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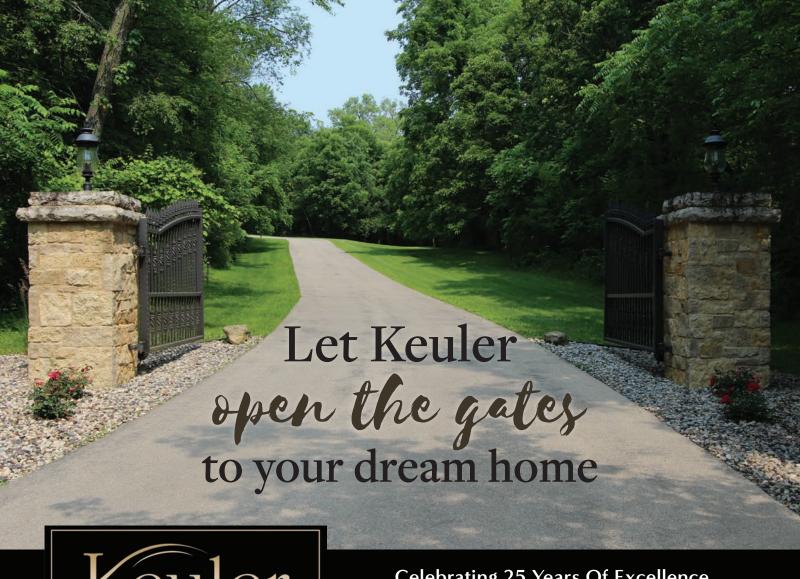
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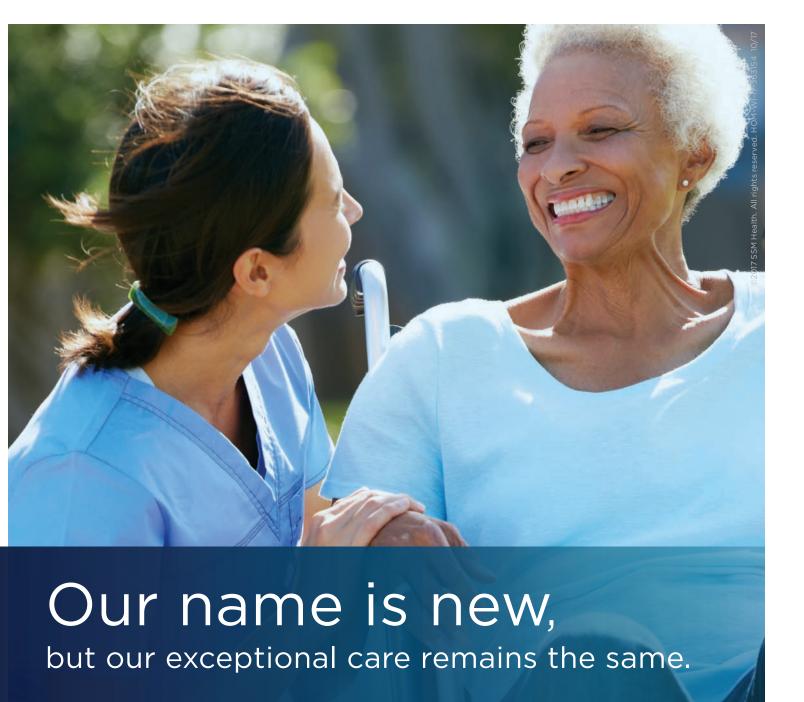
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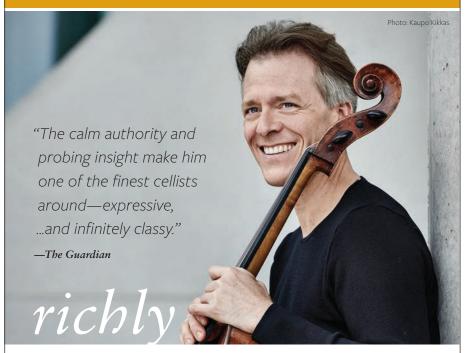
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VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES
ASHLEY QUINTO POWELL
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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
KATE BAST
kate@bravaenterprises.com



MANAGING EDITOR
MARNI MCENTEE
marni@bravaenterprises.com



ASSISTANT AND DIGITAL EDITOR RACHEL WERNER rachel@bravaenterprises.com



ART DIRECTOR
SUNNY FRANTZ
artdirector@bravaenterprises.com



DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & EVENTS GRAPHIC DESIGN ASHLEY DUCHEMIN and@ntmediagroup.com



MARKETING & EVENTS MANAGER MEGAN GLAESER megan@bravaenterprises.com



ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
JULIE SCHILLER
ads@ntmediagroup.com



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LEE ACKER lee@bravaenterprises.com



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT JODY WISZ jody@ntmediagroup.com



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Jennifer Schwarzkopf jes@ntmediagroup.com



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Megan Tepe mbt@ntmediagroup.com

INTERNS
EDITORIAL: MEGAN ROESSLER

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NEXT MONTH





RELATE



GET FIT

THIS ISSUE WE PLAY with ideas about what it means to "be fit" in various aspects

As women we can feel the pressure to be on-trend and on-style. To me, achieving those is no small feat-with new trends coming at us at lightning speed, changing with each season and year. As much as I love a great outfit and look, I simply can't keep up with a constant trendy new wardrobe.

And so, we decided to riff on the idea of how fabulous fashion can be on a budget. Shanna Wolf, stylist and photographer, has her pulse on what's hot, new and happening and gives us great looks without the top-dollar price tag. In a nod to financial fitness, Assistant Editor Rachel Werner-a style maven with a fabulous knack for rocking a vintage look-provides us a thoughtful look, with facts and figures, into how we spend our money on fashion, too, in consideration of being both financially fit and fashionable.

Fashion can be an outward model of how we feel-it can accentuate, it can hide aspects of our external and internal personal fitness. In the feature "Finding Balance" writers Emily Leas and Katrina Simyab explore the yin and the yang of diet and exercise—too much, too little, just right. Together they inspire us to think about finding the mindset of the middle path-the one that leads to true overall health, with a warm embrace of real body love and acceptance.

Fit comes into play as a broader community idea in this issue, as well. Chartered in Madison 110 years ago, the YWCA has been at the fore of the important work to fix racial and gender disparities and inequities. It has put into place meaningful programs that not only empower women but also improve both Madison as a city and the lives of its citizens.

In her feature story on P. 46, Lisa Bauer tells us about the YWCA's rich history and deep impact-last year alone, it served more than 4,000 Madisonians, providing housing and shelter, and vital job training and transportation. The YWCA raises women and families out of homelessness, serves as a thought-leader on racial and restorative justice, and through its YWeb Career Academy provides cutting edge IT training-helping women and people of color see themselves as a fit in a burgeoning and lucrative career field.

When I reflect on what this month's issue shares, I am struck by the idea that "being fit," then, is not just about aspiring to a sweet spot, but also about challenging ourselves and our community to re-think, find and ensure that balancing point where life can be lived good and well.

Editor-in-Chief

ON THE COVER

Yuliva Slesareva simply rocks our frugal fashions. Styled and photographed by Shanna Wolf. Photographed at MMoCA. For inspiration, read the story P. 40.



DON'T MISS!

THRIVE Career Workshop, Feb. 21: Darcy Luoma presents her new Thoughtfully Fit program exploring "Balanced Conversations for Stronger Relationships." Details: BRAVAmagazine.com.



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LISA BAUER I "YWCA MADISON," P. 46 Lisa is a writer for the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies, helping to promote and support lifelong learning across the state of Wisconsin. When she's not writing, she's

hanging out with friends and family (including two teens who still like to hang with her. Score!), doing yoga, or spending time outside.



EMILY LEAS I "GOING FOR THE GOLD," P. 24 Emily relishes the deep dive into a story, and has been a freelance writer for close to 15 years starting in Michigan, then Montana and now Madison for the last eight

years. She also loves seeing new places with her husband, roaming the dog park with her puppy, Duncan, and paddleboarding!



