



# MORE THAN EXCEPTIONAL

In this special section, we highlight women who go beyond exceptional. We outline 10 historical pioneers who made it possible for women to vote, become doctors, purchase homes and be present in the courtroom. Because of these women, young girls were able to imagine themselves as educated business owners and executive directors who have presence in any room.

What makes all 30 women in this section unique is not that they are the only ones doing the work – but that they are encouraging other women to stand by their side and blaze the trail for the generation after them.





## DONDI SZOMBATFALVY

Bella Domicile

Dondi Szombatfalvy is one of two people in Wisconsin to become CLIPP™ Certified and was the 527th person internationally to complete the coursework and testing administered by the Living In Place Institute™. Certified Living In Place Professionals™ make it their mission to incorporate elements into their designs that make homes comfortable, safe and accessible for all.

When you consider that 60% of falls occur in the home and 33% of child injuries result from falls, it's easy to understand why one of the primary goals for a CLIPP™ is fall prevention. Falls resulted in \$50 billion in direct medical costs in 2015 according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While some updates can be major, often simple updates such as light-emitting outlet covers or towel bars that function as grab bars can make an important impact. It's key that a home functions for visitors as well as its occupants.

"Exceptional design," Szombatfalvy said, "seamlessly incorporates a broad spectrum of elements that make a home beautiful and functional."

To learn more about CLIPP™ design please visit [belladomicile.com](http://belladomicile.com) or give Dondi a call at 608-271-8241.



KITCHEN → BATH → LIVING ROOM → ANY ROOM



## MILDRED FISH-HARNACK



# WWII Resistance Warrior

“And I have loved Germany so much.” Those were the last words spoken by Mildred Fish-Harnack before she was beheaded. The World War II resistance fighter was the only American civilian to die by Adolf Hitler’s direct order, sentenced to death for the crime of spying. Together with her husband and a small resistance group—known to Nazi secret police as the “Red Orchestra”—Fish-Harnack smuggled secrets and helped many Jews escape persecution.

Mildred Fish was born in Milwaukee in 1902. Growing up, she learned how to read, write and speak both German and English. A natural writer, she earned her

bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree at the University of Wisconsin and taught literature in the English department. She wrote for the Wisconsin State Journal and the Wisconsin Literary Magazine.

At the UW, she also met her future husband, a student on fellowship from Germany named Arvid Harnack. He proposed at Picnic Point and they married on Mildred’s brother’s farm, two days after she passed her master’s degree exams.

The couple soon moved to Germany. Fish-Harnack earned her doctorate and taught at Berlin University, though she was fired a short time later for not being “Nazi enough.”

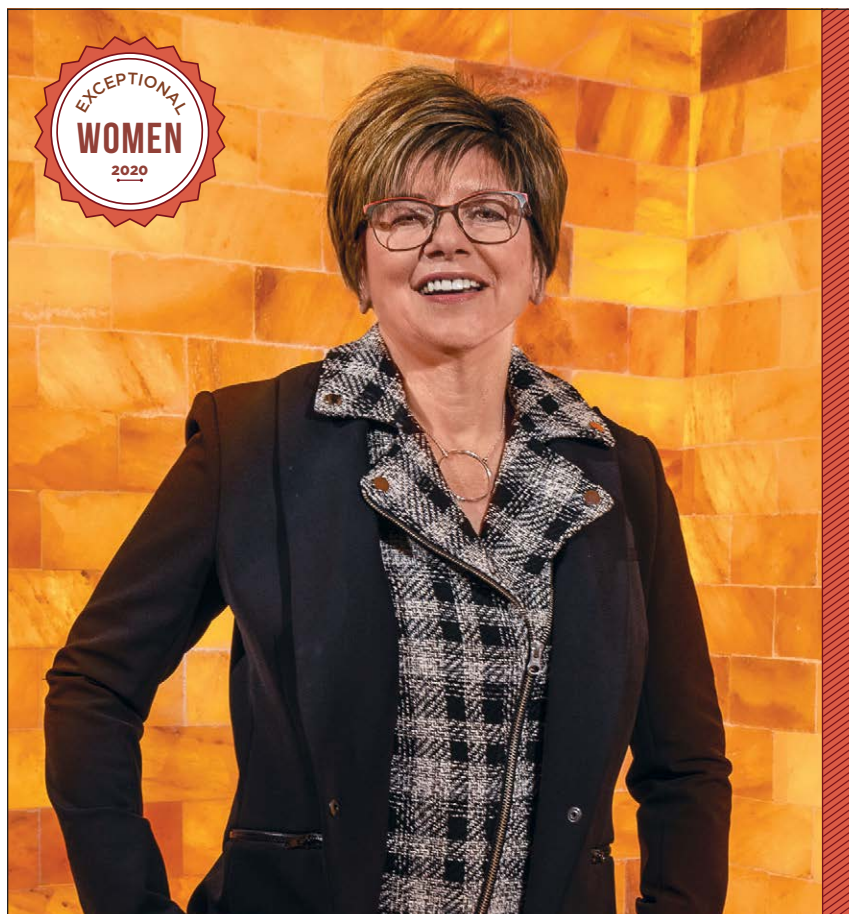
As Hitler and his regime rose to power, Mildred and Arvid were inspired to join the resistance. They published an underground newsletter, transmitted military intelligence to Moscow and helped Jews flee Germany.

