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INSIDE |

WELL EXPO GUIDE
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health and wellness!



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DREAM BIG EVENTS

AT DREAMBANK

Thursday, January 3, 6:15–7:30 pm

The Goodness of Sadness

with Dr. Deb Brock and Dr. Ron Johnson

Thursday, January 10, 6:15–7:30 pm

You are the Priority

with Lisa Robb

Thursday, January 17, 6:15–7:30 pm

Forget Perfect, I Would Rather Be Happy

with Jenni Peters

Monday, January 21, 6:15–7:30 pm

Connection & Intention Through Dream Boards

with Dr. Jasmine Zapata, MD, MPH

Thursday, January 24, 6:15–7:30 pm

Uncovering Your Buried Passions (One Garbage Bag at a Time)

with Nicole Gruter

Thursday, January 31, 6:15–7:30 pm

You're Not Done Yet: The Courage to Dream When You Think It's All Over

with Mary Helen Conroy

Events that encourage your passions and inspire your dreams.



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Monona Terrace | Madison
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Rachel Wilberding

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@bravamagazine

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ON THE COVER

Meet BRAVA's 2019 Women to Watch, 18 women who have great, community-building plans in the works for the year to come, and beyond. Photographed by Hillary Schave at her Azena Photography studio in Madison.

BRAVA

THRIVE CONFERENCE



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The Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison | 8 AM - 4 PM

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DINA NINA MARTINEZ | THE POWER OF FUNNY WOMEN!

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"Ehnes' technique is unfalteringly secure and his tone gleaming."

— New York
Classical Review



PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Mussorgsky's masterpiece explores the colors of the orchestra — the correlation of an artist's visual medium through the colors of sound and music. And its finale *The Great Gate of Kiev*, is one classical music's greatest hits. James Ehnes is a violinist who is completely to my taste. With an absolutely gorgeous sound and consummate technique, he goes to the heart of the music. He will approach the Brahms violin concerto as a violinist's violinist, adored by the public, by his colleagues and by me, for the integrity in his playing. We celebrate the 80th birthday of the internationally-renowned (and Madison-area resident) composer John Harbison, with the first performance by the MSO of his delightful composition, *The Most Often Used Chords*. — John DeMain

FEBRUARY

FRIDAY, FEB. 15
7:30 PM

SATURDAY, FEB. 16
8:00 PM

SUNDAY, FEB. 17
2:30 PM

John DeMain, Conductor
James Ehnes, Violin

Harbison: The Most Often Used Chords
Brahms: Violin Concerto, **James Ehnes,** Violin
Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition

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DISCOVER MORE:
madisonsymphony.org/ehnes

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BRAVA Magazine is a publication of Nei-Turner Media Group, Inc. Gary E. Nei, Chairman, William Turner, President

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(608) 848-6700.

SUBSCRIBE AT BRAVAMAGAZINE.COM

Subscription Information:
(877) 811-2639 or brava@pubdmgroup.com.

BRAVA (ISSN 1934-4317) January 2019, Volume 20, Number 1, Periodicals postage paid at 3902 Milwaukee St, Madison WI 53714 and additional offices. Subscriptions are \$14/year. Postmaster send address changes to BRAVA Magazine, P.O. Box 343, Oregon, IL 61061-0343. This issue or any part thereof may not be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher. All rights reserved. ©2019.

NEI-TURNER MEDIA GROUP

WRITERS

AMY PFLUGSHAUP

"FACING ADVERSITY WITH APLOMB," P. 63

Amy is an award-winning broadcast journalist who covers hard-hitting topics as part of the NBC15 news team. Her favorite stories connect to her agricultural roots.

SAMANTHA GEORGS

"CANNABIS CURE-ALL?," P. 21; "INSTA-PURGE," P. 24; "WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34

Samantha Georgson is a driven and fun-loving freelance writer who is most passionate about engaging with the inspirational people who become the center of her stories.

NICOLE C.W. GRUTER

"FAT TIRES, BIG FUN," P. 56

Nicole C.W. Gruter, MFA, writes, performs and organizes. Wisconsin state parks are a favorite of hers, as is prosciutto wrapped cantaloupe. positivespace.life

EMILY LEAS

"WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34

Emily doesn't let her full-time job get in the way of writing, paddleboarding, dog-loving, running and exploring everything Madison—and the world—has to offer.

MOLLY NAGAPPALA

"MOSAIC BOX'S WORLDLY CURATION," P. 27

Molly Nagappala is a writer, a lifelong Wisconsinite, an aspiring world traveler and a recovering bureaucrat. You can find her on Twitter and Instagram @sconniemolly

MEGAN ROESSLER

"SIRI-OUSLY SMART," P. 32; "WOMEN TO WATCH,"

P. 34; "NO MOUNTAIN, NO PROBLEM!," P. 58

Megan studied Art History at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. She is interested in environmental history, and she makes comics in her spare time.

LISA SCHUETZ

"WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34

Lisa is an award-winning journalist, a communication strategist and owner of 7 Hills Real Estate.

HYWANIA THOMPSON

"WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34

Hywania is a copywriter and native of Chicago. She moved to Madison in 2005. She enjoys volunteering, traveling and listening to live music.

CANDICE WAGENER

"WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34; "CRUNCHY MARVEL," P. 53

Candice loves writing about great food, unique places and inspiring people. A graduate of the UW J-School, she came to Wisconsin from the Chicago area. Follow her on Instagram at [candicewagener](https://www.instagram.com/candicewagener)

ARTISTS

SUNNY FRANTZ

PHOTOS THROUGHOUT

A former BRAVA gal Sunny uses her marketing, graphic design and styled photography skills to connect small businesses with their ideal audience. Follow on Instagram @sunny.frantz

HILLARY SCHAVE

"WOMEN TO WATCH," P. 34

Hillary is a fun pro photographer who puts her left shoe on first and adores shooting weddings, portraits and boudoir for her studio, Azena Photography. azenaphoto.com

VALERIE TOBIAS

"FACING ADVERSITY WITH APLOMB," P. 63

Valerie's interests include cheese, live comedy, bicycling, adventures, talking to strangers and photojournalism. She lives in Madison with her husband and daredevil son.

HOLLY TYLER

"CANNABIS CURE-ALL?," P. 21;

"INSTA-PURGE," P. 24

Holly is an illustrator and designer specializing in watercolor and digital art. She loves Wisconsin winters, biking, running and pretending to be a mountain woman.

LISA WILCOX

"LAQUERUS' BOLD BEAUTY CONCEPT," P. 29

Lisa is a natural light photographer specializing in high school senior, family portraits and modern headshots. lisawilcoxphoto.com

SHANNA WOLF

"HIDDEN WONDERS" P. 30; "SIRI-OUSLY SMART," P. 32

Shanna is a freelance photographer specializing in portrait, documentary and interior photography. sphotographyandstyling.com

To read more about our contributors, visit bravamagazine.com

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REMARKABLE WOMEN

INSIDE BRAVA'S PAGES this month, you'll be treated to the stories of 18 incredible women who will continue their amazing work to make our community more vibrant, healthful and equitable in the coming year. They come from a variety of fields and follow diverse passions, all toward the greater good.

They're BRAVA's 2019 Women to Watch, and their work is a testament to the true goodwill that exists all around us. We can't help but feel inspired by so many women in our community who often put others first to make the world a little better place.

Their efforts are sometimes visible, as in the case of major makeovers on nonprofits and a shining new office effervescing with entrepreneurs. Yet they are often committing acts of unseen good, mentoring students,

granting unexpected wishes and helping those with illnesses and trauma live well and thrive.

When the BRAVA editorial team was selecting the cover for this month's edition, one wise colleague said: "All women, really, are remarkable." And that's true. We all have our super powers in some way or another, and that's to be celebrated.

BRAVA Women to Watch are of us, and are with us, all the time.

So let's put our hands together for this group of 18 women who are worthy of emulation and celebration. We're privileged to share their feats with you.

They are, in a word, exceptional.

Marni McEntee
Editor-in-Chief



DON'T MISS | Join the BRAVA gals at the 2019 Women to Watch Soiree from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Jan. 29 at the new DreamBank location. We'll fete the 2019 honorees, rub elbows with past Women to Watch and toast in the coming year with food and drink. 821 E. Washington Ave., Madison. Tickets at BRAVAmagazine.com.

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Featured Presenters at the WELL EXPO

MAIN STAGE: SATURDAY



10 A.M.

When You're Done with Diets, Choose Profile!

Alicia Lex, Profile By Sanford

Profile by Sanford offers members nutrition, activity, and lifestyle coaching to help them lose weight and keep it off.



11 A.M.

Fight, Flight or Freeze: Reclaiming Your Brain in Times of Stress

Wendy Warren Grapentine, Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin

Wendy explains how our built-in Fight, Flight or Freeze response throws us into survival mode in times of stress.



12 P.M.

Making Yourself A Priority: Setting Goals for Fitness and Wellness

Sarah Clemons-Wagner, SSM Health

Have you ever set a New Year's Resolution and struggled to keep it? We will cover some of those reasons: self esteem, our self talk, asking for help and getting started on new goals that you can stick with.



1 P.M.

Mealtime Mentors

Casey Crevier, Festival Foods

Overwhelmed at the grocery store? Join Casey Crevier, in debunking nutrition myths, breaking down the Nutrition Facts Panel, and learning how to navigate the grocery store like a pro.



2 P.M.

The Benefits of CBD Oil

Tim O'Brien, Apple Wellness/The Healthy Place

See why so many people are using CBD oil for pain, stress, anxiety, depression, and more.

COOKING STAGE DEMONSTRATIONS

Take your cooking to the next level.

FRIDAY, JAN. 25

4:30 P.M.

Mighty Macros

Sarah Berndt and
Dana Reedy,
Fit Fresh Cuisine

5:30 P.M.

Sauces & Sides Move Over Chicken & Broccoli!

Sarah Berndt and
Dana Reedy,
Fit Fresh Cuisine

6:30 P.M.

Immunity, Energy & Inflammation... OH MY!