HILLARY SCHAVE I "YWCA MADISON," P. 46 Hillary is the creative force behind the local business Azena Photography. Her vast experience in documentary and editorial style wedding photography has helped to create some

truly genuine and beautiful portraits of the local women featured here in BRAVA Magazine. She loves food, music, travel, books and her little family of three.



KATRINA SIMYAB I "FINDING BALANCE," P. 33 Katrina is a blogger and plus-size model who also creates and manages social content for brands of all sizes. She uses her blog to explore beauty trends, showcase styling

tips and talk openly about her own self-love journey. Born and raised in Madison, Katrina enjoys connecting with other creatives, traveling with her boyfriend and spending quality time with her parents and four younger siblings.



SHANNA WOLF I "FRUGAL AND FASHIONABLE," P. 40 Shanna is a freelance photographer with a background in advertising and communications, specializing in portrait, documentary and interior

photography. Her photography aesthetic is modern with simplicity and balance. She loves the storytelling of still photography and being a contributor to publications with meaningful messages. Her personal work is focused on travel and wandering, using her camera as her sketchbook.



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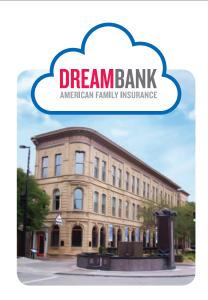


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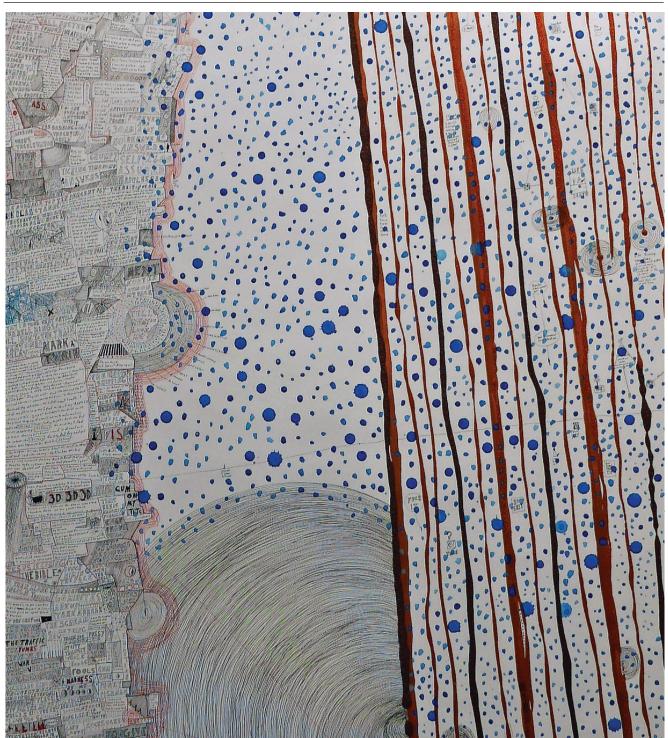
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CALL TO ACTION | Confront propaganda's overt and subtle themes through Art Literature Laboratory's latest exhibition "Shhh." The multimedia collection of work by American artists is a nod to the various mechanisms used to sway public opinion, particularly regarding political agendas and cultural narratives. Through March 3. Art Literature Lab, Madison. artlitlab.org.

CONGRATULATIONS!



BRAVA 2017 WOMAN TO WATCH SAGASHUS LEVINGSTON'S plans to debut a national conference come to fruition this month. Her brand and social enterprise Infamous Mothers hosts "The Talk Back: Between the Covers," a premiere annual event filled with information, ideas and inspiration for women who mother from the margins of society and for the social workers, organizations and institutions that impact their lives. Feb. 22-25 at the Marriott Hotel in Middleton. thetalkbackconference.com.



BRAVA 2015 WOMAN TO WATCH SABRINA "HEYMISS PROGRESS" MADISON launched the Progress Center for Black Women. Its mission is to design a community center and unique programming that builds connection and opportunity for women and families. We catch up with Progress in next month's issue of BRAVA! centerforblackwomen.org



AUTHOR AND BRAVA CONTRIBU-TOR AND SPEAKER ANN GARVIN'S

Tall Poppies, an author-driven marketing co-op-the first of its kind in the U.S.—to lift women authors while connecting them directly with readers and the publishing world, has struck a deal with The Francis Ford Coppola winery in California. Bottles & Books pairs two great reads by a Tall Poppy member, with two wines from Coppola-perfect pairings for book clubbers! Garvin's latest title. "I Like You Just Fine When You're Not Around," is one of the first two book selections. tallpoppies.org.

OUT + ABOUT

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Madison Ballet's "She" celebrates the short works of female choreographers and the many faces of women in classical and contemporary ballet who challenge us to redefine what is male and what is female. Times vary. Bartell Theater, Madison. Tickets: madisonballetorg.

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FEB. 10 | READ(Y) TO WEAR MADISON READING PROJECT

The annual paper-inspired fashion show—with designs made by local teams competing for best in show-raises funds for this nonprofit that helps kids connect with a love of reading and puts books in their hands. 7-10 p.m. Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club, Madison. Tickets: madisonreadingproject.com.

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BRAVA EVENTS

FEB. 21 I THRIVE CAREER WORKSHOP WITH DARCY LUOMA

In this "Balanced Conversations for Stronger Relationships" workshop, we'll learn how to have better conversations that matter. Drawn from Luoma's new Thoughtfully Fit programming, the tips and tools will help immediately re-align your relationships. 8 a.m.-11:45 a.m. Promega BTC Event Center, Fitchburg. BRAVAmagazine.com.

MARCH 3-4 | MADISON KIDS EXPO AN ENTIRE DAY FOR FAMILIES TO PLAY!

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BRIANNA DECKER



GOING FOR THE GOLD

U.S. HOCKEYTEAM HAS THREE WISCO GALS

BY EMILY LEAS

WHEN THE USA Women's National Hockey Team takes the ice in Pyeong Chang, South Korea, for the 2018 Winter Olympics, three players from Wisconsin help fill the 23-player roster. Amanda Kessel of Madison and Brianna Decker of Dousman both make their second appearance at the games, and Alex Rigsby of Delafield competes in her first Olympics.

The team recently won the World Championship against Canada, and it won another fight over compensation in a dispute over pay disparities between the men's and women's programs.

The three elite players from Wisconsin chatted with BRAVA about their lives in competitive sports and what it takes to make it to the Olympics, slated Feb. 9-25.

AMANDA KESSEL: "SOMEBODY'S ALWAYS TRYING TO TAKE YOUR SPOT."

What was your journey through hockey like growing up?

I got put into a pair of skates when I was 4 and fell in love with the sport. I went to boarding school at the age of 14 and I loved it. You leave home early, but it was the best thing for my hockey career...I've learned that you have to always be prepared and be in shape because there's always the next camp or tournament coming up. Somebody's always trying to take your spot.

What's your biggest fear when it comes to playing at this level?

I think it's just growing too old for the sport. There are minimal professional leagues right now. They've been getting bigger in the last few years, so hopefully that continues so that I can keep playing.

Have you ever bad any major injuries?

I suffered a concussion before the last Olympics and had lasting effects from that for about two years. Those were some terrible years of my life and I'm lucky to have made it through.

On days you don't feel like training, what drives you to get back out on the ice?

Some days are tough, whether you're tired or sore. But it's really about my teammates; knowing that I'm going to be training with them and training for them, trying to be the best I can to help the team in any way I can. It's so great to go through that with these women.

BRIANNA DECKER: "THE GAME IS VERY PHYSICAL."

What did it take to get to this level?

It was really committing myself every day to not only being a better player, but also to be a better teammate. Whether I was playing soccer, softball or hockey, I just concentrated on making others around me better as well. But there was a lot of sacrifice along the way-not being able to go to birthday parties, or going out with friends on the weekend. All those little sacrifices helped me get to where I am now.