German High Command discovered the pair’s espionage and arrested the Harnacks in 1942 while they vacationed near the Baltic Sea. Arvid was convicted

of treason and hanged in December 1942. Mildred was originally sentenced to six years in prison, but Hitler himself ordered she be retried, and in February 1943, she was executed.

Because of their connection with Communism, much of the world didn’t know of the Harnacks’ heroism until after the Cold War. However, in 1986, Wisconsin established September 16 as Mildred Fish-Harnack Day, which is also her birthday. In 1994, the UW–Madison International Division established an annual lecture series in her name to honor her courage, idealism and self-sacrifice.

Last summer, a sculpture paying tribute to Fish-Harnack was dedicated at Madison’s Marshall Park, just across Lake Mendota from the campus where she and her husband fell in love nearly a century ago. At the dedication ceremony, artist John Durbrow said his sculpture recognizes “Mildred’s strength, courage and resolve to address early on the forces of oppression which eventually inflamed the entire world.”



## Laurie Adams Breathe Salt & Sauna

Meet Laurie Adams, owner of Breathe Salt & Sauna and certified nutritional and functional health coach. Drawing from her own personal health journey and life-changing impact from halotherapy (salt therapy) and infrared sauna therapy, she knew bringing awareness of these therapies to family and friends was a must. Her goal is to improve the health and happiness of the communities around her. Adams invites you to Breathe, to enjoy a day of calming relaxation while sampling aromatherapy, chromotherapy, infrared sauna therapy and salt therapy.

[breathesaltandsauna.com](https://breathesaltandsauna.com)

*Breathe*  
SALT & SAUNA





VEL PHILLIPS

## A Woman Of Many Firsts

Vel Phillips holds a prominent place in Wisconsin history as a dedicated champion for racial equality and women's rights. A pioneer in law and politics, the accomplished Milwaukee native achieved many firsts, which helped pave the way for others:

- In 1951, she became the first African American woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School.
- She was the first woman and the first African American to be elected to the Milwaukee Common Council.
- In 1958 she became the first African

American woman elected to the Democratic National Committee.

- In 1971 she was appointed the first female judge in Milwaukee County, also becoming the first African American to serve in the state's judiciary.
- She was the first African American to win a statewide office when she beat eight primary candidates and was elected secretary of state in 1978.

Phillips helped lead the fight against unfair housing discrimination during the civil rights era, starting with her 1962 Fair Housing Law. The proposal, which would have made it illegal to discriminate against African American renters, was initially rejected by the Milwaukee Common Council.

Growing more frustrated, Phillips, who was already active in the League of Women Voters and the NAACP, partnered with noted civil rights activist Father James Groppi and the NAACP Youth Council to call out the fair housing

issue. Together, they organized 200 days of marches, which were met by violent counterprotests and police who deployed tear gas. Phillips defied the mayor's ban on marching and was arrested at one demonstration. "I felt nothing was going to stop us," Phillips later said.

For six years, Phillips continued to reintroduce her fair housing proposal. In April 1968, six weeks after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the Milwaukee Common Council finally passed Phillips' fair housing law.

In the 2015 Wisconsin Public Television documentary about her storied career, "Vel Phillips: Dream Big Dreams," Phillips said this: "I just thought that I would have a chance to really make a difference."

Phillips died in 2018 at the age of 94. Her legacy carries on, with a UW-Madison residence hall named in her honor, as well as a street in Milwaukee and the Juvenile Justice Center in Wauwatosa.

PHOTO BY VOCES DE LA FRONTERA



## Julie Umhoefer and Jennifer Haley Dwellings

This designing sister duo provides the missing link to the Madison furniture market with their new store in Fitchburg. It is everything they dreamed of while growing up working in their family's furniture store.