Sarah Berndt and
Dana Reedy,
Fit Fresh Cuisine



SATURDAY, JAN. 26

10 A.M.

How to Build a Better Smoothie

Lisa Grudzielanek,
Metcalf's Market

11 A.M.

Sustainable Seafood Made Easy

Daniella Malfitano,
Verlasso Salmon

12 P.M.

Dinner Tonight

Patrick Zwank,
Metcalf's Market

1 P.M.

Fermented Foods: What's it all about? Zymbiotics

2 P.M.

Healthy Rotisserie Chicken Creations

Patrick Zwank,
Metcalf's Market

3 P.M.

Kombucha & Fresh Eating Forage Kitchen



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now open at wellexpomadison.com.**

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FITNESS STAGES

Learn about the latest fitness trends and get movin'!

UPSTAIRS FRIDAY, JAN. 25

3:30 P.M.

GRIT™

Les Mills,
Princeton Club

5 P.M.

Afterburn Bootcamp

Adrian Lee,
Orangetheory Fitness

6:15 P.M.

**Heart Centered Yoga by
Candlelight**

Holly Krook Castañeda,
Feel Alive Yoga

SATURDAY, JAN. 25

8:30 A.M.

Zumba® Fitness

Amelia "Bedelia" McConnell

10 A.M.

Afterburn Bootcamp

Adrian Lee,
Orangetheory Fitness

11:30 A.M.

Hard Core

Priscilla Peterson,
Princeton Club

1 P.M.

To Be Determined*

2:30 P.M.

WERQ

Monica L. Avila,
Princeton Club



*Find the complete fitness class
schedule at wellexpomadison.com

DOWNSTAIRS FRIDAY, JAN. 26

3:30 P.M.

To Be Determined*

5 P.M.

Bootcamp Team Training

Ryan Campbell,
Anytime Fitness

6:30 P.M.

To Be Determined*

SATURDAY, JAN. 26

8:30 A.M.

Barre with Margo

Margo Plant, Barre District

10 A.M.

Bootcamp Team Training

Ryan Campbell,
Anytime Fitness

11:30 A.M.

**Strengthen Your Core
with Zumba/Belly Dance**

Ghadeer Alafifi, GHC

1 P.M.

To Be Determined*

2:30 P.M.

TurboKick & PiYo Blend

MSCR



*Find the complete fitness class
schedule at wellexpomadison.com

CLASSROOM LECTURES

Get informed on the issues that matter most to you and your health.

SATURDAY, JAN. 26

10 A.M.

Let's Talk Women's Health: Sex, Libido, and Vaginal Health Through the Lifespan

Emily Beaman, DNP, CNM
SSM Health

11 A.M.

How Diagnostic Ultrasound Services can improve your Health!

Alexander Vang, PDSI
Ultrasound Services

12 P.M.

The Most Important Beauty Swaps to Make This Year

Lisa Brill, Qet Botanicals

1 P.M.

To Be Determined*

2 P.M.

Healing Touch for your Health and Wellness

Mary Pat Hank,
Healing Touch Madison

3 P.M.

To Be Determined*

*Find the complete classroom schedule at wellexpomadison.com



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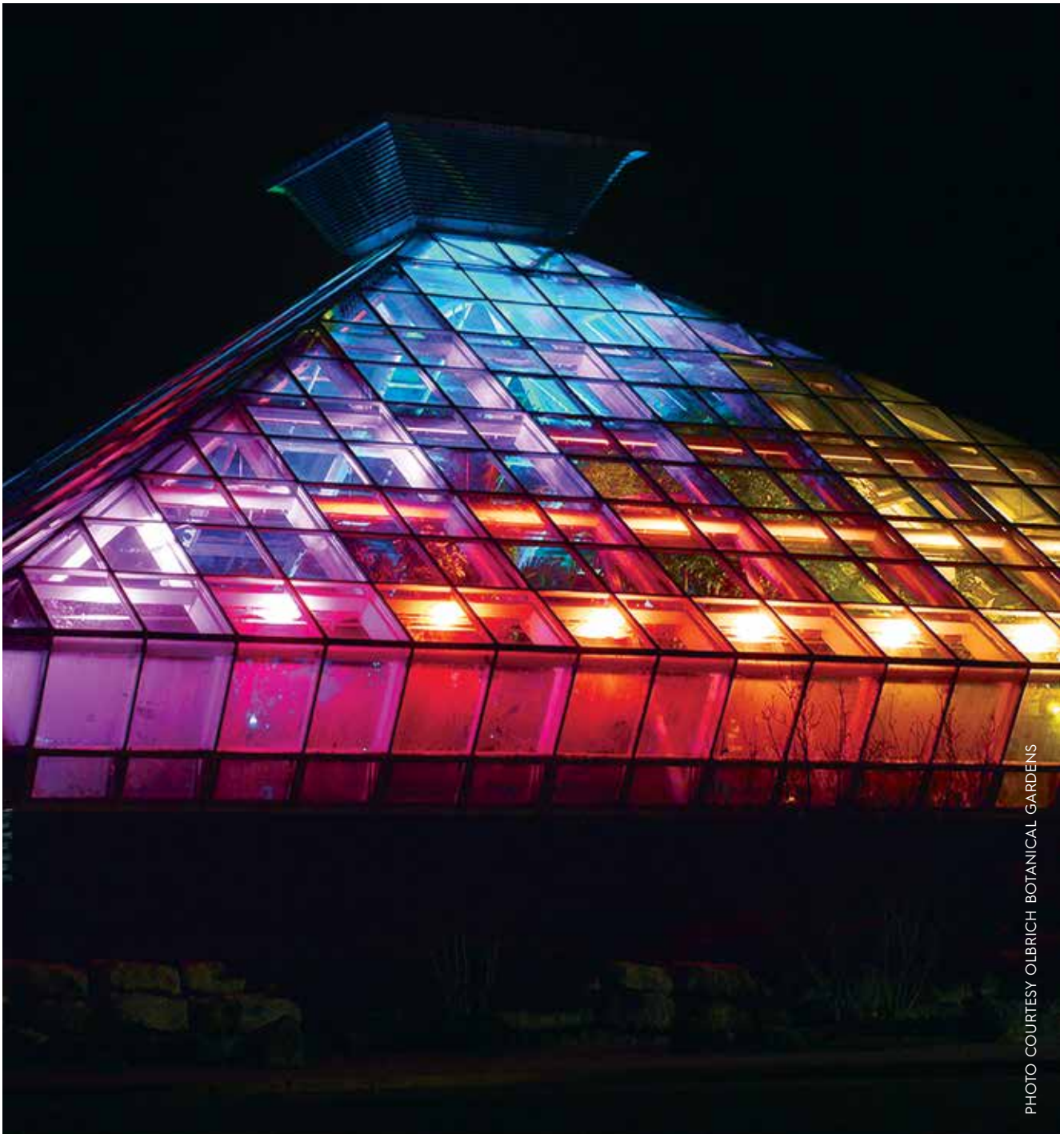


PHOTO COURTESY OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS

FLORAL FUNK | Groove to upbeat tracks spun live at Olbrich Botanical Gardens during Cocktails in the Conservatory. The monthly series kicks off 2019 with Women to Watch alum Vanessa McDowell (DJ Ace) headlining on Jan. 25, so be prepared to party for purpose while dancing all night in an indoor, tropical oasis. *Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. olbrich.org.*

BRAVA EVENTS



1/25 - 1/26 | Times Vary

2019 Well Expo

Gaze out over Lake Monona as you practice yoga or jam out to heart-pounding rhythms at the ever-popular WERQ class. Learn how to de-stress your overworked brain and choose healthy beauty treatments made locally. Over 18 free fitness classes, healthy cooking demonstrations, healthful living tips and more will make for a revitalizing two days at the 2019 Well Expo! *Monona Terrace, Madison. For information and tickets, visit BRAVAmagazine.com.*

1/29 | 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Women to Watch Soiree

Meet the amazing women who make up BRAVA's class of 2019 Women to Watch. They come from many fields, from business to medicine to the nonprofit world. What they all have in common is a passion for making their communities—and beyond—better places for all. Mingle with these accomplished women, and meet prior BRAVA W2W, over food and drink at DreamBank's new location. *DreamBank, Madison. Register at BRAVAmagazine.com.*

2/20 | 8 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

THRIVE Career Workshop: Let it go...build your power to accept others just as they are with Darcy Luoma

It's inevitable: You're bound to work with some people you may disagree with or who have a completely opposite approach than you. Let master life coach Darcy Luoma take you through the steps to maintain your integrity and still work well together, even when faced with challenging viewpoints and behaviors. In this workshop, you'll learn Luoma's Thoughtfully Fit strategies of flexibility that you can use to help you stretch to accept others and let go of what you can't change. *Promega BTC Event Center, Fitchburg. To register, visit BRAVAmagazine.com.*

BRAVA SPONSORED EVENTS



1/26 | 8:30 p.m.

Frostiball

Enjoy sumptuous appetizers and desserts, dance to live music by The Upbeat Orchestra, sip signature craft cocktails and rub elbows with fellow arts enthusiasts—all while supporting the state's largest nonprofit arts organization, Overture Center for the Arts. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org* 🌸

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Everyone welcome!

THRIVE



SOFT OPENING

Never underestimate the power of a nice surprise. Like this illuminated drawer that lets you see what you need in a beautiful way. See more dramatic design options for home storage in *Dwell*, P. 30.

PHOTO COURTESY BELLA DOMICILE

Illuminated Walnut Cutlery Drawer by Bellmont Cabinet; Bella Domicile.

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CANNABIS CURE-ALL?

Understanding the growing popularity of CBD

BY SAMANTHA GEORGSON

ILLUSTRATION BY HOLLY TYLER

AS THE PUSH to legalize medical marijuana continues, CBD is taking center stage as a popular new remedy for a wide range of ailments. As it becomes more mainstream, it's important to understand exactly what CBD is, what it is not, and why it matters. Jennifer Helmer, an herbalist at Community Pharmacy in Madison, breaks down this seeming panacea, specifically with regard to women's health.