How do you make an impact on younger players today?

I try to run camps in the summer, whether it's with our youth national team programs or other camps around the U.S. It's just awesome. I ran a camp in Nashville, Tennessee, last summer and that was really fun because there aren't a lot of girls in the South interested in the sport, so it was fun to get them excited about it.

What is something that you think most people don't realize about female bockey players or the women's game?

I would have to say how physical our game is. Even though technically there is no hitting allowed, the game is very physical. Also, just how driven we are as human beings. We want the best for each other, but also to have an impact on younger girls, not just in our sport, but in other sports as well.

ALEX RIGSBY: "MY MOM POINTED OUT THAT I COULD DO THAT, TOO, SOMEDAY."

How old were you when you started playing bockey?

I was 5 years old when I learned to skate at Naga-Waukee ice arena, just a couple minutes from my house [in Delafield], and then played at the Pettit National Ice Center through my older years. I played boys hockey the whole way through up until college when I went to UW-Madison and played on the women's team.

Was that a hard transition? Playing with mostly boys and then moving to an all-girls team?

It was just different. I was fortunate to play on teams where I had earned the respect of my teammates and coaches. I viewed them as my brothers. When I got to college, the women on the team were unbelievable and to this day are still my best friends. But it's definitely different hockey-wise. I was going from battling with 6'2" guys in front of me to a 5'7" female. I could actually see over people!

What did it take for you to get to this level of bockey?

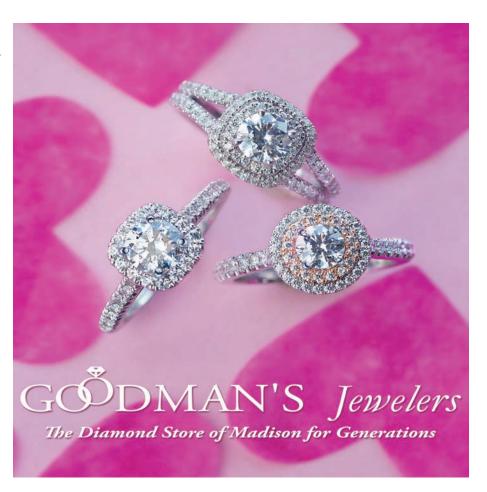
The first thing that comes to mind are sacrifices, but it was all worth it in the end. When I was 6, [the USA Women's Hockey team had just won gold in the first year [1998] for women's hockey at the Olympics. My mom pointed out that I could do that, too, someday. I didn't know the magnitude at that age, but I always knew I was going to play in the Olympics. So as I got older, I knew I wanted to play in college, then I knew I wanted to play on the National team, and eventually competing at the Olympics became a reality. So, just having those goals and dreams, and making those sacrifices, doing whatever it took to get to that next level.

What is your training regimen right now for the Olympics?

With Olympic residency [in Tampa, Florida], we started the beginning of the year with exhibition games against boy junior teams around here and some college club teams. A normal day is practice from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., then we have an off-ice session, so either skills or strength and conditioning. We have some meetings, then call it a day. We're also in the middle of our The Time is Now tour, so we're playing exhibition games against Canada throughout December. Then in January, we'll be wrapping up and getting prepared to head to the Olympics.

What's the excitement level for your first Olympics?

I'm so excited. It's important to enjoy the journey and the process, not looking too far ahead. But we're so excited to get there. And I'm so excited to be part of the Team USA culture, and getting to see these amazing athletes compete at their sport.



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WOMEN TO WATCH



CONGRATULATIONS, **EMILY KUHN!**

Emily, we are honored that you were selected to be a Brava Woman to Watch! We have watched you grow as a co-founder, designer, & main programmer of the 1myVote app. You taught each of us the benefits of having a free, non-partisan voter app for local, state, & national races. We in turn have shared the message with others & have been downloaded in 48 states. Thank you for all that you do!



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CONGRATULATIONS, KARA O'CONNOR!

Wisconsin farmers have found a true champion in Farmers Union Government Relations Director Kara O'Connor. Whether she is speaking up for family farmers at the Capitol, meeting with them out in the countryside, or hard at work channeling their voices, words, and real-life experiences into her latest testimony or op-ed, Kara pours her heart into her work. Her integrity, sharp thinking, and poise have proven invaluable as she fights for the future of rural Wisconsin.

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CONGRATULATIONS, VANESSA McDOWELL!

Since being named one of Brava's Women to Watch, your commitment to advancing equity and empowerment in our community has been inspiring and energizing. We look forward to seeing how your leadership will strengthen YWCA Madison as our CEO and how your vision will shape our community to eliminate racism and empower women. Vanessa, we are honored to work with you and we thank you for all that you do to move us forward!

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TAKE YOUR PULSE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE JUST GOT LOWER

IF A DISCUSSION ABOUT BLOOD PRESSURE doesn't come up at your next well visit, you may want to broach the subject. Recently, a team of the nation's heart experts lowered the definition of high blood pressure to head off complications at lower numbers and allow for earlier intervention.

Here's a quick review of the numbers. The top number is systolic, the pressure when your heart squeezes, and the bottom number is diastolic, the pressure when your heart relaxes. The new guidelines indicate a reading of 130-139 systolic and/or 80-89 diastolic is considered Stage 1 Hypertension, an elevated risk. Above 140 systolic and/or 90 diastolic is considered Stage 2 Hypertension, necessitating intervention.

"People who previously had no problem with blood pressure, may now be told by their doctor that they need to monitor [it], make lifestyle changes, or start taking blood pressure medication," says Jill Barnes, an assistant professor in kinesiology at UW-Madison. The changes have been implemented based on years of research indicating previous guidelines were not stringent enough, as well as the proven link between higher blood pressures and kidney disease, cognitive decline, heart attack and stroke.

Barnes advises women to be particularly aware of these new guidelines, since many experience an increase in blood pressure around the time of menopause. In our 50s, the scales tip toward women having a higher prevalence of hypertension than men.

"Blood pressure throughout the menopausal transition will now be closely monitored and more women may find themselves being told to take blood pressure medication," says Barnes. "Women should be aware of these changes with menopause and make lifestyle modifications early so that blood pressure remains near a healthy level."

Jackie Gerhart, a physician with UW Health, says clinicians and patients now have a better opportunity to understand risk factors based on patient's data, and can use a cardiac "calculator" during an office visit to determine cardiovascular risk.

"Using this information, you and your clinician can engage in mutual decision-making regarding next steps and interventions, such as lifestyle changes and/or medications," says Gerhart. -Candice Wagener 🎕

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FLYING HIGH SKY ZONE'S AIRBORNE FITNESS CRAZE

BY RACHEL WERNER

GET READYTO FEEL LIKE A KID AGAIN and burn plenty of calories in the process at Sky Zone. The indoor trampoline park provides hours of active movement for toddlers through seniors thanks to a variety of programs and physical challenges accessible to all ages and ability levels.

"We are proud to say we have the top-of-theline innovations in our park such as a two-lane Ninja Warrior Course, in addition to our challenge zone that consists of a Jousting section, Free Climb Rock Wall and Sky Ladder," says General Manager Herb Coulthurst "And the trampoline factor provides a full body and low-impact workout for each activity. I've lost 30 pounds just by doing this stuff and tweaking my diet a bit"

And for those looking for a more concentrated metabolic boost, the weekly SkyFit classes are worth checking out. "There are some really technical benefits such as increased performance of the body's lymphatic system since it is a high intensity workout that can burn up to 1,000 calories in one session. I'd rather catch air on our trampolines than sit on a stationary bike any day!" says Coulthurst.