The vaulted ceilings, skylights and polished concrete floors create a fresh retail experience as customers browse the distinct selection of upholstered furniture and personalized home accessories.

The sisters offer their \$150 in-home design consultation to get you started on your dream interior. Customers can take advantage of either avenue to create a home they love.

[dwellings-furniture.com](http://dwellings-furniture.com)

**dwellings**  
interior design & home furnishings



**ADA JAMES**

## A Richland County Legacy

On June 10, 1919, Wisconsin became the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Suffragist leader and social activist Ada James played an important role in that distinction by convincing her father, former state senator David G. James, to personally deliver the ratification papers by train to Washington, D.C., barely beating a messenger from neighboring Illinois.

James spent much of her life championing various causes and learned a great deal about organizing at home. Both of her parents were active in the women's suffrage movement. Her mother founded the Richland Center Women's Club, which in 1866 invited Susan B. Anthony to speak.

James herself formed a club while still in high school to advance the cause of suffrage. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, James co-founded the Political Equality League of Wisconsin in 1911 and served as its president for two years.

Employing some creative campaign tactics — including hiring a motorboat to distribute brochures along the river and dropping pamphlets on county fairs from an airplane — she fought for her father's 1912 women's suffrage amendment, which voters ultimately defeated in a statewide referendum.

After the passage of the 19th Amendment, James turned her attention to temperance, pacifism and world peace, among other social issues. She lobbied Richland County government officials to create a local children's board to provide assistance for children in poverty, the first such organization in the state. Today, Ada James Place in Richland County offers affordable housing to people experiencing homelessness.



## Kimberly Monroe Allure Skin Health

At Allure Skin Health, aesthetic nurse Kimberly Monroe understands that when people look in the mirror, they're often their own worst critic. Beginning her career as an oncology nurse, she quickly discovered her passion for helping people look and feel their absolute best.

With over 25 years of experience in aesthetics, Kimberly is not only able to provide exceptional service to clients, she also improves their lives through personal connection. She opened Allure in 2012 as a practice where clients can rely on her to be a confidant and friend.

Kimberly believes that an "exceptional woman" has the confidence in herself to believe and support other women. This is why Allure supports other women in business by aligning with like-minded establishments and working to bring girls and women of all backgrounds together.

There's no place like Allure, and it's all because care and kindness take priority. Kimberly attributes her success to her passion and connection with people, saying, "Being kind is what real beauty is!"

804 Liberty Blvd, Suite 206  
Sun Prairie  
608.772.0069  
[allureskinhealth.com](http://allureskinhealth.com)







## UW Credit Union

"UW Credit Union welcomed me into my first executive role with incredible support."

—Anne Norman, senior vice president and chief marketing officer

"We see diversity as a source of strength and work hard to sustain an inclusive culture."

—Sheila Milton, director of cultural competency and inclusion

"Programs like caretaker leave reflect our commitment to work-life balance. I've thrived in my career while being the mom I want to be."

—Pam Peterson, associate vice president of human resources

Every woman has what it takes to be exceptional. Whether you bank with us or work for us, we'll help you build a life that makes you proud.

Here For Every You. | [uwcu.org](http://uwcu.org)



## Native American Healer for All

Throughout much of her life, Betsy Thunder was known across west central Wisconsin as an extraordinary healer for using traditional Ho-Chunk medicine to treat both Native American and white patients.

Thunder was born near Black River Falls as a member of the Ho-Chunk tribe (also known as the Winnebago). Thunder married a medicine man several years her senior who trained her in traditional and ceremonial medicine, which included properly collecting, preparing and administering herbs and treatments. As her husband had hoped, she passed along her knowledge and skills to future generations; at least one son and one grandson became natural healers, as well.

Residents in Jackson County and beyond trusted her as a skilled medical practitioner. Patients often gave her clothing, food or blankets in exchange for her services.

Despite knowing little English, Thunder also worked with many white patients. As the story goes, she treated the son of a prominent lumberman when the young boy became critically ill and doctors with more formal training couldn't find a cure. The child recovered after Thunder treated him for a few days with herbs, roots, barks and berries. To show his gratitude, the businessman gave Thunder enough lumber to build a small cabin on her 40 acres of land, and the townspeople helped build it to show their similar appreciation for her years of service.

In the 1900s, the U.S. government ordered Thunder's tribe to relocate to Nebraska. Thunder refused and hid in the hills of her ancestral land until she died. Her exact birthdate is unknown, but an obituary published in a 1913 Black River Falls newspaper reported her age at the time of her death to be an impressive 96 years old.





