce. I think as the region grows more diverse, we really need to be paying attention to mirroring the communities that we serve, and Rung is raising these women up, and sharing with them and helping them to stand in spaces that they may not have stood in before. And we fully support that too.