Each hour-long module combines strength exercises and abdominal toning with cardiofocused segments. Participants execute jumping jacks, running, push-ups and military training rolls in fluid motion—while on the trampoline floor. "The best part is you don't feel like you're exercising," boasts SkyFit instructor Lauren Kaul. "Plus it's fun to fly!" 😭

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SYMMETRY, CONTRAST AND A BIT OF SPARKLE can transform even the darkest, smallest bathroom into a steamy retreat. Designer Andrea Jakubczak of Bella Domicile uses paired vanities and windows, dramatic slate grey cabinets and Cambria quartz countertops with a subtle shimmer to energize a once-tired space. Stay on trend with intricately patterned tile, tall vanities or a freestanding tub and your bathroom is sure to relax and reinvigorate. Not doing an entire remodel? Statement succulents or air plants—like this one creatively mounted by the homeowner—soothing neutrals and stone or ceramic accessories can add an understated luxury to any room. -Megan Roessler

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SIMPLE STEPS TO MAKE YOUR JOURNEY TO A HEALTHY YOU A LOT EASIER—
AND A LOT LONGER-LASTING.

DIETING VS. HEALTHY EATING FOCUS ON HOW IT MAKES YOU FEEL.

W e are smacked in the face daily with tips and diets that we should follow to be healthy, lose weight, or look good. Eat this many times. Consume this. Cut out that. But how do we know what will help us be healthy, and what our bodies need?

"When I first started as a dietitian, I thought I knew what was best for everyone to eat," says Krista Kohls, registered dietitian at UnityPoint Health Meriter.

But as she gained more experience, she realized that we can learn what's best for each body if we just tune in.

Kohls notes that sometimes diets are necessary to regulate a chronic condition like diabetes, but she doesn't call it a diet.

"It's hard to think about being on a diet for the rest of your life. Instead, let's work through some tweaks, and create an eating plan that might make a difference," she explains.

Many diets today focus on cutting one whole category of food, like carbohydrates, gluten, dairy or sugar. And if the eating plan feels restrictive, or far out of the norm of your usual eating habits, sticking to it will become harder and harder. Kohls explains that this is because the connection between why we are following the diet lessens over time because the focus is on the food.

Instead, she recommends tuning into how foods and eating patterns make us feel to drive our actions.

"Often we're focused on the wrong things," she says. "For example, if we're eating a dessert with a lot of gluten, we're focused on that we shouldn't be eating it because it's a dessert, and less on how it's actually making us feel."

This type of mindless eating is common in our society, which can set us up for failure when we're trying to create healthy eating habits. How often have you found yourself grabbing that donut at work just because it's there, or wolfing down lunch at your desk while checking emails?

"Usually the end of eating in those situations is the end of the bag or the plate is clean, instead of acknowledging when your belly is satisfied," Kohls says. "This often leaves us wanting more."

By carving out a mealtime and respecting the food we put in our bodies, success is more likely. And not only planning when to eat, but also what to eat. Kohls says meal planning is critical, especially if you're rushed during the day or lacking the will to cook at night. She recommends finding healthy but convenient options like pre-cut or frozen veggies to add to a main entrée, and jotting down what those meals will be throughout the week, then bringing those foods into your environment.

"I see my patients give up when they feel they aren't eating perfectly," she says. "But healthy eating is not so black and white. By creating a healthy eating environment, it's easier to make better choices."

And she says we need to give ourselves some credit. If the scale doesn't move, but you're doing something differently that's making you feel better, pat yourself on the back. Acknowledge those good choices and you'll find balance, and that's what will keep you coming back for more. – *Emily Leas*



FITNESS OBSESSION VS. PASSION TEND YOUR PRIORITIES.

This year, I'm going to exercise more! Does this sound like a familiar New Year's resolution? As we work through the winter, many may find themselves in two camps: Having trouble motivating to keep up with that resolution, or going overboard and hopscotching from Zumba to spinning to boot camps. So how do we find that passion for physical fitness without going overboard?

Lauren Birkel, owner of Orange Shoe Personal Fitness, says finding a partner is key.

"Whether it's a personal trainer, a friend, a family member, a coworker, it's really important to have someone that can be supportive of your goals and hold you accountable at the same time," she recommends.

And if you're new to making movement part of your routine, finding something that you enjoy will lead to greater success. If you don't like it, you're probably not going to stick with it, Birkel says. Try out a variety and build a plan around the activities that you can look forward to.

"I always like to think of it as 30 minutes is only 4 percent of your day. When you break it down that way, it can feel more realistic," says Birkel.

But even that can seem daunting in a world where work and home life don't turn off. Begin by removing obstacles. If you know you won't want to work out after a long day in the office, pack a bag in the morning and go straight to the gym, or find that partner who will hold you accountable for a morning workout. Then pick a goal that is measurable and has a specific timeline, suggests Birkel. For example, be able to do a pull-up by March, or run a 5K in June.

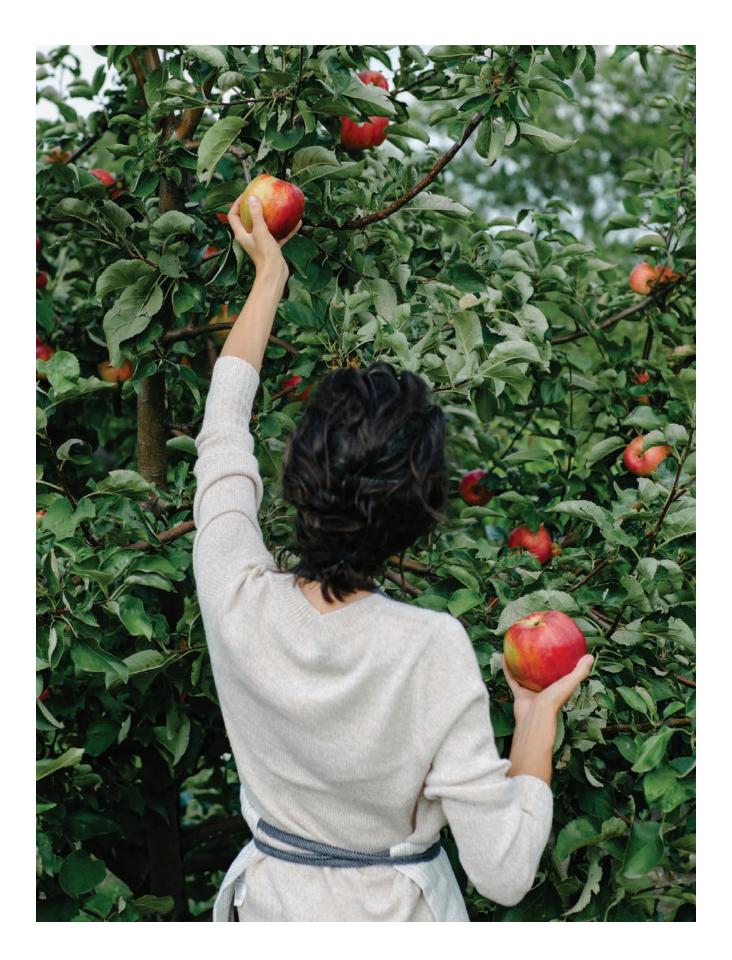
Then celebrate milestones along the way with your training partner, and reward yourself when your goal is met. And when life gets in the way, Birkel says have a plan for that, too. Often, when a workout is missed the path either goes the way of giving up, or going overboard and doubling up.

When the latter happens, it can sometimes lead to an exercise addiction, a condition that is more common as we are all pressured to look a certain way. Athletic. Fit. Like all addiction, it's needing to do more to get the same effect, having symptoms of withdrawal, having trouble cutting back. But it may be harder for you or others to recognize since exercise is viewed as virtuous, a habit that is envied. How do you know if you're obsessed with the gym?

"Indicators of overtraining are things like restless sleep, or feeling irritable, run down or fatigued," says Birkel. "Or little things like getting a cold that continues to build because you're not giving your body time to heal."

Beyond the physical, Birkel says if hitting the gym is interfering with relationships in your life that are valuable to you, there may be diminishing returns, thinking you need more, but getting less from the workout.