## JANA GYURINA

### Oak Park Dental

Real life experiences oftentimes create compassion and this holds true for Dr. Jana Gyurina of Madison's Oak Park Dental. After getting her braces removed as a child, Dr. Jana suffered chronically from TMJ, a condition that causes severe headaches, neck pain, and jaw pain. When she discovered neuromuscular dentistry at the age of 28, she knew she could help others who suffered from temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMJ).

"I'm passionate about helping others relieve their pain. Medications and other treatment modalities would work for a short period of time but were only temporary fixes that did not address the underlying cause of my pain."

With her focus on neuromuscular dentistry, her drive to find ways to relieve others' pain, ultimately fueled her success. "My personal experience with chronic pain combined with my extensive continuing education, has allowed our team at Oak Park Dental to change patients lives."

Dr. Jana's talented, all female practice is able to continue changing the lives of patients by utilizing the latest technology, such as prepless veneers, 3-D guided implant placement, full mouth cosmetic restorations, TMJ treatment, and sleep apnea treatment without the use of a CPAP.

[OakParkDentalMadison.com](http://OakParkDentalMadison.com)







## Patti Mackesey Boardman Clark Law Firm

A standard poodle named Hazel goes to work daily with Patti Mackesey, a paralegal at Boardman Clark.

It's a way for Hazel to get used to behaving in public, part of her training to become a service dog for Custom Canines Service Dog Academy, which provides service dogs to people with varying needs. Hazel has become a popular guest at the law firm over the past several months.

"She brings a smile to everyone's face," Mackesey said.

Mackesey is glad her commitment to volunteering is shared by Boardman Clark, a law firm with century-old roots in Madison. The firm's employees are encouraged to take a day of paid volunteer time to help at their favorite local charities. They also organize employee volunteers for events such as Brat Fest and the Special Olympics.

"It's a fun way to get to know your coworkers," Mackesey said. "It's a team-building activity."

[boardmanclark.com](http://boardmanclark.com)

**BoardmanClark**



**CARRIE  
CHAPMAN CATT**

## 'Emblem of Equality'

Wisconsin native Carrie Chapman Catt is a well-known figure in the women's suffrage movement. She campaigned for the right to vote and, after the 19th Amendment passed, founded the League of Women Voters.

When Catt graduated from Iowa Agriculture College in 1890 with a degree in science, she was the only woman in her class. She worked in Iowa as a law clerk, teacher, school principal and her district's first female superintendent. After moving to California, she co-edited her husband's newspaper, wrote a weekly feature about women's suffrage and eventually became San Francisco's first female newspaper reporter.

Activist leader Susan B. Anthony invited Catt to testify to an all-male Congress about proposed suffrage legislation, and in 1900 Catt succeeded Anthony as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWFA), a position she held until 1904, and again from 1915-1920.

In a speech celebrating the passage of the 19th Amendment, Catt remarked, "The vote is the emblem of your equality, women of America, the guarantee of your liberty. ... That vote has been costly. Prize it!"

To assist the millions of women newly eligible to vote, Catt stepped down from the NAWFA and founded the League of Women Voters, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. She then turned her attention to other social causes, fighting against child labor and for world peace. In the lead-up to World War II, she organized protests against Adolf Hitler's rise to power and pressured the U.S. to accept more Jewish refugees fleeing persecution.

In 1982, Catt was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame along with several of her fellow suffragettes. In the 1990s, Iowa State University established the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics and renamed a renovated botany building Carrie Chapman Catt Hall.





**CLARA BEWICK  
COLBY**

## First Female UW Valedictorian

In 1869, six women graduated from the University of Wisconsin. It was the institution's first co-educational class. Clara Bewick Colby was among them and has the distinction of being chosen as the university's first female valedictorian. A prominent journalist, Colby would spend her life advocating for the causes of women in higher education and women's suffrage.

Colby was born in England but grew up in Windsor, Wisconsin. As a teenager, she taught at a Dane County school to earn money for her family. After graduating from the UW, she taught Latin and history to women students and continued her own education, taking classes in French, Greek and chemistry. She resigned from the university only a few years later, when administrators denied her request for a pay increase.

Colby and her husband, a UW Law School graduate, moved to Nebraska. There, she established a public library and worked as principal of a local school district, along with championing the rights of rural women. In 1883, she launched the Woman's Tribune, a monthly newspaper for which she wrote, edited and set type. The Tribune became the official paper of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

Working with fellow suffragists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she wrote and lectured about women's voting rights. However, after a long separation and eventual divorce, national suffrage leaders shut her out of the movement, fearing she would stain their reputation.

