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Prominent Denver women form business/ nonprofit consulting firm

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Three of Denver's most prominent female business-group leaders and consultants have formed a new firm that looks to utilize their expertise across the business, government and non-profit sectors.

Taloma Partners is the collaboration of Tamra Ward, Lori Fox and Maren Stewart. In discussion for more than a year, the firm began working with clients early this year and is going public with the announcement of its creation just now to inform community leaders of its existence.

Ward most recently worked as chief external relations officer for the Denver Zoo. Before that, she served as president and CEO of Colorado Concern and senior vice president of public affairs and communications for the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Fox has worked in corporate and government settings over the past 15 years and currently leads policy and stakeholder-engagement strategy for Panasonic's CityNOW headquarters as a consultant. She also has served as interim legislative director for Gov. John Hickenlooper, vice president of communications and public affairs for Pinnacol Assurance and regional director of corporate and public affairs for United Airlines, a subsidiary of United Continental Holdings Inc. (NYSE: UAL).

Stewart was vice president of external affairs at Children's Hospital Colorado before becoming the first president and CEO of LiveWell Colorado, which works with government and business groups to improve workplace wellness and population health. She has spent the past three years consulting on a variety of projects.

The unique place of Taloma – a word that combines the first two letters of each of the three partners' names – will be the wide array of experience the women bring



Lori Fox, Maren Stewart and Tamra Ward are the partners in the newly formed Taloma Partners.

that links the public and private sectors and that combines corporate focus and government lobbying. That is apparent in the long list of clients they bring to the firm at its inception, ranging from Panasonic and BBVA Compass to the Denver Zoo and Visit Denver to nonprofit/government entities like CollegeInvest and Metropolitan State University of Denver.

"We are all three of us so deeply rooted in this community, and we are passionate about Denver and Colorado," Fox said. "We hope Taloma Partners will make a lasting imprint on some of the most important initiatives in the city."

Consulting firms are common in Denver, enough so that Stewart acknowledged "the world probably doesn't need another consulting firm necessarily." But the breadth and depth of the partners' roughly

75 years of experience in this area is somewhat unique for a new company coming out of the gate.

The bipartisan nature of the partners, each of whom has worked at some point on both federal and state policy, also could turn some heads. While Fox served under the current Democratic governor, for example, Ward has served with several business organizations that, while nonpartisan, have worked particularly closely with Republican officials at the Legislature.

In addition to having external-affairs experience, each of the partners also has communications experience, giving the firm the ability to both advise and write for clients.

"We're an interesting and collaborative crew," Ward added.