All cannabis plants, including hemp and marijuana, contain an array of compounds called cannabinoids. The two most common are THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the psychoactive element in cannabis, and CBD (cannabidiol).

Pure CBD is made from hemp and under U.S. law, the difference between marijuana and hemp has everything to do with THC levels. "To be classified as hemp, it can contain no more than 0.3 percent of THC," says Helmer. "So, the short answer is no, over-the-counter CBD products will not get you high."

Cannabinoids don't just come from the cannabis plant. We also make them in our bodies.

"We have a network of cannabinoids and receptors in our

bodies, the endocannabinoid system," says Helmer. "This system is responsible for keeping the body in balance, or in homeostasis." The endocannabinoid system influences everything from our appetite and anxiety levels, to our perception of pain.

While research regarding CBD is limited, so far it's promising. "We're seeing high success rates with pain and anxiety," Helmer says. She refers to cannabinoids as the "bliss chemical," and says that, in cases of mild anxiety and depression, CBD simply works to "restore a sense of calm, allowing women to feel centered throughout the day."

CBD oil is also a well-established anti-inflammatory and is starting to be used as treatment in cases of fibromyalgia, a chronic disorder that is more commonly diagnosed in women, characterized by widespread pain.

CBD is made into elixirs, capsules, balms and other products touted for beauty, stress reduction and wellness. "CBD hasn't been proven to legitimately cure any specific ailment," Helmer notes, "but it helps with healing; there's a real synergy there." 🌸

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INSTA-PURGE

Be mindful about your social media use this year

BY SAMANTHA GEORGSON

STILL THINKING ABOUT your New Year's resolution? Instead of making the annual pact to actually make use of your gym membership, why not challenge yourself to something even more difficult this year? Wean yourself from social media.

Many of us have grown accustomed to constantly checking our social media feeds. We reach for our phones first thing in the morning to check Facebook for our daily dose of news, we spend lunch breaks scrolling aimlessly through Instagram, and we wind down in the evenings by searching Pinterest for recipes to save before our next trip to the grocery store.

While social media is great for building connections and keeping in contact with friends and family, it can also be incredibly time consuming and prompt constant comparison to friends and followers. Local experts offer advice for practicing mindfulness when it comes to using social media.

BE A CONSCIOUS USER

Our smart phones and tablets are so hard to ignore because they're constantly interrupting our daily activities. "These networks focus on trying to capture our attention," says UW professor and social media coach, Don Stanley. "They're designed to keep us on their platforms as much as possible. So, the reality is, you should start to think about how much time you spend on social media, and whether or not these tools really have your best interests in mind."

One way to tune out the digital noise is to turn off notifications. "If you can cut down on the number of dings and pings, you'll find yourself in a much calmer environment, which lends itself to a less stressful emotional state," says Joanne Cantor, director of the Center for Communication Research. Cantor also recommends turning devices off for parts of the day, so you can really focus productively on one thing, instead of constantly multitasking.

EMBRACE THE DIGITAL DETOX

"There's a lot of anxiety around removing ourselves from social media," Stanley admits. "A digital detox is a lot like working out. You can't just walk into the gym and do a full CrossFit workout your first time, you have to ease into it."

Everybody could benefit from taking regular social media breaks. "Find quiet times throughout the day when phones, email and other connected devices can be turned off," Cantor suggests. Both she and Stanley emphasize finding the balance that works for you, rather than adhering to a strict media purge. "You need to practice this on an ongoing basis, if you only exercise once a month, you're never going to get fit—the mind is the same way," Stanley says.

STICK TO CONTENT THAT FEELS GOOD

Social media can be an incredible tool, but constant connection can also take a toll on our mental wellbeing. Returning to social media after a break could be the perfect time to actually sift through the content you see and the people you follow in order to craft a more positive and uplifting feed. "Really try to be mindful," says Stanley. "It's as simple as asking yourself, 'Does this make me feel good?'" 🌸

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We are thrilled to announce that Lauri Droster was recently named the 2018 Gail Winslow Award recipient by the Women's Associate of Financial Advisors at RBC Wealth Management. The award recognizes a woman who demonstrates exemplary efforts to help attract, support and retain women clients and financial advisors. Congratulations, Lauri!

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

MOSAIC BOX'S WORLDLY CURATION

IN 2016, GLOBAL GOODS retailer Chioma Amegashie knew she had to make a change to weather the “retail apocalypse” so she made a bold move by transforming her almost 10-year-old online store into a bimonthly subscription box model. MOSAIC Box caters specifically to the professional, well-traveled, busy woman on the hunt for premium artisanal products. Amegashie personally curates the collections through her world travels to places like Guatemala—where she loves the local beadwork and embroidery—and Spain, where high-quality leather can be found. Each box is themed, often by color, and features three to five authentic and handcrafted items such as scarves from Thailand, stationery from the U.K. or woven home accents from Rwanda. For Amegashie, a 22-year veteran of the retail industry, her business is “all about the art of discovery.” And she affirms “everything from MOSAIC tells a story and commands attention because it’s a statement piece.” Traveling vicariously through the box is part of the joy. —Molly Nagappala 🌸

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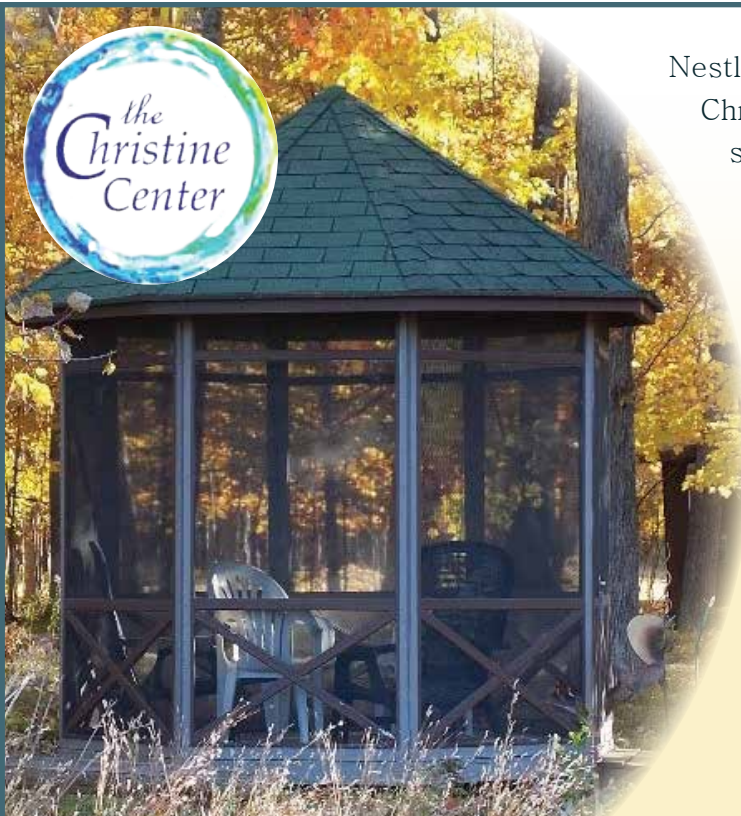


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LAQUERUS' BOLD BEAUTY CONCEPT

A LITTLE PRIMP and polish never hurt nobody. But Laquerus owners Jennifer Lane and Priyanka Verma are pushing the envelope on nail care. "Our business was founded out of frustration with the current nail salon market. For the past 50 years, nail salons have looked and felt the exact same way," says Lane. "At Laquerus, we're introducing our clients to an elevated nail studio experience embedded in digital integration, social interaction and cutting-edge service procedures."

The ladies hope their clientele will appreciate their innovative approach to providing a relaxing—and healthy—cosmetic experience for all genders. After researching salon-related medical issues they decided to remove the possibility of water-borne bacterial infection by going waterless. "The concept of 'waterless' is new to the Madison area, but in essence, we remove the hand and foot soak from all nail services," explains Verma. "We're confident that with a little education, we'll get the entire Madison community to understand the benefits of #goingwaterless."

—Rachel Werner 🌸

laquerus.com



Jennifer Lane and Priyanka Verma

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LISA WILCOX





TOP AND BOTTOM PHOTOS
COURTESY BELLA DOMICILE



PHOTO COURTESY THE GALLEY SINK SYSTEM

(Clockwise from top) Dish Storage Drawer with Movable Pegs by Dura Supreme Cabinetry, Illuminated Walnut Sliding Door Cabinetry by Bellmont Cabinet, The Galley Sink System; Bella Domicile.



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-Marni McEntee 🌸

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SMART HOME hardware simplifies and secures everyday life. From refrigerators that let you see inside without opening the door to video doorbells that show you who's on the stoop, these appliances capitalize on energy saving and home security. These small, simple designs can easily blend into the aesthetic of any home and many can be controlled using a smartphone, putting peace of mind in the palm of your hand. -Megan Roessler 🌸



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CONGRATULATIONS, MASAYA XIONG!

We are proud of your well-deserved recognition as a BRAVA Woman to Watch, Masaya! You are an excellent advocate, mentor and career advisor to hundreds of Madison College students and community members. You understand the barriers to education and employment that many of our students face and work tirelessly to support them in reaching their social, economic, academic and personal goals. We admire your commitment to gender equity, social justice and student development. We are honored and lucky to have you as a colleague and friend!



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Congratulations, Alison!

We are proud to congratulate Alison Helland on being named one of BRAVA's 2019 Women to Watch.



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2019 WOMEN TO WATCH



REAL
WOMEN,
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By Samantha Georgson, Emily Leas, Marni McEntee,
Julia Richards, Megan Roessler, Lisa Schuetz, Hywania Thompson, Candice Wagener and Rachel Werner
Photographed by Hillary Schave at her Azena Photography studio in Madison

They are entrepreneurs and mentors. They work to increase equity in education and access to food, and they strive to pull up the underrepresented, smoothing the uneven ground so everyone has an equal shot at getting established and thriving in society.

They strive to increase services and access to mental health care and work to help those with devastating illnesses like cancer, Parkinson's disease and other medical problems.

They help people see, survive and cope in this hard-knock world, with the help of remarkable four-legged friends. They help others understand and know that who they are is enough. And they design and build new spaces for those who never dreamed of such a fine place to study, play and grow.