She was, however, allowed to serve as a delegate to the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance at Budapest in 1913. Sadly, Colby died in 1916, just four years before the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving white American women the right to vote.



## Deb Corning Décor for the Well-Dressed Home

Deb Corning started her design remodel business nearly 20 years ago. Corning was the first Wisconsin woman to receive a Certified Remodelers Designation through NARI and become a licensed general contractor. Since then DC Interiors & Renovations has offered design and remodeling services.

"We have a reputation for taking care of the details," Corning said. "Our niche is listening to clients and helping them every step of the way, from design through remodeling. If people love the home that they live in they are more successful in every phase of life because they feel comfortable, satisfied and surrounded by the things they love."

Most recently Corning opened Décor, a home accents store located in Fitchburg where customers can find a unique selection of accessories, art, furniture and more in a variety of styles.

[decormadison.com](http://decormadison.com)



DC INTERIORS & RENOVATIONS





## Lynda J. Patterson, FASAE, CAE AMPED Association Management

Lynda Patterson's leadership led to her first executive director position at age 25. She spent the next 15 years running trade and professional societies.

When she moved to Madison 12 years ago, she looked for a national association CEO role. Seeing none, Patterson built her own association management company, AMPED Association Management.

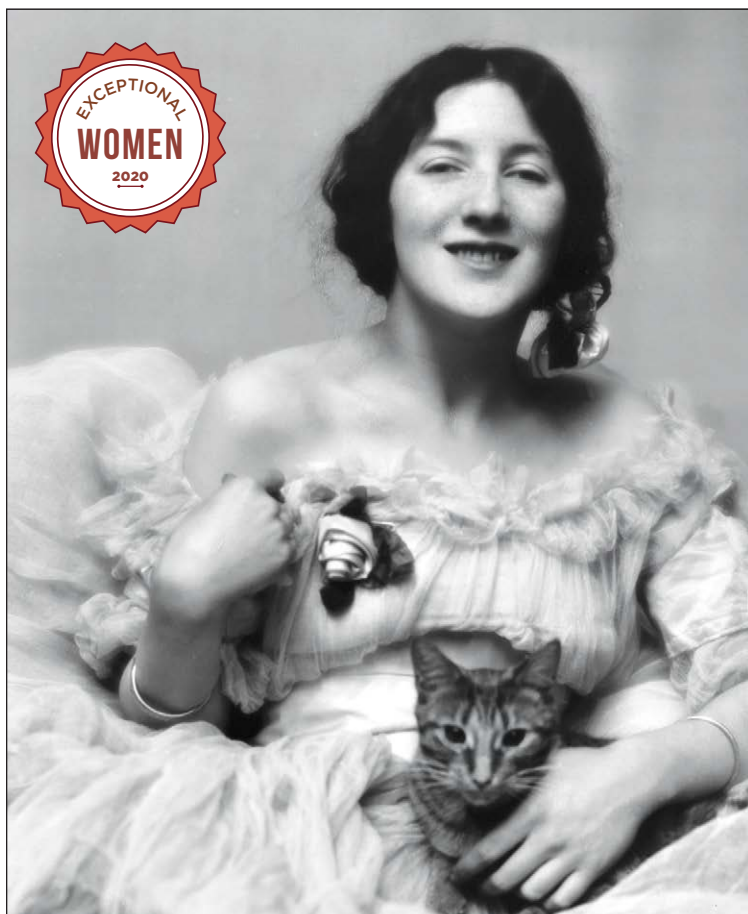
"We've brought 17 national associations to Madison and Washington, D.C.," she said of the company's success. "We're their headquarters."

AMPED's diverse clients include Women in Government Relations, Association of Equipment Management Professionals, Fantasy Sports and Gaming Association, and Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis. AMPED also provides consulting services and strategic planning for associations and their volunteer leaders.

Patterson said she hopes other women are inspired by her success as a business owner, volunteer leader and mother of four.

"I really want to help open doors for women," she said.

[manageassociations.com](http://manageassociations.com)



## Audrey Munson Hilton Madison Monona Terrace

It can be easy to overlook the bronze figure who watches over Madison from atop the state Capitol.

Audrey Munson was a female pioneer and a symbol of freedom in the 1900s. That is why Hilton Madison Monona Terrace named the new restaurant after this swing era role model.

"She is our muse for the creativity in our food and beverage menus," said manager Ranette Maurer.

Many of our specialty cocktails are inspired by Audrey's personality and lifestyle, including The Muse, made with Milagro Silver tequila and Ouzo #12 with fresh ginger, lime and chambord.

"We wanted our restaurant to be a symbol of inspiration," Maurer said. "And Audrey was a perfect choice."