Whether you find yourself obsessed with exercise, or just having trouble motivating, re-evaluate what started you on this path, your original goal, and tap into a partner to help celebrate even the smallest victories on the journey to better health. – *Emily Leas*



TRUE AFFIRMATION A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO LOVING ONESELF

A s a plus-size model and blogger, I am always asked how I seem so confident and comfortable in my own skin. The truth is, it's impossible to look at any woman and tell if she loves her body.

At the height of my eating disorder, I was a size 6 and had no clue what it meant to be body positive. I tried to make my gym trips and strict dieting appear as if they came from a place of self-love, but really it came from a deep self-hate. I wasn't working out to be healthy or eating under 400 calories a day for proper nutrition. I wanted to modify my body because I thought it wasn't good enough and I was willing to starve, exhaust and mentally berate myself to stay "skinny."

When I finally gave up on obsessive dieting and tried to recover from restricting, I started binging instead. Yearning to practice "self-love" led to regularly overindulging on food and not worrying about my increasing weight. I embraced my new lifestyle as freeing. But after a while, it was clear that I still had self-loathing thoughts and now also felt physically unhealthy. Not caring about my wellness choices didn't make me body positive, but it did make me feel sick and rundown.

Over the past 15 years I've struggled to understand what it means to care for and love my body in a healthy way. Now in my late 20s, I'm finally able to understand that true body positivity means finding a perfect balance between self-care and self-love. Focusing on body modification can become obsessive and harmful, while not practicing healthy habits is just as destructive in the long run. Because it's not looks or labels that define healthy—it's about making choices that work for your body's unique needs. Now that's body positive. — *Katrina Simyab*

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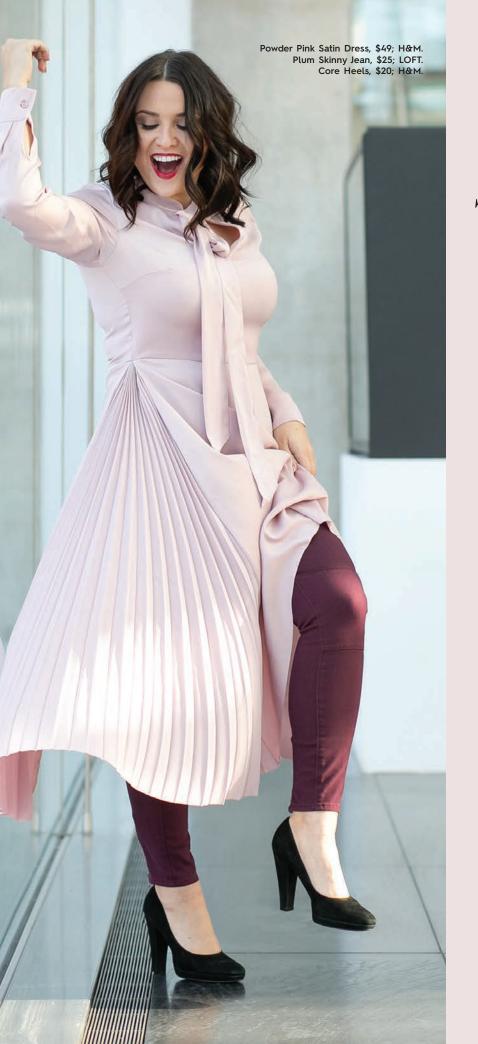
BY RACHEL WERNER

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Forest Green Woven Trench Coat by J.O.A., \$99; Long Sleeve Floral Dress by Mo Vint, \$89; Luceo Boutique.





DANCE. STOMP. SHOUT.

Nothing's better than being on trend without breaking the bank. So consider these pages the cliff notes on where to find this winter's hottest looks for under \$100.



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Fabrina Loafer by Franco Sarto, \$69; Tweed Blazer by Tommy Hilfiger, \$79; Boston Store. Watches, \$20 each; H&M. Denim Bomber by Lucky Brand, \$89; Z. Bella Boutique. Pleaded Skirt by Max Studio, \$56; Boston Store. Ruffle Sleeve Sweatshirt by First Love, \$36; Mainstream Boutique. Lace Mock Neck Top by Lucky Brand, \$69; Z. Bella Boutique. Velvet Mini Mac by Rebecca Minkoff, \$79; Nordstrom Rack. Karini Bootie by Vince Camuto, \$28; Boston Store.



Woven Scarf, \$18; H&M. Long Sleeve Floral Dress by Mo Vint, \$89; Luceo Boutique. Open Front Cardigan by Staccato, \$46; Mainstream Boutique.



Katherine Boyfriend Jean by KUT; \$89; Mainstream Boutique. Green Corduroy Pant, \$39; LOFT. Embroidered Denim by Mac & Me, \$88; Mainstream Boutique.

TIGHTEN THE PURSE

A little retail therapy never hurt anybody. But not every winning look comes with a runway price tag. And unchecked spending can lead to shocking results. In fact:

1.

Americans spend more on shoes, jewelry and watches (\$100 billion) than on higher education, according to Psychology Today

Women make 85 percent of all consumer purchases.

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5.

95 percent of Americans shop online at least yearly and 80 percent of Americans shop online at least monthly. 30 percent of Americans shop online at least weekly. 5 percent of Americans shop online daily.

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6.

Female consumer purchasing power exceeds the GDP of India and China combined.

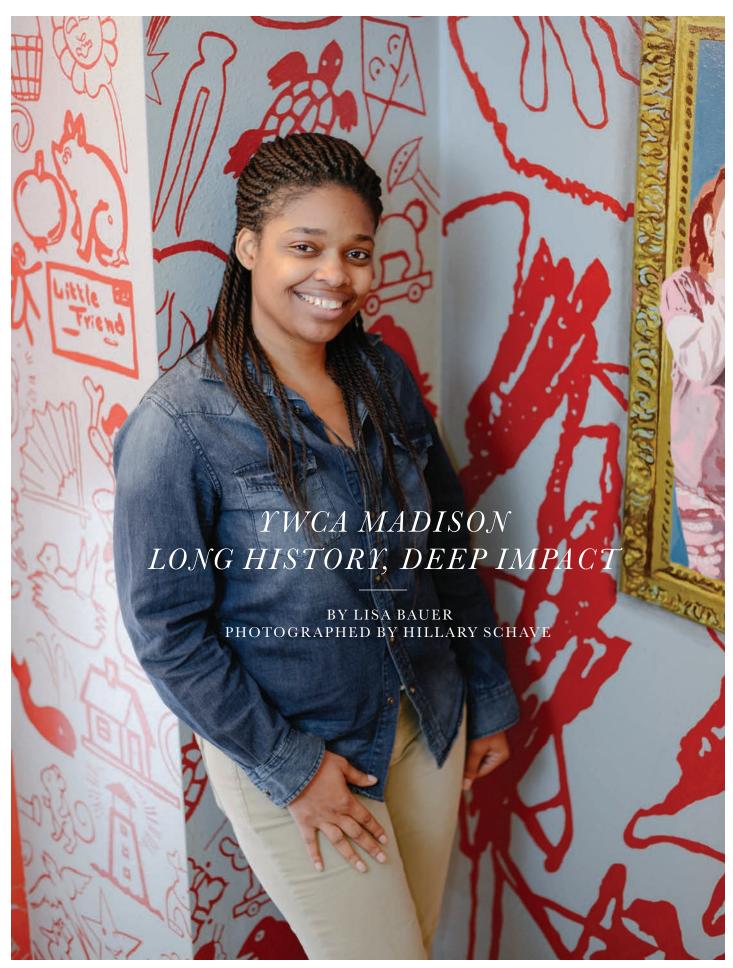
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Plus, a little frugality when it comes to essential pieces like jeans, slacks and blazers can add up to more disposable cash for the next musthave couture item.





Billie Lace Blouse by Heartloom, \$89; Luceo Boutique. Green Corduroy Pant, \$39; LOFT.