And if those parts of their day weren't enough, they are moms, partners, spouses and friends to those all around us.

They are **BRAVA's 2019 Women to Watch**, and they all have stories to tell. Keep your eyes on these gals, because they'll be reshaping our communities into a more evolved form for some time to come.



Doua Kha

COLLEEN JOHNSON

Helping people achieve the college dream

People with low incomes face barriers that make college feel unattainable. It may be lack of childcare, fear of rejection, fear of navigating a complex system or the belief they won't be given a fair chance.

As director of development and community partnerships at the UW Odyssey Project, Colleen Johnson helps adults and children reconnect with their dreams—and that's vital for Dane County's economy.

"I really believe that to strengthen a community, you have to start with the people who live there, especially the economically disadvantaged and people of color," says Johnson, who earned her graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning at UW-Madison.

The Odyssey Project, an award-winning program at UW-Madison, has helped more than 400 adults and 100 children believe in their ability to go to college. This year, Johnson is raising money to support the program's growth, including a plan to expand it to the state's prison system. She also plans to share the model with other universities.

The core program enrolls 30 adults in a two-semester, six-credit curriculum covering English literature, philosophy, American history and art history. The program provides childcare, tutors, financial coaches and more. But the real results are much broader.

"Almost 90 percent of our participants say they vote because they're empowered to use their voice," Johnson says. "And 97 percent say their participation in the adult program helps them support their children in school."

Keena Atkinson is among the 24 percent who go on to earn a degree or certificate. She came to the Odyssey Project like most do—hearing about it from a program graduate. Just 10 years ago, she was a single mother and homeless. Now, after graduating from UW-Madison with a psychology degree, she runs her own business as a health and wellness coach, writer and speaker.

"Before I was just living to exist. Now I live with purpose every day," says Atkinson.

In 2019 Johnson's goal is to help more Odyssey alumni attain degrees like Atkinson did. A vital component is creating a community for success.

"Often people don't find a community of other working parents who face similar obstacles and are succeeding," says Johnson. "We have drop-in tutoring two nights a week, celebrations, picnics, a Facebook group, a clinical social worker, academic counselor and financial advisers. It's like nurturing a family."

—Lisa Schuetz





LANNIA STENZ

Optimism in the face of adversity

Lannia Stenz speaks softly and genuinely. "We're named after a comedian... we're about optimism and levity through dark times," she says of Gilda's Club, an organization that offers support to people going through a cancer diagnosis and their loved ones.

Stenz has been offering steady and compassionate leadership as the executive director of Gilda's Club Madison since 2011. But this past year was a challenging one: after Gilda's Madison celebrated its 10th anniversary in June, the Clubhouse—which hosted much of Gilda's programming—was hit by August's historic floods. Gilda's wasn't down for long. "Within two weeks, we had our programs back up and running," Stenz says, crediting its local partners for offering temporary meeting spaces.

Still, the nonprofit is raising funds for repairs, which are estimated at \$1.4 million.

Stenz views the new year as a time of healing and describes 2019 as "an opportunity for a grand reopening, a rebirth and a new opportunity." Focusing less on growing the organization than in previous years, her goals as a leader turn instead to rejuvenation. "I want Gilda's to reopen its doors this January," she says, noting that she wants to continue growing relationships with the community and donors by improving her storytelling of resilience in the face of cancer. —Megan Roessler

CHANDRA MILLER FIENEN

Boosting Madison's startup scene

When you think of technology's leaders, Chandra Miller Fienen, executive director of StartingBlock Madison, would like YouTube's Susan Wojcicki, Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg or Epic CEO Judith Falkner to be top of mind.

This year, it's her goal that the new entrepreneurial hub become gender balanced with a third to half of its businesses led or owned by women. She says it would be the first in the country.

"In the end, we want to change the startup ecosystem and encourage all sorts of entrepreneurs with varied backgrounds and talents," says Miller Fienen, a graduate of Macalester College in Saint Paul and UC Berkeley's law school.

StartingBlock focuses on tech startups. Currently, there are 30 startups at the nonprofit hub, located in the new Spark building downtown. To date, those startups raised \$24 million. Women-led companies raised 53 percent of it, says Miller Fienen. Nationally, 2 percent of investment dollars goes to teams founded or led by women.

Miller Fienen knows a bit about startups. In 2016, she co-founded FoodWorks Madison, which is dedicated to providing kitchen skills training and jobs to people who are underemployed.

At StartingBlock, she says, she's collaborating with American Family Insurance, the Doyenne Group, UW-Madison and Madison College—and others—to create a robust startup community. The hub will be fully rolled out this year. —Lisa Schuetz





JONNAH PERKINS

Marrying sport, food and the land

Farmer, activist, ultra-distance trail runner, mother. These are just a few of the facets that make up Jonnah Perkins, grower and creative manager at Vermont Valley Community Farm in Blue Mounds. In 2019 she'll add video series producer to her résumé as she tackles a new project called Eat Local Run Wild.

The series combines the many aspects of her life and allows her to share her passion for the local food movement, travel and running.

"What's been interesting to me is how good the outdoor industry is at talking about environmental issues, but food never comes into that conversation," Perkins says.

Her plan is to partner with a well-known outdoor brand, then feature professional athletes in each episode, allowing them to guide Perkins through a region important to them, exploring local food options using Perkins' expertise. Then Perkins and the athlete join a local farmer or rancher to cook a meal using food harvested from the region, ultimately bringing together the sport, the food and the land.

"My main mission as a food activist is to get people asking questions and supporting their local food economy. Even if it's just in a tiny way," says Perkins. Her hope is that Eat Local Run Wild will start this conversation and bring the small, local farm into the big picture. —Emily Leas

JENNY CZERKAS

Tutoring pupils in need—and feeding them

She's dedicated her life to helping those who need food and support. In 2005, Jenny Czerkas, and her husband, Andy, founded The River Food Pantry. The Czerkas' leadership helped grow the pantry and fill a critical need on Madison's North Side.

Czerkas now volunteers as operations director for Selfless Ambition, a faith-based, nonprofit on a mission to close the racial achievement gap and give families access to healthy food. Last year, they opened a food pantry at Glendale Elementary, one of 25 Madison schools with 50 percent or more students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch.

Czerkas' passion for helping families isn't solely about feeding the body. It's also about feeding the mind. She hopes tutoring will set students up for success and shrink the racial achievement gap. "This is a deep-rooted, not new, systemic problem that has been going on for a long time," says Czerkas.

Selfless Ambition CEO Henry Sanders says Czerkas has a fierce passion to attack racial disparities in education. "Jenny has made a career out of serving others and making sure some of our most vulnerable populations are embraced and treated with the dignity they deserve," he says.

Czerkas will continue to focus on opening food pantries and providing tutoring at schools. She has plans of her own too. "I need to take care of myself, spend time with grandkids and take vacations!" —Hywania Thompson





AMY GANNON AND HEATHER WENTLER

Doyenne founders empower female entrepreneurs

There's no 'I' in team when it comes to Doyenne Group creators Amy Gannon and Heather Wentler. Founding a nonprofit to develop funding and training opportunities for novice female entrepreneurs was a daunting task, which this duo dove into six years ago with little more than each other to rely on.

"Doyenne's initial goal when we launched was twofold: create opportunities for women to connect with each other, because it wasn't happening at the existing entrepreneurial events, and to eliminate any excuses for women to not be represented as speakers and panelists," shares Gannon. "Our mission became clear—build ecosystems where women entrepreneurs from all backgrounds can thrive. We also have a painful history of division within the women's movement. It is critical that we own that history fully and that we find ways to work together to advance all women."

Buzz of their personal success in these initial endeavors did not take long to spread. They became inundated with requests from around the country to pilot programs in other communities, leading Gannon and Wentler to expand programming to Milwaukee last year and to commit to starting up

near Appleton in 2019. "Part of Doyenne's mission is to make Wisconsin a nationally recognized leading state for women entrepreneurs to launch, grow and run their businesses and be able to receive the support necessary to do so," states Wentler.

Even with Doyenne's impact rapidly gaining momentum, their local influence is unlikely to diminish anytime soon. "Now when you look at our city and entrepreneurial community, you see women not only at the table, but they've taken over the table. Women are in the majority on organizing committees and speaking at conferences like Forward Fest; running co-working spaces like StartingBlock and Synergy; and taking the lead on business development organizations like the Latino Chamber of Commerce and the Monona East Side Business Alliance," explains 2018 W2W alum and leadership development coach Laura Gmeinder. "Before I met Heather and Amy, I had a hard time finding the right words to explain my professional journey, but now I proudly claim the title 'entrepreneur' like a badge of honor. Having these women as mentors—and friends—has been life-changing." —Rachel Werner

CRISTEN INCITTI

Expanding access to Girl Scouts

It's more than cookies. Girl Scouts is about powerful leadership development capacity. Cristen Incitti, chief operating officer for Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland Council, wants to provide everyone the opportunity to reap the benefits of this empowering program.

Key statistics you should know: All three female U.S. secretaries of state, 90 percent of female astronauts, 73 percent of female senators and 50 percent of female business leaders were all Girl Scouts in their youth.

"We have these outcomes for Girl Scouts like nobody else," says Incitti.

Motivated by the racial inequities in Dane County, it's a real sticking point for Incitti that the traditional model of Girl Scouts leaves many behind. "There's a lot of opportunity for us to do more. I want more girls to be able to participate, and we need to think differently about what that means," she says.

Cost and time are two major barriers. Incitti is creating partnerships to cover memberships, uniforms and miscellaneous expenses for families in need. She's also collaborating with after-school programs to bring Girl Scouts to girls, rather than making them come to Girl Scouts. Her goal is to enroll 500 more girls in 2019 and 1,000 by 2020.

While Incitti is very focused on youth, she is also passionate about bringing more adults into the organization. She's upending the traditional model of parents (typically moms) as troop leader by opening the role to anyone in the community who is committed to helping youth.