[hiltonmadison.com](http://hiltonmadison.com)







## Iconic Artist

Even as a young child growing up on a Sun Prairie farm, the woman who would become one of the most important and influential American artists of the 20th century knew exactly what she wanted to be.

Georgia O'Keeffe was inspired by the nature that surrounded her family home, from trees and flowers to barns and country life. Her sisters, Catherine and Ida, were also budding young artists. A local teacher and watercolorist who boarded at the O'Keeffe farmhouse gave the girls drawing lessons.

O'Keeffe began more formal art lessons at Madison's Sacred Heart Academy, then learned from a high school art teacher who used flowers to demonstrate color and shape techniques.

When she turned 18, O'Keeffe left Wisconsin and began art training, first at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, then at The Art Students League in New York. Unfulfilled by school, she tried traveling the country teaching but wound up back in New York, where she began painting full time.

In the first few decades of her career, O'Keeffe created some of her most innovative and iconic paintings, full of flowers and lush lakeside landscapes. Her frequent vacations to New Mexico inspired a second phase of her career, painting open skies, rugged mountains and bleached animal bones, all tinted in her own distinctive color palette.

Toward the twilight of her career, her 1976 illustrated autobiography was a bestseller and President Gerald Ford awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She died in 1986 at the age of 98.

Today, the city of Sun Prairie honors her with a historical marker and special events. The University of Wisconsin awarded her an honorary degree and she was given the Wisconsin Governor's Award for Creativity in the Arts in 1966.



## Kristen Carreira Carreira Quinn Financial

Kristen Carreira did not have any female mentors when she entered the financial advising field more than a decade ago. So she decided to set an example herself, starting Carreira Quinn Financial in 2018.

"I am in a very male-dominated field, so to be a significant player in that field and be able to reshape it is hugely important to me," she said.

Carreira Quinn Financial, located in downtown Madison, offers an array of investing, financial planning and insurance services to help clients pursue their financial goals. Carreira said running her own firm allows her to offer more services than when she was a financial advisor for a national company. She also can take a more personalized approach.

"It really allows me to understand my client's needs and goals on a deeper level," she said.

Securities and advisory services offered through LPL financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC.

[carreiraquinn.com](http://carreiraquinn.com)







## Meg Pekarske Husch Blackwell

Meg Pekarske of Husch Blackwell didn't grow up dreaming of being a lawyer, but rather was called to it through her compassion for others. Little did she know that practicing hospice law would lead her to become a respected name in this niche industry.

As the exclusive firm practicing hospice law in Wisconsin, Husch Blackwell serves hospice and palliative care providers nationwide from Hawaii to Maryland. It's a dedication to the industry that is unmatched by any other law firm in the country.

Pekarske's successful career can be attributed to her drive and motivation to give those working in hospice care the best support possible, and to the way she connects compassionately and personally with clients.

"It's so important to be who you are," she said. "If you bring your whole self to what you do, people see that, and while it may not resonate with everyone it will attract those who you do want to work with. Hospice people are my people, and I want to continue to learn and grow with them to assist them in new and expanded ways."

**33 East Main Street, Madison • 608.255.4440 • 608-258-7138**  
[huschblackwell.com/offices/Madison\\_WI](http://huschblackwell.com/offices/Madison_WI)

# HUSCH BLACKWELL



## Marla Bergh Serial Entrepreneur

Founder of The Food Court Agency, Marla Bergh Photography and Borrowed Bar,

Marla Bergh is a seasoned marketer and creative director who has launched three successful small businesses based in Madison. "In life, work and business, I think everyone should blaze a trail for someone else," she said.

The passionate entrepreneur works with businesses on their marketing campaigns. She has even coordinated a client's appearance on "Shark Tank." Her philosophy is: "As long as the Earth is spinning, you should be dreaming and creating."

Bergh recently opened a studio space downtown where she runs her photo studio and leads creative projects for emerging and established brands.

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**@mbergh78**

MARLA BERGH  
PHOTOGRAPHY







## Pam Keiner Maly Roofing Company, Inc.

Owning a commercial roofing company as a woman is not the norm.

Being a woman leader in the commercial roofing industry requires hard work and resilience, said Pam Keiner, owner of Maly Roofing.

"For 21 years I've been determined to prove that it is possible for women to exist in the roofing industry."

In 2013, she was recognized at her first roofing conference for her success as one of four women contractors from across the country. Although the accolades were deserved, Keiner is most proud of her team's accomplishments.

"We've worked at the Madison Library and The Edgewater Boathouse Patio. It gives me great pride knowing we can thrive in the industry and make a difference in the Madison community," Keiner said.