FOR 159 YEARS, THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, OR YWCA, HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF MAJOR AMERICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS LIKE RACE RELATIONS, LABOR UNION REPRESENTATION AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.

In 1908, YWCA Madison was chartered to join the charge. This local powerhouse, situated fittingly at the center of the action on the Capitol Square, is on a lofty mission to eliminate racism and empower women. In 2015, more than 4,000 people participated in transformative YWCA Madison programming in its three areas of service: housing and shelter, job training and transportation, and race and gender equity.

"The YWCA helped us change our lives," says Dorecia Carr, mother of five and participant in the Y's housing program.

 $YWCA \ Madison \ CEO \ Vanessa \ McDowell says the organization is all about empowerment. "I want every touch people have with the Y to be an empowering experience—from looking at our website to meeting with a case manager," she says. "For me, to empower is about walking alongside of people and serving them in a way that gives them tools they need to self–actualize and live up to their full potential, however that looks."$

This summer, McDowell became the first African-American at the helm of YWCA Madison in its 109-year history. "Our organization is moving in a forward direction while it seems like the country is moving backward," McDowell says. "There is a lot of work to be done, but we have hope."

HOUSING AND SHELTER

As owner of YJB Talent, Carr represents more than 200 models and actors. One of these actors is her son, Ajani Carr, celebrity and philanthropist who created an organization called Building Bosses to teach youth leadership and service. Carr credits her and Ajani's success in part to YWCA Madison.

"There's no way my son would be who he is or I would be a business owner if not for the YWCA," she says.

There was a time when Carr and her family were homeless, sleeping in cars and living in a dangerous situation. In 2008, they found Rapid Rehousing, the Y's one-year program providing families with rent assistance for permanent housing and supportive case management services. "That changed our lives and helped us get on the right track," Carr says. "The Y set us up for success."

Rapid Rehousing is one of many shelter and housing services for women and families. The Y provides safe housing for women who are survivors of domestic violence. It offers temporary and permanent housing for homeless families as well as housing for single women and single female-headed families. The Y also has supervised activities, field trips and holiday events for young children living in the Third Street and Family Shelter programs.

Rapid Rehousing helped the Carrs find shelter and supplement their rent. Their case manager connected them to resources and a support system. And Carr says the Y staff always treated them with respect.

Carr, her husband and their five children now live in a comfortable house in Fitchburg, when they're not traveling back and forth to Atlanta, where Carr's talent agency is based. Recently, Carr took a post on the YWCA Madison board of directors. "This is the biggest honor for me. My whole family celebrated," she adds. "I strongly believe—and all of us feel this way—that we wouldn't be where we are today without the help of the Y."

RACE AND GENDER EQUITY

"We have a very strong and heavy mission," says CEO McDowell. "We kind of carry the banner of race and gender equity in the community. I don't know of any other organizations that have a mission that bold."

In doing so, the Y offers programs in racial justice and restorative justice as well as women's leadership initiatives like the Moxie Conference and YWomen Lead career development series. Its flagship Racial Justice Summit has grown each year and features workshops and nationally renowned speakers for hundreds of attendees determined to eliminate barriers that foster racism. Community members, businesses and organizations can also take YWCA racial justice education courses.

Arguably one of the most impactful programs is the Y's Creating Equitable Organizations initiative. Race and Gender Equity Manager Naomi Takahashi says of this, "We're really focusing on transformational, long-term change and recognizing that's going to take time and effort."

The Y has partnered with 33 organizations with staff from 12 to 4,000—such as Group Health Cooperative—to help them create diverse, inclusive and equitable work environments. It's about capacity building and culture shifts. In surveys, 100 percent of organizations felt they made progress.





"Shifts don't happen right away, and it's hard to quantify inclusiveness, but we know that both leadership and staff need to be on board to facilitate change," Takahashi says. "And here at the Y, we walk the walk." She says YWCA Madison has been doing internal equity work for five years, and now more than 50 percent of those in leadership roles at the organization are people of color.

YWCA Madison efforts extend from corporate boardrooms to local schools. Six middle schools partner with the Y in restorative justice programming that offers an alternative to often ineffective and inequitable punishment models of discipline. Restorative justice focuses on the harm done and creates community and safe spaces to solve problems. Those in conflict—for example students, teachers, parents—meet in a circle process, driven by storytelling, deep listening and relationship building. Participants pass around a talking piece. Youth, called "circle keepers," lead the groups.

"Our mission is to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline," says Eugenia Highland, restorative justice manager at the Y. "School punishment disproportionately affects kids of color, LGBTQ students and students with disabilities," she adds. Many of those children end up in the court system.

Leilani Villavicencio is an eighth-grade student, activist and restorative justice advocate at Cherokee Middle School. Villavicencio participated in her first circle as a sixth grader. She was getting bullied. "When I was part of that circle, I felt like there was a trust there. We came to an understanding, and after that I was like, 'I need to be a part of this.'"

Villavicencio has lead more than 20 circles at Cherokee and given presentations on restorative justice—one at the Racial Justice Summit in Madison. She's seen circles resolve difficult issues, and build community. She's convinced restorative justice has improved her school environment. Villavicencio has been a big and important part of that change, and it's changed her.

Being involved in restorative justice, she says, "is one of those things that will stick with me for the rest of my life."

"I don't know exactly what I want to do, but I know I want to make a difference in the world," she adds.

The YWCA also partners with Dane County Time Bank and Briarpatch Youth Services to offer restorative justice in the community. Youth age 12 to 16 who get municipal citations can opt to go through a restorative justice program instead of going to court.

"Restorative justice is a very humanizing approach," Highland says. "We look at what happened and why, and we try to address the needs and build relationships."











YWCA's Race and Gender Equity Manager Naomi Takahashi, CEO Vanessa McDowell, Restorative Justice Manager Eugenia Highland, restorative justice student advocate Leilani Villavicencio (group center), YWCA board member Dorecia Carr

FOR MCDOWELL AND HER STAFF, THE WORK DOESN'T END UNTIL RACISM ENDS AND ALL WOMEN ARE EMPOWERED.

70B TRAINING AND TRANSPORTATION

Elizabeth Bell sits in a sunny vestibule at American Family Insurance headquarters in Madison, gazing at some complicated JavaScript on her computer screen. She's fixing an issue on the back end of an auto insurance quote web page. As an associate application development engineer, Bell sets high standards for herself to use "pretty code"—uncluttered, organized and smart.

"They value and rely on my work here," says Bell, who's had a variety of jobs but none she felt were stable and could support her family. "I'm so glad I've reached this point. I would have never made it here without the Y."

Bell took part in YWCA Madison's YWeb Career Academy an employment service program that trains women and people of color to become web developers and designers. The threemonth program covers technical skills such as design, HTML, CSS and JavaScript, but also employability skills: project management, communication and resume writing.

YWeb is one of several job training and transportation programs to help women and particularly women of color gain job skills and access to employment fields in which they have traditionally been underrepresented. The goal of YWeb is to increase diversity in the tech arena.

Construct-U is a training program that prepares people for careers in the skilled trades and road construction industry. Driver's License Recovery helps address the growing issue of loss of a driver's license. Driving Customer Service prepares people for careers in customer service and transportation. And Transit and JobRide provide safe transportation to and from work and safe night-time rides.

In 2015, 415 people participated in the Y's job training and transportation programs, which are ultimately intended to help people improve their economic situations.

Bell says she's in the process of buying a home, thanks to her new career path.

"My family and I strive for success," she says. "We work hard, but we've also had a lot of hardships. It would have taken us a lot longer to save up if not for YWeb and what came out of that for me."

She adds that in addition to computer skills, she learned "soft skills," like how to collaborate with others, how to receive and give constructive feedback and how be a leader and a mentor.

Bell sees no limits on her horizon. "I want to learn and share as much as possible and be successful here at American Family. In the future, maybe I'll want to build something that everyone can use, that reaches all people."