Marci Henderson, CEO of Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland Council, touts Incitti's inquisitive nature as one of many strengths. "She has been instrumental in helping us update our strategic plan and prioritize inclusion and diversity," Henderson says.

Incitti has a deep passion for social justice and a way of connecting that would make anyone a believer in her cause.

"Each step I take is centered on a deep commitment to human worth, value and dignity," says Incitti. "I have spent my career and personal life striving toward building relationships, communities and solutions so everyone has what they need and can thrive. This, to me, is how we show love, how we advance as a community and why I do what I do."

—Candice Wagener



ALISON HELLAND

Paying it forward

"It should be our goal as successful professionals to really pave the way for the next generation," says Alison Helland, an attorney at Boardman & Clark whose practice focuses mainly on business matters. "You can only do so much on your own, and sometimes it really helps to have somebody facilitate your involvement at that next level."

In 2019, Helland is looking to pay it forward through her work with the MarketReady Program, a local initiative focused on supporting entrepreneurs who have faced historic barriers to entry that are interested in becoming vendors at the Madison Public Market.

In this role, Helland serves as a mentor to both female and Spanish-speaking business owners, working to provide the resources and support they need in order to be successful. "This is often their first go at starting a business," she says. "They need to be able to sit down with different professionals, to ask questions and have somebody to bounce their ideas off of."

Additionally, Helland's goal is to build relationships with some of the younger attorneys and law students this year. "Mentoring can take a lot of different forms," Helland says. "We all have busy lives and our own responsibilities, but I think mentoring can be as simple as inviting somebody to a meeting that they're not on the list for—really getting people connected."

—Samantha Georgson



EMILY ERWIN-FRANK

Removing the shame from mental illness

Having been stigmatized herself in dealing with a mental illness diagnosis, Emily Erwin-Frank has set out to reduce harmful stigmas about the disease. Erwin-Frank created UpStage Stigma, a show where individuals share stories of mental illness or emotional struggle through various art forms. In the new year she wants to continue to grow the project as well as do more writing and speaking openly about her own experience.

The idea for UpStage Stigma came while Erwin-Frank was an intern with the Program of Assertive Community Treatment, an organization providing care to those living with severe mental illness. "I wanted to create something that enabled people to share in a brave space," says Erwin-Frank. Clients there inspired her and helped her come to terms with her own struggles.

UW-Madison professor Angela Willits serves as an adviser for UpStage Stigma. "Emily's creative vision for this event, as well as her courage and commitment to bringing this event to life, is an inspiring example of the magic we can create when we combine activism, art and love," Willits says.

Erwin-Frank also has a podcast in the works that will feature a different mental health topic each week. It's a collaboration with the UW-Madison School of Social Work and is scheduled to debut this year.

Auditions for UpStage Stigma are this month and the show is set for May 17. Find details at upstigestigma.org.

"I am constantly inspired when I dedicate myself to UpStage Stigma and other creative community projects," she says. "These projects allow me to use my skills, which include envisioning innovative ways to create change." —Hywania Thompson



*"I have spent my career and
personal life striving toward building
relationships, communities and solutions
so everyone has what they need and can thrive.*

*This, to me, is how we show love,
how we advance as a community and
why I do what I do."*

—Cristen Incitti



ELLEN MERKER

Helping disabled adults have healthy relationships

"People with disabilities are just like the rest of us. They want to be in relationships. They want connections, and sometimes that means they want sex," says Ellen Merker, owner of Heart Consulting in Madison. "When we assume that they don't want sex it only puts them at higher risk."

This idea drives Merker forward every day. After receiving her master's degree in rehabilitation psychology and gaining experience working with developmentally disabled clients as a case manager, Merker found a reason to take a leap and follow this passion. It began when a client was reprimanded at work for asking a coworker about sex.

As Merker began researching sex education for adults with disabilities, she realized there were no resources to help her. It opened her eyes to the fact that many of her developmentally disabled clients were survivors of sexual assault or engaging in risky dating behaviors.

Merker says that often special education teachers are discouraged from talking about sex and dating, and parents are unsure of how to bring up the subject. "But if [people] don't know the proper terms and then they are sexually assaulted, how do they report? How do they know to say no? And when is it okay to say yes?" Merker asks.

She called a friend at the Rape Crisis Center to pitch an idea for a workshop, which ran for three years, for women with developmental disabilities to help them understand healthy relationships.

Merker ultimately started her own company, Heart Consulting, and began seeing clients in February 2018, coaching them on things like consent and safe touching. In just a few months she was at capacity, a testimonial to the need for this service in our community.

In 2019 Merker plans to start a women's empowerment group for people with disabilities and expand Heart Consulting's services to the Milwaukee area.

She'll also focus on the big picture—impacting policy at the state and local levels. Making sure people with disabilities are included in the conversation when bills are introduced about teen dating violence or comprehensive sex education is critical, she says.

Ultimately, she wants to change attitudes about disability and sex. And in only a short time, she's proven that change can start with just one person.

—Emily Leas

LAUREL BURLESON

Foodie on a mission

Ugly Apple Café owner Laurel Burleson is using her mobile catering service to promote waste reduction and local agriculture in Dane County. "She is able to provide Industrious members with creative and delicious breakfast options that allow for both locals and visitors in our space to understand Madison's local food scene," says Kayla Hietpas, community manager of Industrious Madison, a coworking space. "Laurel's commitment to serving the city in a sustainable way is unmatched and we are very proud to have her as one of our vendors."

Burleson says she felt called to the culinary industry since childhood when being a chef was her dream job—one she realized by starting her food cart in June 2018, shortly after she and her husband, Travis, moved to Madison from Chicago. Her top priorities in 2019 involve marketing her new fruit leather product, Apple Straps, and hopefully launching a 'pay what you can' dinner series. "I would like to find a venue in a neighborhood with a population that is mixed income and serve a simple dinner service where guests can pay for their meal with money or by volunteering for a future meal," she explains. "Also, I will continue to work with the Culinary Ladies Collective on fundraising for local orgs like DAIS and The Rape Crisis Center." We'll eat to that.

—Rachel Werner



MASAYA XIONG

Nurturing students for success

"There are so many different types of leaders," says Masaya Xiong, student and career adviser at Madison College. "Sometimes it's great to be in the spotlight, but I feel most empowered working from behind the curtain."

As an adviser, Xiong's primary role is working with students who are in designated non-traditional occupation programs. "Everything I do, I do for the success of my students," she says. Xiong focuses on getting her students connected with the community by introducing them to potential employers and other networking opportunities. "I want to make sure my students have some support there, so they have the confidence to navigate their career path or academic journey, whatever it might be."

This year, Xiong is particularly excited to take that same momentum and put it toward creating an affinity group, or employee resource group, for women of color at Madison College. "We want to create an inclusive space where we can thrive and really grow, personally and professionally," says Xiong.

"Masaya makes everyone feel at home," says Lucia Nuñez, one of Xiong's colleagues. Nuñez is also an adviser at Madison College, and she is one of the sponsors of this employee resource group. "She is dedicated to making sure that everyone feels welcome, supported and engaged, whether it be our students or our staff."

Xiong is incredibly humble in her work. "I get my satisfaction from knowing that I have done all that I can to really support my students," she says. "I truly love what I do, and I love the students that I'm with." —Samantha Georgson



NICOLE MEADOWCROFT

Giving the “exhilaration of independence” to those in need

Nicole Meadowcroft remembers that one of the first times she saw a German shepherd, which she'd always wanted to have as a pet, it was working as a seeing eye dog.

Her mom had told her that having a dog just wasn't in the cards, so when she saw the guide dog, she told her mom, “I hope I go blind someday so I can have a German shepherd,” Meadowcroft recalls. “She said ‘be careful what you wish for.’”

It would be a fateful childhood wish. By age 17, Meadowcroft was having increasing difficulty seeing, especially at night. When she saw an ophthalmologist, the doctor determined she had retinitis pigmentosa, a rare genetic disorder that slowly erodes vision.

The diagnosis turned Meadowcroft's world upside down, eventually dashing her plans to become a veterinarian.

But Meadowcroft couldn't shake her dream of working with dogs and, eventually, she found a way around her disability. When she got older, she bred and showed German shepherds and, in 2004, was introduced to a guide dog training team.

That sparked the idea for Custom Canines Service Dog Academy, Meadowcroft's all-volunteer nonprofit launched in 2009. An innovative service dog organization, Custom Canines provides dogs to those with autism, military veterans, and those who are blind, in a wheelchair or who have medical issues such as seizures.

“I use a service dog every day, so I just have a desire to want everybody who has a disability to have that enhancement and feel some exhilaration of independence and hope,” says Meadowcroft, who currently has about 2 percent of her central vision left. Snickers, an amiable black Labrador Retriever mix, is her third guide dog.

The need for high-quality service dogs is enormous. Custom Canines currently has 46 dogs in training and a list of 236 people qualified to receive a dog.

In 2013, the organization started its post-traumatic stress service dog initiative for veterans. One beneficiary is Joshua Webster, who served four tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan, where a roadside bomb nearly killed him.

The post-traumatic stress kept Webster unable to venture out in public for nearly a year when he returned home. He finally reached out to Custom Canines and received his dog, Atlas, with Meadowcroft's help, in late 2017.

“She saved my life,” Webster says.

Webster says Atlas gives him confidence to interact with others, knowing the dog will help calm him when needed. He recently was able to attend his 11-year-old daughter's school theater performance for the first time, taking a seat that for years had been left empty, in the front row, with his name on it.

“My daughter told me one day that Atlas ‘gave her her daddy back,’” Webster says. He now volunteers for Custom Canines.

This year, Meadowcroft is looking forward to finishing



renovation of a massive, donated building on Madison's North Side, being completed mostly by volunteers. Custom Canines' programs will increase to include, among many other things, training opportunities for average dog owners.

And it hopes to increase by 20 the number of service dogs it can make available for those who need them.

It's a visceral kind of work for Meadowcroft.