[malyroofing.com](http://malyroofing.com)



## Katie Frank REFORMadison

Katie Frank is a risk taker.

At 28, she graduated from veterinary school with more than \$100,000 in student loan debt and an unsettling feeling that working as a veterinarian was no longer something she wanted to spend the rest of her life doing.

With the stressors a new family can bring, she found solace through exercise. When she took her first Lagree class, a full-body cardio and strengthening session that takes place on a moving platform, she knew she needed a career change. She had never written a business plan, never taken a managerial class, never even thought about owning her own business.

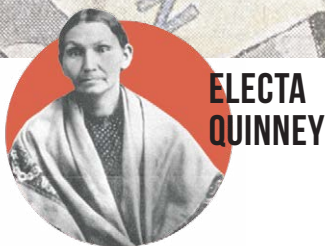
"It was daunting, but there are certain opportunities that come around," Frank said. "And this one was mine."

REFORMadison opened in 2018. As the owner of the only Lagree studio in Wisconsin, Frank believes REFORM's success is due largely to the other exceptional women trainers who believed in the risk she took.

[reformadison.com](http://reformadison.com)






**ELECTA  
QUINNEY**

## Public Education Pioneer

Even before Wisconsin became a state, Native American children and the white children of early settlers in the Fox Valley received a superior education thanks to Electa Quinney, the state's first public schoolteacher.

Quinney, a member of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians, grew up in New York. Her spirit name in her native language was Wuh-weh-wee-nee-meew Quan-au-kaunt.

Passionate about education, she attended top-notch boarding schools, received her advanced education at a female seminary in Connecticut and taught for six years at a mission school.

When the U.S. government ordered the

mass removal of native people from New York, Quinney's brother led her tribe west to Wisconsin to relocate on Menominee lands.

A year after arriving in the area that's now Kaukauna, Quinney opened the first public school in the Wisconsin part of Michigan Territory. Most of her students could not afford to pay educational fees, so the school relied solely on public funding instead. (Until then, most children learned under private tutors, at private schools run by churches or at military facilities.)

Quinney taught 40 to 50 students at one time, in a one-room log schoolhouse on the Fox River, which operated in connection with a Presbyterian mission. Though most of her students were Native American, everyone studied together in English, learning arithmetic, geography, history, language and penmanship. One former student said later the school was

modeled after some of the best public schools in New England, inspired by Quinney's own early education and teaching career.

In the 1830s, Quinney married a Mohican Methodist minister from Canada, his mission work taking them to Missouri for a time. After he died, she remarried — this time to a Cherokee newspaper editor — and moved back to Wisconsin, where she lived until her death in 1885.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee created the Electa Quinney Institute for American Indian Education in her honor, praising her for using education to prepare young people to meet challenges in their communities. She's also the namesake for Electa Quinney Elementary School in the Kaukauna Area School District. Last year, the state voted to proclaim November 1, Electa Quinney Day in Wisconsin.



## Jesse Marcks Au Fait

Master hairstylist Jesse Marcks wanted to create a salon environment for clients that felt warm, creative and modern. She created a learning environment that allows more time with clients and more time training a new generation of stylists. Staff members train under Marcks for a minimum of one year and take part in advanced education at least six times a year.

Marcks opened Au Fait in Madison in 2012, relying primarily on word-of-mouth advertising. She and her team of five are like family and believe in giving back to the community through local nonprofit organizations in Madison such as Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, Porchlight and Santas Without Chimneys.

Au Fait has a reputation for providing in-depth client consultations, forecasting the latest trends (new in 2020: reverse lobes, center parts, pastels and ponytails), and major makeovers.

"I love to create customized looks to bring out the best in each client," Marcks said.

[aufait.me](http://aufait.me)







**SHIRLEY  
ABRAHAMSON**

## Presence on the Bench

Respected as one of America's sharpest legal scholars, Shirley Abrahamson achieved many firsts during her distinguished judicial career, paving a remarkable path for future generations.

Abrahamson was born in New York City to first-generation Jewish immigrants from Poland. She earned an A.B. magna cum laude from New York University. She finished first in her class at Indiana University School of Law in 1956 and was the only woman in her class.

She earned her S.J.D. at the University of Wisconsin Law School and was hired by La Follette, Sinykin, Doyle & Anderson as that firm's first woman attorney. She

practiced there for 14 years, eventually becoming a partner, while still teaching classes at the UW Law School.

At a time when there weren't very many women in law school or at law firms, let alone on the bench, it was a major milestone when, in 1976, then-Gov. Patrick Lucey appointed her to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. She would win reelection four times.