THE ROAD AHEAD

For McDowell and her staff, the work doesn't end until racism ends and all women are empowered. They're in it for the long haul. In less than a year as CEO at YWCA Madison, McDowell has already made her mark.

In September, she opened the Y's new Empowerment Center on Park Street, to offer job resources, assistance and training. "We're very excited to be there. We have the possibility of having more capacity to serve," McDowell says. "Right next to the Urban League and Centro Hispano, it's good to be among friends."

McDowell is also excited about a partnership between YWCA Madison and Heartland Housing, Inc., to provide permanent housing for families, that will be located on the West Side on Tree Lane by the end of 2018.

In the job training arena, McDowell says YWeb is such a winner that, "Employers are coming to us saying they need more people," she says, adding that the Y is exploring expanding that model into another area, such as biotech.

For McDowell, YWCA Madison continues the pioneering spirit that started the national organization in 1858.

"There's no way we are going to get rid of disparities if we don't challenge them," she says. "But we have to go beyond conversation. We are challenging this community to join us and do the work, do better when it comes to race and gender equity." 🕸

CELEBRATE, LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED AT THE INSPIRATIONAL YWCA MADISON CIRCLE OF WOMEN LUNCHEON FEB. 15. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT YWCAMADISON. ORG/EVENTS.

GO+DO



FEBRUARY

EVENTS



PERFORMING ARTS

2 I TIMES VARY **JERRY SEINFELD**

America's premier comedian, Jerry Seinfeld, will be performing his signature stand-up routine in Overture Hall. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

2 | 8 P.M.

DUBLIN IRISH DANCE: STEPPING OUT

Choreographed by Dublin-born Anthony Fallon, an all-star cast traces the immigrant journey from pre-famine Ireland to Ellis Island. Wisconsin Union Theater, Madison. union.wisc.edu.

2-3 | TIMES VARY

"SHE"

She celebrates the work of female choreographers and the many faces of women in classical and contemporary ballet Bartell Theatre, Madison. madisonballetorg.

6 | 7:30 P.M.

"MOMIX OPUS CACTUS"

Artistic director Moses Pendleton brings the desert landscape of the American Southwest to life in this unique, modern dance experience. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

8 I 7:30 P.M. "GOBSMACKED!"

This amazing and uplifting acappella show features reigning world champion beat boxer Ball-Zee. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

14 | 8 P.M.

"A VALENTINE'S AFFAIR: LOVE SCENES FROM SHAKESPEARE"

Spend Valentine's Day with Shakespeare's greatest couples, including Beatrice and Benedick, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra and Richard and Anne. Bartell Theatre, Madison. bartelltheatre.org.

16-18 I TIMES VARY "RICHLY ROMANTIC"

The lyrically bittersweet Walton concerto will be a delicious contrast to the sweeping, majestic romanticism of the Brahms. Overture Center, Madison. madisonsymphony.org.





18 | TIMES VARY "SHOPKINS LIVE! SHOP IT UP!"

All of Shopville is in a tizzy as preparations get underway for the annual "Funtastic Food and Fashion Fair."

Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

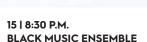
ENTERTAINMENT

917:30 P.M. **LAURIE ANDERSON**

Laurie Anderson is one of America's most renowned creative pioneers, and is known primarily for her multimedia presentations. Wisconsin Union Theatre, Madison union.wisc.edu.

14 I 8 P.M. **BECCA STEVENS**

Drawing comparisons to Björk and St Vincent, Stevens combines pop, rock, funk and R&B to create new and thoughtprovoking rhythms and lyrics. Wisconsin Union Theater, Madison. union.wisc.edu.



UW-Madison's Black Music Ensemble will perform the music of black artists from many time periods and styles. Wisconsin Union Theater, Madison. union.wisc.edu.

16 | 8 P.M. **BÉLA FLECK & ABIGAIL WASHBURN**

Béla and Abigail's deep bond, combined with the way their distinct musical personalities and banjo styles interact, makes their partnership unlike any other. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

17 I 2 P.M. **DUCK SOUP CINEMA - MANTRAP**

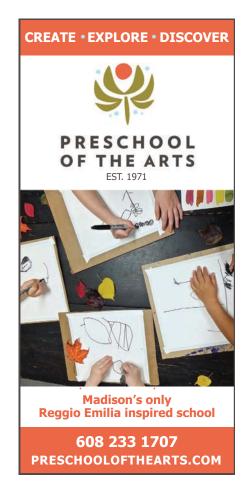
This black and white film is set during the Jazz Age-the time of the female suffrage movement. It follows the story of one woman's experience with marriage. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.







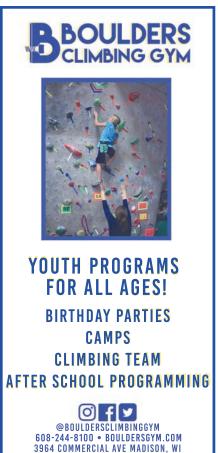












24 | 9 A.M. INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Join us in celebrating the rich cultural heritage within our community and enjoy more than 30 free performances throughout Overture by artists who call Dane County home. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

25 | 7:30 P.M. ANI DIFRANCO

With her 20th studio album, "Binary," the iconic singer, songwriter, activist and poet returns to territory that brought her to the world's attention more than 25 years ago. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

FAMILY

3 I TIMES VARY KIDS IN THE ROTUNDA—BLACK STAR DRUM LINE

Black Star Drum Line gives kids in the Madison community an opportunity for creative expression through percussive arts. Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.

3 I 10:30 A.M. STORY SATURDAY AT THE WISCONSIN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Features fun and exciting Wisconsin stories geared toward families and kids. Activities and crafts bring the stories to life! Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison. historicalmuseum.wisconsinhistory.org.

3-4 I TIMES VARY 2018 MADISON WINTER FESTIVAL

The 14th annual Madison Winter Festival is a family-friendly event that promotes outdoor sports, recreation, the arts and maintaining a healthy winter lifestyle. Elver Park, Madison. winter-festcom.

9 | 5:30 P.M. WARNER FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

Activities include gymnasium fun with a bouncy house, sports and fun games. Family fitness classes and drop-in art and pottery projects will also be available. Warner Park Community Recreation Center, Madison. cityofmadison.com.

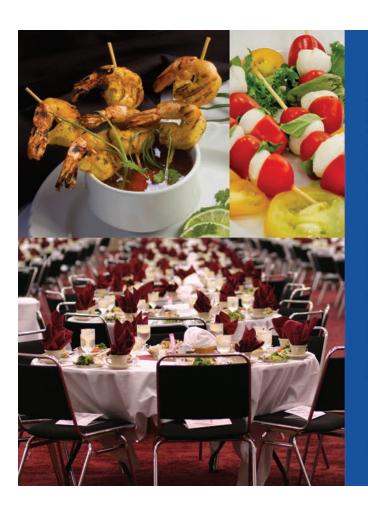
24 | 9:30 A.M. MAPLE SYRUP 101

Spend a fun morning with the family learning about forest wildlife, tapping trees and seeing the maple syrup making process up close. *DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/dreambank/events.*

27 I 7:30 P.M. NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE—ON THE TRAIL OF BIG CATS

Award-wining photographer Steve Winter will lead you on a photographic journey of big cats from around the world. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org.*





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4 | 1 P.M.

COOKING CLASS: CHOCOLATE ABC'S

Learn the distinguishing characteristics of chocolate and how to make decadent chocolate treats. delecTable, Madison. delectableexp.com.

716 P.M. **TUNES, TAPS & TACOS**

Choose from five types of specialty tacos, sip on select Wisconsin Brewing Company draft beers, and listen to house musician Pat Ferguson Music. HotelRED, Madison. hotelred.com.

8 | 6 P.M. MAD MEN DINNER-THROWBACK **SERIES**

Enjoy a sumptuous five-course dinner that recalls the '60s era with vintage American cuisine and classic cocktails. Avenue Club and The Bubble Up Bar, Madison. avenueclubmadison.com.

