



INCLUSIVE SEMICONDUCTOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP 2025

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DEEP TECH, AI,
AND SEMICONDUCTOR INNOVATION

On February 5th, 2025, GSA WLI held its inaugural Inclusive Semiconductor Entrepreneurship Event at NVIDIA's offices in Santa Clara.

While the semiconductor industry continues to evolve, inclusivity remains a challenge, particularly in leadership. The WISE event tackled this issue by showcasing and supporting early-stage semiconductor and AI start-ups committed to equity and inclusion.

Hosted by the Global Semiconductor Alliance (GSA) and the Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI), the event connected innovators with top investors and venture capital firms. Attendees explored groundbreaking technologies through demos, posters, and presentations, gaining firsthand insight into deep tech, AI, and semiconductor advancements.

Start-ups were required to have at least one woman in a leadership role, reinforcing the importance of inclusive management.

THANK YOU TO  NVIDIA FOR HOSTING THIS EVENT!

PARTICIPATING COMPANIES

ANAFLASH AONdevices  AXIADO

celestial AI™

COOLSTAR
Technology

 CRYSTAL SONIC

 d-Matrix®

 EXERGY
Exergy Systems, Inc.

 movandi

 xLight

Ten incredible start-up companies were represented at the event, each bringing groundbreaking innovations to the semiconductor industry.

Anaflash (presented by Shahrzad Naraghi, CTO)

AONdevices (presented by Mouna El Khatib, Co-Founder, CEO, and CTO)

Axiado (presented by Shruti Jogi, Human Resources Specialist)

Celestial AI (presented by Jyothsna Kamati, ASIC Verification Engineer)

Coolstar Technology (presented by Xiaotong Lin, CEO)

Crystal Sonic (presented by Lara Bathurst, COO and CFO)

d-Matrix (presented by Sree Ganesan, VP Product)

Exergy (presented by Azita Yazdani, Founder and CEO)

Movandi (presented by Maryam Rofougaran, Founder and CEO)

x-Light (presented by Kevin Heidrich, CCO)

If you're interested in learning more about any of these companies or would like to receive their pitch deck, please feel free to reach out to wli@gsaglobal.org.



EVENT RECAP

COMPANY INTRODUCTIONS AND KEYNOTE



Howard Wright

VP, Startup Ecosystem

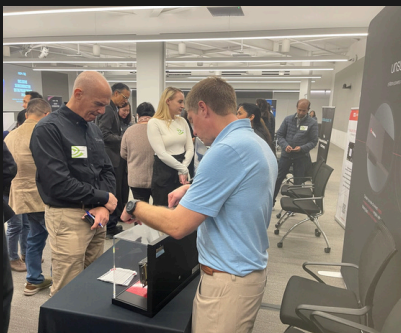
NVIDIA

The event kicked off with a short networking session, allowing attendees to connect before the presenting companies took the stage. Each startup was given one minute to introduce the cutting-edge work they have been engaged in, showcasing advancements across AI and hardware.

Following these introductions, Howard Wright delivered an engaging keynote, sharing his journey from the NBA to NVIDIA. He spoke about how an inclusive mindset helped shape his career, as leaders recognized his full potential beyond traditional expectations—an approach he continues to champion as Vice President of Startup Ecosystem at NVIDIA to uphold high standards and create and open opportunities for all.

He emphasized the importance of breaking down barriers to access, particularly in the startup and investment space. True meritocracy means ensuring equal access to capital, resources, and tools, enabling executives of all backgrounds to lead, execute, and drive innovation at the highest levels.

As part of NVIDIA's commitment to fostering innovation, Howard highlighted that NVIDIA provides start ups free access to its resources, ensuring that groundbreaking ideas aren't held back by a lack of support.



EVENT RECAP

PANEL DISCUSSION



Sophia Marzouk

Executive Director, Technology
Investment Banking

Morgan Stanley



Mouna El Khatib

Co-Founder, CEO & CTO

AONDevices



Andrew Homan

Managing Partner

Maverick Silicon



Sydney Sykes

Manager, VC Alliance

NVIDIA

The keynote was followed by a panel discussion, moderated by Sophia Marzouk, Executive Director of Technology Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley. The panel featured:

- Andrew Homan, Managing Partner, Maverick Silicon
- Mouna El Khatib, Co-Founder, CEO & CTO, AONDevices
- Sydney Sykes, Manager, VC Alliance, NVIDIA

Together, they explored the challenges women face in launching startups, including raising funds, identifying the right VC partners, and navigating the investment landscape. With expertise spanning business, semiconductors, and venture capital, the panel provided attendees with a well-rounded perspective on the steps needed to build and scale successful companies.

Attendees then had time to network, visit the start-up tables, view company technology demos, and enjoy a small bite before the event concluded.

A huge thank you to our WLI Entrepreneurial Program Committee for your dedication and hard work in bringing this event to life!

A special thank you to NVIDIA for hosting!

Testimonials

The event was a tremendous success, offering great presentations, demos, and networking opportunities. Congratulations to you and your team on a job well done!

- Sue Kim, VP of Corporate Marketing and Strategy, ANAFLASH

I'm very grateful to you, Traci, and your colleagues for organizing last week's event. I thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to supporting GSA WLI in the future. You really did a great job!

- Lara Bathurst, CFO and Co-Founder, Crystal Sonic

Appreciate all your efforts and extensive time that you are dedicating to WLI and GSA. Your event exceeded my expectations as always and it was an excellent event and turnout. Congratulations!

- Maryam Rofougaran, CEO and Founder, Movandi

I was very impressed by the strong line up of women leaders and energized by the event. Thanks for making it happen!

- Sree Ganesan, VP of Product, d-Matrix

What a great event! The pitches were great and so many interesting conversations.

- Diane Vanasse, VP of Marketing Communications, Credo

Celestial AI was proud to be represented by Design Engineer Jyothsna Sree K and Global Head of People and Culture Victoria Sevilla at the inaugural "Inclusive Semiconductor Entrepreneurship Forum" by the Global Semiconductor Alliance and the GSA Women's Leadership Initiative. As Howard Wright said in his keynote, "it is inspirational to hear from leaders and entrepreneurs, who happen to be women".

- Celestial AI

Thank you for the event today. It was well organized and very valuable.

- Henry Huang, Investment Director, Micron Ventures