During a speech she delivered in 1980, Abrahamson shared her response when asked what being a woman brings to the bench. "My gender — or, more properly, the experiences that my gender has forced upon me — has, of course, made me sensitive to certain issues, both legal and nonlegal. So have other parts of my background. ... Each of us is a person with diverse experiences. ... If all judges were the same, why have seven?"

In 1996, Wisconsin native and then-chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, swore

Abrahamson into office as chief justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, a position she held until 2015.

Abrahamson earned a reputation as one of the hardest-working judges around. Fellow justice Ann Walsh Bradley once told the State Bar of Wisconsin that Abrahamson worked so late, so often that she developed a close relationship with the night custodians at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Abrahamson was the longest-serving justice on the Wisconsin Supreme Court in state history. Upon news of Abrahamson's retirement last summer, longtime friend and associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Ruth Bader Ginsberg released this statement: "Wisconsin was fortunate to have her steady hand at the helm of its Judiciary. During her long tenure, she has inspired legions of law graduates to follow in her wake to pursue justice, equal and accessible to all."

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## Francesca Johnson Makeup by Francesca

Inspired by her mother, an Italian immigrant who ran her own clothing business, and her father, who encouraged her to find her passion, Francesca Johnson knew from a young age she wanted to be her own boss and inspire others.

"It never feels like work because it's what I'm meant to do," Johnson says of Makeup by Francesca, the professional makeup and styling business she opened in 2014 after raising her children and establishing a successful 25-year career in cosmetics. Her Verona shop is located in The Purple Goose, a business owned by a fellow female entrepreneur. "There are so many women there who inspire one another," Johnson says.

In addition to instructing teens about makeup, transforming beautiful brides and styling models at photo and video shoots, Johnson authentically cares for all her clients and delivers a unique experience that not only alters their look, but also boosts their confidence.

[makeupbyfrancescaj.com](http://makeupbyfrancescaj.com)

*Makeup  
by Francesca*





NOVA board members:  
left to right and top  
to bottom: Andrea Barnes,  
Melissa Campbell, Jason  
Gennaro, Laura Brandon,  
Kristine Lohman, and  
Lindsey Kromm.

## Lindsey Kromm

### Terso Solutions

Lindsey Kromm learned about Terso Solutions in Fitchburg through her previous job as a recruiter and knew she had to work there.

"I sort of recruited myself," she laughs.

Three years later, Kromm helped build the Account Management Program and was promoted to assistant director of client services.

Terso Solutions develops RFID inventory technology solutions for companies in the health care and life sciences industries. As Kromm explains, Terso is unique because it has the resources of a larger company (Terso is owned by Promega Corp.) but feels like a smaller startup.

"We're all helping craft the vision of what Terso will be," she said.

Kromm is also passionate about the women's initiative she launched. NOVA (Networking, Opportunity, Value and Advancement) involves recruiting more diverse candidates and improving everyone's understanding of inclusion.

"Our culture — this cool mix of backgrounds and perspectives, and how we treat one another — makes us successful," Kromm said.

[tersosolutions.com](http://tersosolutions.com)



**ARDIE  
CLARK HALYARD**

## Fair Housing Advocate

Many African American families in Milwaukee can thank Ardie Clark Halyard for helping them reach their dream of owning a home.

Throughout much of the 20th century, Halyard was an active community leader and tireless crusader against racial discrimination. Born to a family of sharecroppers in Georgia, she trained as a teacher and graduated from Atlanta University. She and her husband, Wilbur, moved to Milwaukee in 1923, and the following year they opened Columbia Savings & Loan, the first such business owned by African Americans.

At that time, many African Americans faced racism, segregation and redlining, unable to move into modern middle-class life through homeownership. The Halyards sought to tear down those immense barriers and fight back against discriminatory lending practices. For decades, Columbia Savings & Loan was the only place African Americans could turn for financial assistance. Today, it remains one of only a few black-owned banking institutions in the country and is a staple of the Milwaukee community.

Halyard helped organize the Wisconsin State Conference of the NAACP and, with Milwaukee civil rights activist Father James Groppi, established the NAACP Youth Council, an instrumental group behind the city's fair housing movement. She served as the Youth Council's first president and first treasurer. In 1951, Halyard was named the first woman president of the Milwaukee chapter of the NAACP.

In addition to campaigning for fair housing, Halyard served on the Wisconsin State Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education for more than eight years. She was a member of the Wisconsin Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, which advised state leaders on issues that directly impacted women, such as sexual assault, marital property and divorce. •