“Imagine how much you love your pet,” Meadowcroft says. “What if you relied on that pet every day to keep you alive, or keep you safe, or help you get from point A to point B, independently. There's really no words for what that feels like.” —Marni McEntee

A full-length photograph of Rachel Wilberding, a woman with short dark hair, smiling and sitting on a wooden stool. She is wearing a black dress, a grey cardigan, a colorful necklace, and black knee-high boots. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

RACHEL WILBERDING

Raising awareness about Parkinson's disease

In Wisconsin, 15,000 people are living with Parkinson's disease, a progressive nervous system disorder that affects movement. That's prompting Rachel Wilberding, community development director for the Wisconsin chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA), to work to increase community awareness and access to help across the state.

Wilberding is no stranger to disease. In addition to managing celiac disease herself, Wilberding's mom was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis when Wilberding was 7. She experienced firsthand how neurodegenerative disease can change lives. "I've also seen the help and optimism to be gleaned from a sense of community and a reliable source of information about the disease," says Wilberding. "My mom continues to inspire me and mentor me, and she's a big part of the reason that the mission of APDA is so special to me."

Last year, Wilberding stepped into the association position that had been vacant for a year and a board of directors experiencing significant turnover. "I'm not sure she knew what she was taking on," says Kary Beck, current board member. "She figures it out, gets things going and just keeps moving ahead."

Beck, who says she would have been "desperate" if not for the Wisconsin APDA chapter, is a classic example of the need for increased awareness. Beck's first question upon her husband's Parkinson's diagnosis last spring was how much time he had. She learned from the association that people can live over 30 years after being diagnosed.

Wilberding intends to increase the association's profile within the community in 2019, so that more people understand the disease and can utilize the extensive resources offered, including a statewide network of over 60 support groups, art therapy and exercise geared specifically toward those with Parkinson's, financial assistance programs and a caregiver respite program.

Wilberding is also brainstorming how to create a networking group to connect women working in the nonprofit sector because the work can often feel isolating.

"I like to think of myself as a giver, a difference maker, someone who's a very heart-forward kind of person," she says. "Working in a nonprofit, I can make a good living and honor that part of me."

—Candice Wagener

A portrait of Doua Kha, a woman with short, dark, curly hair, wearing a black blazer over a dark top and large hoop earrings. She is sitting on a wooden stool, smiling at the camera.

DOUA KHA

Nurturing diverse identities

Doua Kha has long struggled to reconcile being queer with being Hmong. Kha, who uses the pronouns they, their and them, is now working to support other youth who may wrestle with issues of identity. "Looking back, I wish I had a mentor or a teacher who looked like me or identified like me," they say.

Born in a refugee camp in Thailand, Kha was 1 when the family moved to Milwaukee. When they then moved to a small, predominantly white town near Wausau, "it was the first time that I ever realized that I was a different race," says Kha.

Later, grappling with their queer identity, Kha found language a barrier to coming out to parents who don't speak English. "In Hmong you can't translate queer," says Kha, who uses the term to describe both sexuality and gender identity. The idea of leaving one's family if they are not accepting is also not a solution in a culture centered around kinship.

Currently a grad student in curriculum and instruction at UW-Madison, Kha supports student teachers learning to nurture young people's diverse identities. "She's a really dynamic presence who works to center issues of equity and justice," says Tom Owenby, Kha's supervisor and mentor.

Early this year, Kha's research and volunteer work will seek to help young people better understand their identities. Kha will interview UW System college students to develop a master's thesis broadening the scope of literature on queer Asian American identity.

Kha will also partner with the Bayview Foundation to lead middle school and high school youth in exploring all aspects of identity through creative writing. The goal is to compile the resulting poems and stories into an anthology. "Reflective work is very important in understanding who you are in order to move forward," Kha says. — *Julia Richards*

ANGELA SKALITZKY

Making a difference, by design

The Respite Center. The Rainbow Project. Centro Hispano. East Madison Community Center. Thanks to the savvy, determination and design skills of Angela Skalitzky, vice president of retail sales and design at Floor360 and project manager of the Design for a Difference program, these nonprofit organizations have had massive, free makeovers in recent years.

Skalitzky says 20,000 people have been directly impacted by the makeovers. She hopes to increase that number, which reflects the cumulative number of those served by the nonprofits, to as many as 30,000 people by 2019.

The Madison Design for a Difference chapter currently has 44 designers involved and has always been the largest group by far in the national program. Skalitzky hopes to continue growing DFAD's reach within Madison, vetting even more designers and possibly taking on more smaller projects, in addition to the large annual makeover. She also hopes to shepherd the program into Milwaukee.

Even after four years of makeovers, Skalitzky still gets emotional right before the reveal of the new space. "Those kids are going to walk in and just be so happy with this space, when it is improved in a way that they couldn't even have imagined." That it's a gift to them is a bonus. "You can tell that they know that we did it for them... there's so much bad in this world that to do something good and use our super powers of design for good is pretty incredible." — *Candice Wagener*



DENISE NEY

Research helping real people

Denise Ney has seen her research impact real people's lives. Because of Ney's work as director of the dietetics program at UW-Madison, patients with the rare genetic disorder phenylketonuria (PKU) now have tastier options to meet their extremely limiting dietary needs. Soon Ney's research may be able to help a new population—postmenopausal women who need to lose weight.

It all comes down to a special protein called glycomacropeptide (GMP), which not only has "very interesting biological properties," according to Ney, it's also the "only known dietary protein that doesn't have phenylalanine," which is what makes it ideal for patients with PKU.

During her research Ney noticed that GMP seemed to reduce body fat and build bone in the control group of mice. Now Ney and her collaborators have prepared a pilot study to see if it can do the same in humans, specifically overweight postmenopausal women with metabolic syndrome—a constellation of problems that may include high cholesterol, high blood sugar and high blood fats. Protecting bone health in this population is key because when the women lose weight, they often also lose bone density, explains Karen Hansen, one of Ney's collaborators and a UW rheumatologist who treats patients with osteoporosis.

Wisconsin happens to have an abundance of this unique protein, which is extracted from whey, a byproduct of cheesemaking. "This is capitalizing on a byproduct that normally would just be tossed out and making it into something useful," Hansen says. As a supplement, GMP can be processed into a shake.

The researchers are still trying to figure out what it is about GMP that creates its beneficial effects and hope to do further studies. "The whole mechanism behind why the GMP supplement might promote bone health is still a story to be unraveled," Hansen says. One theory is that it acts as a prebiotic—unusual for a protein—nourishing healthy gut bacteria and reducing inflammation.

Beyond her professional work, Ney's enthusiasm extends to many personal achievements, particularly coauthoring a book telling her mother's immigration story from Germany during World War II. Find more information on the book ottiremembers.com.

—Julia Richards



WOMEN^{TO}WATCH

2

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

Find out what makes Nutkrack so addictive in Entrée, P. 53.

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CRUNCHY MARVEL

Nutcrack's nutty invention

BY CANDICE WAGENER

MUCH LIKE THE INVENTION of chocolate chip cookies and popsicles, Nutcrack's creation was a happy accident. Creator Eric Rupert had several pots cooking on the stove simultaneously, including pecans and simple syrup to make candied pecans. Mindlessly scooping them up and transferring them into a different pot, Rupert realized from the sound he had made the wrong move. Discarding the nuts onto a sheet pan to deal with later, it would be several hours before he discovered just how delicious and incredibly addictive they were.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

PRODUCT

No secret ingredients here. In fact, there's only four: Pecans sourced from New Mexico, a little bit of sugar, a pinch of sea salt and canola oil. Rupert plans to switch over to local, cold-pressed canola oil from Marshall, Wisconsin, in the near future.

PASSION

He is already a chef by day. The first Nutcrack customers came when Rupert, then working as executive chef at Epic, gave the nuts to visitors waiting in the lobby or to customers at events. Epic still supports his side gig, including his step down to a team leadership position to focus more on the business. Rupert was motivated to go public with Nutcrack when his son, Kellen, expressed interest in becoming involved shortly after graduation.

PHILOSOPHY

Rupert believes in creating a simple product with complex flavors. When he decided to start selling the nuts, he tested almost 50 different candied pecans from around the country and found most overly sweet. "I really want the nut to do the work," says Rupert. He also hopes that Nutcrack will create special memories for people, especially as a popular host gift and party favor. "If you bring this to a party," he says, "you will be everybody's favorite human being." 🌸

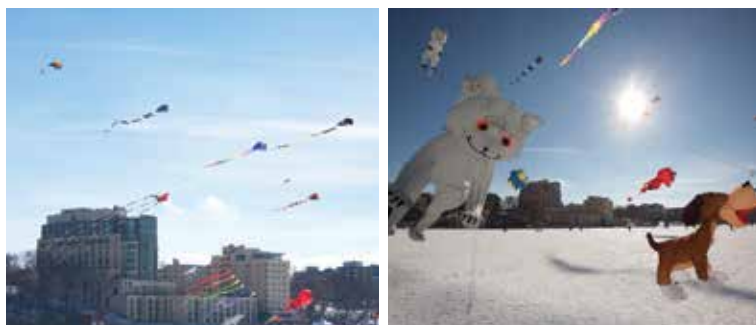
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DINE FOR DOLLARS

Foodie brand Epicurean Chronicles is raising funds through its EC Gives Back Program for Little John's, a new "pay what you can" counter-service bistro piloted by Chef Dave Heide to address issues surrounding food waste and employing military veterans. Restaurants develop a social-media-friendly special, with a portion of sales benefiting a charitable organization. SoHo in Fitchburg is the featured participating restaurant through Jan. 31. -Rachel Werner 🌸

ucsoho.com

Spicy Green Beans: Sautéed in a flavorful fusion of house soy sauce, Thai chilis and garlic. It's a sharable plate but can also be savored solo.

Baked Fried Rice: Commonly found in eateries around Hong Kong, try it with a tomato or a curry sauce. Soho will donate \$3 from each order to the EC Gives Back Program this month.

FAT TIRES, BIG FUN

Take to two wheels
this winter

BY NICOLE GRUTER

PHOTO COURTESY JOE VADEBONCOEUR

WONDERING ABOUT THOSE BIKES with the oversized tires? Their unusual dimensions are becoming more familiar as interest grows in what's known as fat biking (or in the winter months, snow biking). With seemingly countless trails and races created specifically for this sport, opportunities abound for giving it a whirl.

