



# **Riverbend Women Come Together for Perfectly I'Mperfect: A Women's Empowerment Summit**

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - Perfectly I'Mperfect: A Women's Empowerment Summit drew women across the Riverbend region for a day of growth and self-reflection.

Organizers Tara Hurst and Nina DeAngelo welcomed four other speakers, many sponsors and upwards of a hundred women to the summit on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023. They agreed it was a powerful experience to see so many women coming together to support each other throughout the event.

"We are just here today to empower women in the Riverbend area," Hurst said. "We want them to walk away empowered, motivated, encouraged, and honestly just heard. We want them to know that they're not alone and there are so many people and so many resources here that will allow them to get out of their comfort zones."

DeAngelo kicked off the morning with a speech titled "You Can't Spell Awesome Without 'ME'!" She spoke about "positive inner chatter" and encouraged a positive mindset to improve "the way you communicate with yourself and others." Hurst followed with her speech, "The Other Side of Fear and Doubt," about the power of choosing yourself.

Throughout the rest of the day, speakers Stacey O'Byrne, Rose Perry, Dr. Lori Franke-Hopkins and Katie Fry gave presentations about cultivating a "healthy mind, healthy body healthy spirit," Hurst said. Attendees also enjoyed breathwork and meditation exercises.

“I just love to be able to hold that space of compassion, grace and love for other women and just kind of be there for them until they can get there on their own,” DeAngelo said of organizing the summit. “It’s basically just women sharing their tragedy-to-triumph stories where they’re sharing that with other women to help maybe plant those little seeds in other people’s minds. Even though we go through dark seasons in life, there’s always light at the end of the tunnel. As long as you charge through and go forth, you can find that light.”

The event marked a month since the publication of international bestseller “Perfectly Imperfect: Remarkable Stories of Ordinary Women Overcoming Extraordinary Circumstances.” This anthology, compiled by DeAngelo and Hurst, tells the stories of women around the world, including several in the Riverbend region who wrote first-person accounts about overcoming hardship. You can read more about the book at [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](#).

For readers and attendees like Sara DeCourcy, these stories have been powerful. DeCourcy decided to attend the summit because she has decided to relearn who she is now that her kids are older.

“This is really helping me to find that path,” DeCourcy said. “Finding how much we really need the support of each other and how ready we are to give it has been really awesome.”

This was the main goal behind the summit, Hurst and DeAngelo agreed. They wanted to provide a space for local women to talk about their struggles, their successes and the control they have over themselves and the future. After a successful first event, Hurst promises it won’t be the last women's empowerment summit.

“I’m just super excited to see all the different ladies here today, gathering from different backgrounds and just hanging out and uplifting each other and being here for one another,” DeAngelo added. “I feel like this is super important — especially at this time in our world where the world itself really isn’t the best place right now — to have a place for women to come and sit together and have conversation and just enjoy each other’s company to really lift us up and make us feel like maybe it’s not so bad after all.”

For more information about the “Perfectly Imperfect” book, the summit and other upcoming events, visit [DeAngelo’s website at DynamicShiftConsulting.com](#) or [Hurst’s website at CoachTaraHurst.com](#)