10-19 | 5 P.M. **FOOD FIGHT FOODIE WEEK**

Special three-course menus will be offered from 19 locally owned and operated restaurants during Madison Hotel Week. Madison. foodfightcom.

JAUNT

THROUGH FEB. 18 I TIMES VARY YESTON & KOPIT'S "PHANTOM"

Hailed as the "finest PHANTOM of them all," this tragic love story is filled with luxurious music and makes for an unforgettable experience. Fireside Dinner Theatre, Fort Atkinson, firesidetheatre.com.

2-4 ITIMES VARY SCANDIHOOVIAN WINTER FESTIVAL

Stroll, shop, eat and play during a weekend full of indoor and outdoor events. Mount Horeb. scandihoovianwinterfestcom.

3 I 6 P.M.

CANDLELIGHT SKI, HIKE & SNOWSHOE

Explore a 1- and 2-mile candlelit, wooded loop to ski, and a separate 0.75-mile trail for hiking and snowshoeing, then enjoy a bonfire and free marshmallow roasting. Blue Mounds State Park, Blue Mounds. dnr.wi.gov.

10 I 2 P.M.

NEW GLARUS WINE WALK

Sample Wisconsin-made wine at 15 locations around New Glarus. Admission fee includes a keepsake wine glass for sampling. Chamber of Commerce,

New Glarus. swisstown.com.



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- Helen Johnson-Leipold Chairman of Johnson Financial Group

JOIN US IN TEEING OFF THE 2018 SEASON!

Join fellow female golfers for the 2018 EWGA Tee Off! Renew your membership or join this nonprofit organization that helps you to learn, play and enjoy the game of golf for business and for life.

Learn about expanded member benefits, sign up for a league and check out clinics and educational opportunities. We'll have information about social and golf events in 2018, including our Annual Charity Golf Outing, supporting Children's Theatre of Madison.

Network with fellow golfers, visit vendor tables, try for door prizes and more!





Wednesday, March 21, 2018 Registration: 4:30 | Main Event 5:30

> Sheraton, Madison, WI ewgamadison.com





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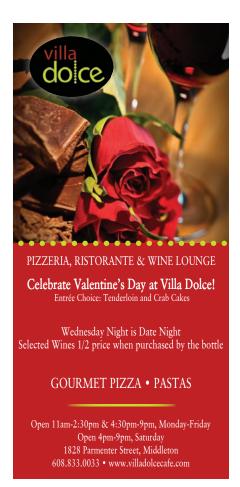
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VALENTINE'S CELEBRATION FEBRUARY 9-16 MAKE A RESERVATION TODAY





24 12 P.M MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE-JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

See this classic tale performed by Missoula Children's Theatre, the nation's largest touring children's theater-touring and performing for more than 40 years all over the world. Young Auditorium, Whitewater. uww.edu/youngauditorium.

THRIVE

3-4 ITIMES VARY **ORCHID QUEST 2018**

Madison Orchid Growers Guild's 30th year of hosting Orchid Quest will showcase huge orchid displays along with fragrant orchids for sale. Also planned are growing seminars, a raffle and a silent auction. Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. orchidguild.org.

7 | 5:30 P.M. FREE BALLET 101 WORKSHOP

This free one-hour workshop is for adults interested in exploring the basics of ballet in a fun, relaxed setting. Madison Ballet, Madison. madisonballetorg.

SOUL-CARE SUNDAY MINI-RETREATS

Listen to the Inner Voice of your Soul during these mini-retreats. Clearing distractions, nature healing, artistic inspirations and self-discovery will be practiced. Soul Full Sanctuary, Barneveld. soulfullsanctuary.com.

15 I 6:15 P.M.

DREAM BIG: DEVELOPING GRATITUDE THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF INTENTIONAL DISCOMFORT

Explore the idea of intentional discomfort with author and motivational philosopher LQ McDonald III and how adopting the practice can improve everyday gratitude. DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/ dreambank/events.

22 | 6:15 P.M. **DREAM BIG: POWER OF SMALL RIPPLES**

Join happiness coach Tracer Traeder to hear how the power of small ripples play an important role in creating a new story together. DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/dreambank/events.





Executive Director and Founder Rowan Childs

FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS MADISON READING PROJECT INSPIRES KIDS TO READ

BY AMY PFLAUGSHAUPT NBC 15 NEWS ANCHOR

"THE CAT IN THE HAT," "Charlotte's Web" and "Curious George." Many have memories of these popular children's books, and probably many other titles. While reading at a young age serves as a positive source of entertainment, Rowan Childs, executive director of Madison Reading Project (and a former BRAVA Gal), says it sets children up for success later in life.

Being able to read at the right reading level is so important to being able to get through school, find a job or go to college, Childs says. "Setting up kids at the very beginning is so important," she explains. "If you can't read by third grade, just every year beyond that it just makes things so much harder."

Childs grew up with a lot of exposure to books and she's continued to give her own children the same opportunity. But what she noticed early on is that not all children are able to get their little hands on books.

"Some kids may not have the option of going to the library after school, or they may not have the option of getting the book at the Scholastic Book Fair," Childs says. Or, she adds, there may be books that they may like, but they just aren't able to get them. That's why she founded the Madison Reading Project.

The nonprofit not only provides books to children in need, but also offers a variety of reading and writing programs.

"The main objective is to get kids inspired to read and especially kids that need our help-kids specifically that we consider vulnerable," says Childs. That could include low-income kids, kids who have a case worker, or children enrolled in a Head Start program.

When Childs started Madison Reading Project in 2014, she wasn't sure how long the program would last. But in just three years, the program has provided thousands of books to area children. In 2017, Madison Reading Project set a goal to donate 25,000 books—and surpassed it with a total of 26,188 books donated. "I'm still a little bit in shock, but I'm super excited," says Childs. "When we set that goal at the beginning of [2017] everyone thought I was completely nuts. But I had faith we could do it."

Most of the books are donated. The group also purchases books considered high need, including bilingual and Spanish books, and those with diverse characters.

With all the technology that is out there and available to kids, it can be hard to motivate little hands to pick up a book. "One of our things is to always try and provide books that are really fun and interesting that are either brand new or look new. This way kids are more likely to pick them up—and someone isn't saying 'you have to read this'-making the kids more likely to read it." 🕸

Donate books, share your time—and don't miss its annual fundraiser Feb. 10 at the Madison Concourse Hotel and Governors Club: READ(y) to Wear is a paper inspired benefit fashion show that includes cocktails, appetizers and a DJ. Tickets: madisonreadingproject.com.

FEBRUARY NONPROFIT EVENTS

2-4 ITIMES VARY FROZEN ASSETS FESTIVAL

Participate in free winter activities or compete in the Fat Bike Race or 5K run/walk. Race and walk registration fees support Clean Lakes Alliance's ongoing environmental and water quality initiatives. The Edgewater, Madison. cleanlakesalliance.org.

3 I 12 P.M. **SOUPER BOWL**

Select a handcrafted ceramic soup bowl and receive a meal of soup, salad, bread and dessert for a small donation during the Habitat for Humanity-UW Madison Campus Chapter 22nd annual Souper Bowl fundraiser.

9-11 I TIMES VARY WISCONSIN PUBLIC TELEVISION'S **GARDEN EXPO**

Celebrating the latest trends in gardening, landscaping and edibles at this midwinter oasis for garden enthusiasts. All proceeds from the three-day event benefit WPT. Alliant Energy Center, Madison. wigardenexpo.com.

PAGE-TURNING FASHION I A model at the READ(y) to Wear fashion show in 2017 graces the runway in an editorially inspired look. Showcasing designs inspired by, and made primarily from, paper the annual event benefits the Madison Reading Project, which makes books and reading more accessible to all children. For more on the Madison Reading Project, check out CATALYST, P. 59 and go to madisonreadingproject.com/readytowear.









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Friday, April 27, 2018

The Edgewater Hotel, Madison I 8 AM - 5 PM

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