With tires as wide as five inches, fat bikes are buoyant both in substance and spirit. Inspired by mountain biking, the sport allows the rider to "float" over rocks and roots with ease, enthusiasts say.

Winter's frozen lakes bring special opportunities for Madison-area fat biking fans, vastly increasing the cycling area avail-

able. To give it a try, bike rentals are available locally at Machinery Row Bicycles both on a daily and weekly basis. Just 20 miles outside of Madison, you'll find the CamRock trail system. With over 600 acres and three shelter houses, CamRock provides trails along Koshkonnong Creek between the Villages of Cambridge and Rockdale. Trails are marked easy, medium and difficult, providing a fun ride no matter your ability. Also close is the Quarry Ridge Recreation Area, with more than three miles of trails and access to the Military Ridge and Capital City State Trails. Capital Off Road Pathfinders provides trail conditions for Madison area biking.

Former Trek Travel employee Joe Vadeboncoeur, who currently serves on the Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association board of directors, says keeping an eye on the weather is key for maintaining ideal trails. Vadeboncoeur suggests riding at "freezing or just above. Biking in soft, warmer snow can rut





PHOTOS COURTESY TREK TRAVEL



up the trail after it freezes, making it difficult to groom out." The association manages about 125 miles of mountain bike single track in the Hayward Cable area, and grooms about 50 miles for snow biking. The marked trails do not require a pass, but donations are gladly accepted. Printed maps are available in Hayward area bike shops or can be downloaded. Both cambratrails.org and fat-bike.com list trail condition reports.

With weekly events and races in Wisconsin nearly every weekend throughout winter you can take fat biking to the next level and make a trip of it. The Sweaty Yeti is a weekend winter festival Feb. 22-24

in Neillsville, Wisconsin, including night rides, camping and bonfires. No doubt brats and beer make it into the mix!

Or for a chance to ride and race on the professionally groomed American Birkebeiner ski trail try the Fat Bike Birkie March 8-9 in Cable, Wisconsin. Cycling on these trails is only allowed during the Birkie.

One element always present with fat biking is fun. Vadeboncoeur says fat biking is "slower, but lends itself to a smile. You can only go so fast and when you fall, generally speaking you land on a big puffy pile of snow." In Wisconsin, what could be more fun than that? ❀

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NO MOUNTAIN? NO PROBLEM!

Wisconsin's downhill ski scene

BY MEGAN ROESSLER



Photos courtesy
Granite Peak Ski Area

IMAGINE SPENDING THE DAY speeding down the slopes before kicking back in a cozy snow-covered chalet. It's the kind of wintertime nostalgia that might make you think you'd need a ticket to Aspen or Jackson Hole to experience, but you'd be mistaken. For steep slopes and stylish retreats right in your backyard, be sure to check out these Wisconsin ski spots this winter.

Kewaskum's **Sunburst Winter Sports Park** is in the greater Milwaukee area. Being in a flatter part of the state, it doesn't offer the same verticals that you might find farther north or west, but this doesn't mean a shortage of hills. Sunburst has 12 runs, several of which are rated as "advanced," as well as three terrain parks. For those not ready to take on these more difficult slopes, Sunburst also offers a bunny hill and a snow tubing area. skisunburst.com

Natural beauty and Midwestern charm make **Mt. La Crosse** in La Crosse stand out. "From up at the top you look down over a bluff and river valley," says Jeni Blake, the resort's marketing director. "Our natural beauty outshines a lot of other parks." This character and scenery have helped keep Mt. La Crosse going strong since 1959. The park features the Midwest's steepest ski hill, "Damnation," a double-black diamond-ranked run, with a 516-foot vertical descent. But don't worry if that's not quite your

speed. "Even if you're not a skier, you can enjoy Mt. La Crosse," Blake says, adding that the A-frame family-friendly chalet is perfect for a relaxing beer from their award-winning selection after hitting the slopes. A hot tip? Be sure to check out the chalet's antique St. Bernard Room, and keep an eye out for family and student deals online. mtlacrosse.com



With Rib Mountain State Park encompassing part of the resort and a rural downtown at its base, **Granite Peak Ski Area** is all about its community. The numbers definitely stack up for this

GO+DO | JAUNT

family-owned park in Wausau: between its 75 ski runs and four terrain parks, there's plenty of space to shred. New this year is the RFID gate system—the same system you'd find in Vail or Mammoth Mountain—which gives skiers a chip card that tracks their vertical feet and posts their photo to a leader board. Lisa Zilinsky, the park's director of marketing, says visitors should make sure to check out



the west side of the park. "The sun hits it the most," she says, "It's really beautiful." skigranitepeak.com

In Portage, just an hour's drive from downtown Madison, **Cascade Mountain** is a winter classic. Perfect for a day trip, the site offers something for the whole family. The "Far Out" trail, at just over a mile long, takes skiers on a scenic pass around the edge of the ski area, and the snow tube park provides boundless fun with no athleticism required. cascademountain.com

Whether you spend your time skiing or just relaxing back at the chalet, each of these Wisconsin ski parks offers a unique winter experience that proves quality downhill skiing is possible without mountains. If you're a novice, or just want to give it a try for an afternoon, most of these resorts offer ski lessons for aspiring Lindsey Vonns and Chloe Kims of all ages. ❁

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1/8 - 1/13 | Times Vary

"FINDING NEVERLAND"

Playwright J.M. Barrie struggles to find inspiration until he meets four young brothers and their beautiful widowed mother. Spellbound by the boys' enchanting make-believe adventures, he sets out to write a play that will astound London theatergoers. *Overture Center, Madison.* overture.org



PHOTO COURTESY OVERTURE CENTER

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1/12 - 1/13 | Times Vary

VIGNETTES- CONCERT #3

Through a series of vignettes, witness how a brief musical work allows the composer to focus narrowly on specific themes to tell a story, recall an experience or feeling, describe a place, or present a character study. *Oakwood Center for Arts and Education, Madison.* oakwoodchamberplayers.com

1/17 - 1/31 | Times Vary

"HEISENBERG"

Two strangers, set adrift by life and loss, embark upon a fascinating game of cat and mouse that changes course with each new revelation. *Overture Center, Madison.* forwardtheater.com

1/19 | Times Vary

"ELLA CINDERS"

In this 1926 reimagining of the Cinderella story, Colleen Moore is a domestic worker for her stepmother and stepsisters, who enters a contest promising a better life in Hollywood. *Overture Center, Madison.* overture.org



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1/20 | 2:30 p.m.**BEYOND THE SCORE®: MENDELSSOHN**

Beyond the Score® is a multimedia presentation featuring American Players Theatre actors, stunning visual projections and musical examples. *Overture Center, Madison. madisonsymphony.org*

1/24 – 1/30 | Times Vary**"A SERPENT'S TOOTH: THE KING LEAR MUSICAL"**

A musical adaptation of the classic Shakespeare tragedy examining the themes of aging, familial love and losing your mind. *Bartell Theatre, Madison. arewedelicious.com*

1/25 | 7:30 p.m.**MASTERWORKS I: MIRIAM K. SMITH, CELLO**

We welcome young cello sensation Miriam K. Smith, who will perform Cello Concerto in A minor by Saint-Saëns. Fresh from performances with the Cincinnati and Louisville symphonies, we are excited to showcase this amazingly gifted young woman. *Overture Center, Madison. wisconsinchamberorchestra.org*

1/27 | 7:30 p.m.**GREGORY ALAN ISAKOV WITH GOOD OLD WAR**

The Colorado-based indie-folk artist is a full-time farmer who sells vegetable seeds and grows various market crops on his three-acre farm, while also tending to a thriving musical career. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

ENTERTAINMENT**1/11 | 6 p.m.****ECOSQUARED ART SHOW**

Come to the artists' reception of this eco-friendly art show highlighting upcycling, repurposing and recycling materials for the sake of art. The show will be up from Jan. 8 through Feb. 28. *Hatch Art House, Madison. hatcharthouse.com*

1/11 – 1/13 | Times Vary**MADISON HOME EXPO**

Speak with professionals about home improvement projects and receive advice on kitchen and bath remodeling, roofing, flooring and landscaping. *Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison. mononaterrace.com*

1/12 | 1 p.m.**DROP-IN TOUR: JOEL SHAPIRO: THE BRONZES**

Gain insight into Joel Shapiro's "The Bronzes" on a free half-hour guided tour and discussion led by MMoCA's docents. *Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison. mmoca.org*

**1/15 | 7:30 p.m.****NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE: VIEW FROM ABOVE WITH TERRY VIRT**

Sometimes, a little distance is all you need to see things in a brand-new way. For astronaut Terry Virts, his newfound perspective was from the International Space Station, where he installed the Cupola module, granting an unprecedented 360-degree view from the station. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

1/25 – 1/27 | Times Vary**2019 NARI REMODELING EXPO**

Attend one of the 40 seminars led by professional remodelers, vendors and suppliers to ask questions that matter to you. *Madison Marriott Convention Center, Madison. nariexpo.com*

1/25 | 6 p.m.**CRAZY RICH ASIANS**

Watch the free screening of this romantic comedy flick based on the bestselling book which chronicles a native New Yorker's trip to Singapore to meet her boyfriend's family. *Alicia Ashman Library, Madison. madisonpubliclibrary.org*

1/26 | 8 p.m.**THE FLOP HOUSE**

"Floppers" Elliott Kalan, Dan McCoy and Stuart Wellington are friends who love to watch commercial movie "flops"—bad movies—and discuss them, entertaining listeners with their casual banter and humorous commentary. The popular podcast throws away filters and adds laughs. *Wisconsin Union Theater, Madison. union.wisc.edu*

FAMILY**1/13 | 3 p.m.****"THE RAINBOW FISH"**

The Rainbow Fish will enchant even the youngest child with his silver scales and heart of gold in a new adaptation of Marcus Pfizer's award-winning books about the beautiful fish who learned to share his most prized possession. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

1/26 | Times Vary**KIDS IN THE ROTUNDA – GET BACK WI**

Join us on a Beatleful musical journey as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Beatles album Yellow Submarine! Get Back Wisconsin is a Madison-based ensemble that specializes in performing live recreations of the entire Beatles catalog. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

1/26 | 10 a.m.**STORYBOOK MAGIC**

Join Children's Theater of Madison for Storybook Magic! In this engaging and interactive story time, children and their families will use imagination and creativity to bring the spring-themed story, "Giraffes Can't Dance," to life through drama-based activities. *DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/dreambank/events*

1/26 | 2 p.m.**CURE CABIN FEVER!: TAIWAN PUPPET TROUPE**

Enjoy a traditional Taiwanese puppet show and learn about the country of Taiwan and its culture. After the show, you can make your own puppet! *Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison. wisconsinhistory.org*

1/26 – 1/31 | Times Vary**"R WEE DELICIOUS"**

A cast of parents write and perform short plays with their children in mind. Come share in the joy of generations. This show will be appetizing for all ages. *Bartell Theatre, Madison. arewedelicious.com*

1/29 – 1/30 | Times Vary**PAW PATROL LIVE**

It's Pirate Day in Adventure Bay and Ryder will need all paws on deck as he and the PAW Patrol discover a secret treasure map while on a mission to rescue Cap'n Turbot from a mysterious cavern. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

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SAVOR

1/5 | 8 a.m.

LATE WINTER MARKET

Get your market fix this winter every Saturday while chatting with many of the Dane County Farmers' Market members and shopping a full array of fruits and vegetables, cheeses, honey, bakery items, meats and specialty items. *Madison Senior Center, Madison. dcfm.org*

1/12 | 9 a.m.

GLUTEN FREE WAFFLES AND QUICHE!

Indulge in an allergen-friendly breakfast with the option to also savor waffles with real maple syrup, house-made single-origin chocolate sauce, fresh whipped cream and berries. *Madison Chocolate Company, Madison. madisonchocolate.com*

1/16 | 6 p.m.

VEGAN BAKING SECRETS: CHEESECAKES

Learn a basic recipe and how to vary the crust, the filling and the topping to make the perfect vegan cheesecakes while enjoying samples. Gluten-free options will also be demonstrated and discussed. *Willy Street Co-op West, Middleton. willystreetcoop*

1/19 | 2 p.m.

ISTHMUS BEER AND CHEESE FEST

Chat with brewers and cheesemakers from around Wisconsin and try hundreds of delicious samples. *Alliant Energy Center, Madison. isthmusbeercheese.com*

1/27 | 2 p.m.

SWEET DOUGH

Make a basic sweet dough and shape it into classic pecan rolls, cinnamon rolls with caramel icing, and a cream cheese cherry braid with certified master baker Punky Egan who taught professional baking classes for 30 years at Madison College. *vomFASS, Madison. madison.vomfassusa.com*

JAUNT

1/3 | 5 p.m.

1ST THURSDAY DINNER

Enjoy a family-style, multi-course, ethnic feast before or after taking a stroll through the VIVA Gallery Artist Cooperative's open house right next door. *Rooted Spoon, Viroqua. rootedspoon.com*

1/25 - 1/27 | Times Vary

PETTIT INDOOR MARATHON & HALF MARATHON

Join or watch the marathon, half marathon or marathon relay for a packed weekend of indoor running events. *Pettit National Ice Center, Milwaukee. pettitindoormarathon.com*

1/26 | 10 a.m.

WAUSAU WINTERFEST

Enjoy a day of free activities including horse-drawn carriage rides, a snow slide, ice sculptures, art projects, cookie decorating and ice skating. *The 400 Block, Wausau. wausauevents.org*

1/26 | 11 a.m.

WINTERFEST ON BROADWAY

Take advantage of Wisconsin's most underrated season with the whole family while participating in an assortment of activities on the outdoor streets of the Broadway District. *Locations vary, Downtown Green Bay. onbroadway.org*

1/27 | 11 a.m.

13TH ANNUAL MILWAUKEE CHILI BOWL

Sample traditional and spicy chili, along with specialty chili like chicken, lamb, brisket, sweet potato, bratwurst and vegetarian chili as Milwaukee's top chefs and restaurants compete for best chili and the coveted Golden Ladle Award. *Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, Milwaukee. mkechilibowl.com*



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THRIVE

1/11 | 6 p.m.

GROOVE AND GLIDE

Experience the fun and beauty of ice skating under the lights with fun music and games. *Warner Park, Madison. cityofmadison.com/calendar/groove-glide-warner-park*

1/12 | 9 a.m.

BRAZEN DROPOUTS BIKE SWAP

Shop around for new and used bikes, bike parts, bike tools, bike accessories and bike art. *Alliant Energy Center, Madison. brazendropouts.org/bike-swap*

1/24 | 6:15 p.m.

DREAM BIG: UNCOVERING YOUR BURIED PASSIONS ONE GARBAGE BAG AT A TIME WITH NICOLE GRUTER

Explore what you own, how you own it, and how your stuff affects a daily sense of joy and purpose as Nicole Gruter, a professional organizer, artist, performer and writer shares her inspiring experience of downsizing while guiding you toward yours. Learn the next steps in making room for your dreams—literally! *DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/dreambank/events*

1/26 | 9 a.m.

SUSTAINABILITY SERIES: SUSTAINABLE GARDENS & LANDSCAPES

Plan your sustainable garden or landscape to attract bees and other pollinators at this presentation by Susan Carpenter, UW Arboretum's native plant gardener. *Lussier Family Heritage Center, Madison. lussierheritagecenter.com*

1/30 | 12 p.m.

WELLNESS TALK

Learn about evidence-based programs such as Tai chi, yoga, "Stepping On" and dance which are proving to help reduce the risk of falling in this free presentation sponsored by Group Health Cooperative. *Monona Terrace, Madison. mononaterace.com/programs-and-events*

1/31 | 6:15 p.m.

DREAM BIG: YOU'RE NOT DONE YET—THE COURAGE TO DREAM WHEN YOU THINK IT'S ALL OVER WITH MARY HELEN CONROY

There's one thing for certain in life—change is always around the corner. And while seeking permanence in a world that is constantly changing seems like the safest option, Mary Helen Conroy makes the case that it, in fact, is not. She takes the example of a spiral to explain why motion is the key to creating your own path. *DreamBank, Madison. dreamfearlessly.com/dreambank/events*

FACING ADVERSITY WITH APLOMB

The Center for Resilient Cities helps communities overcome stressors

BY AMY PFLUGSHAUPT
NBC15 ANCHOR

PHOTOGRAPHED BY VALERIE TOBIAS

MADISON IS GROWING at a record pace. The latest U.S. Census shows more than a quarter of a million people call Wisconsin's capital city home. And the surrounding communities—Fitchburg, Sun Prairie and Verona—are among the top-10 rapidly growing cities in the state.

With everything from the landscape to community dynamic changing, the Center for Resilient Cities has taken on the task of making sure we as a community are creating sustainable and thriving neighborhoods.

The nonprofit was launched in 1996.

surrounding the city," Caton Campbell says.

But what is resiliency and why do communities need it? Caton Campbell says it's how individuals, the economy and the environment respond to stressors and difficulties allowing them to find ways to not just survive, but to thrive.

As an example, Caton Campbell says, "A community garden can help enhance a sense of togetherness. It can help by increasing social connections, access to healthy foods and provide an outlet for physical activity."

"The resilience of cities depends a lot on a city's ability to provide services and infrastructure that's efficient and cost effective."

—Marcia Caton Campbell

The executive director, Marcia Caton Campbell, says the organization is driven by community members who are envisioning their space and putting those plans into action.

"The resilience of cities depends a lot on a city's ability to provide services and infrastructure that's efficient and cost effective, as well as compact, so you're not just sprawling out into green spaces

She says that, looking forward, the organization has some major topics to address.

"We're going to wind up working on aspects of addressing the impact of climate change at the neighborhood scale," says Caton Campbell. The devastating flooding last summer, for instance, is a timely example of climate change that can be studied and



Marcia Caton Campbell

discussed. "We need to think about how we're going to address those kinds of issues."

The group is based out of the Badger Rock Center on Madison's South Side and offers a number of programs including community gardens, art and music—often at no cost to participants.

"Come see us," Caton Campbell says. "We have a community dinner the second Friday of every month at 6 p.m." 🌸

For more information, visit badgerrock.org.

JANUARY NONPROFIT EVENTS

1/19 | 6 p.m.

2019 "I HAVE A DREAM" BALL

Join Women in Focus in celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during this annual event that helps provide scholarships to both high school seniors and adults returning to continue post-high school education—fulfilling the organization's mission to erase educational barriers for students of color. *Monona Terrace, Madison.* womeninfocus.net

1/20 | 6 p.m.

WINTER CELEBRATION AND SILENT AUCTION

Enjoy a night of light appetizers, music and wine as all silent auction proceeds and a percentage of wine sales benefit the Future Leaders WI Scholarship Foundation. *Grape Water Wine Bar, Middleton.* facebook.com/futureleadersWI

1/27 | 12 p.m.

CAMP BINGO

Learn how AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin is a resource for HIV prevention, care and treatment programs in the state while participating in seven games of bingo with the chance to win cash prizes, a costume contest, trivia game and 50-50 raffle. *Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison.* arcw.org

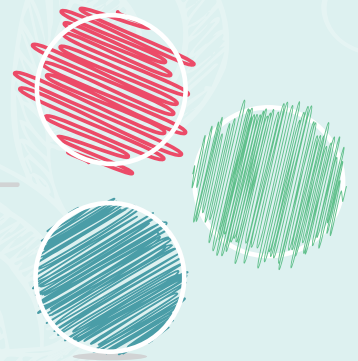


PHOTO COURTESY OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS

TOTALLY HOT | The Bolz Conservatory in Olbrich Botanical Gardens is home to 650 exotic plants, along with rare orchids and live birds. It's a tempting 65-80 degrees inside—perfect for a midwinter shindig. *See details about the conservatory's January cocktail party on P. 17.* 🌸

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