

# BRAVA

women + style + substance

2021  
WOMEN  
TO  
WATCH

10 VISIONARIES  
TRANSFORMING  
MADISON

*Dominique Christian,*  
AYA Advocacy Group  
and The Road Home

*Side  
Hustle*  
KNOW-HOW

---

MENTAL HEALTH  
ON-CALL

---

INSPIRING  
*Wall  
Art*



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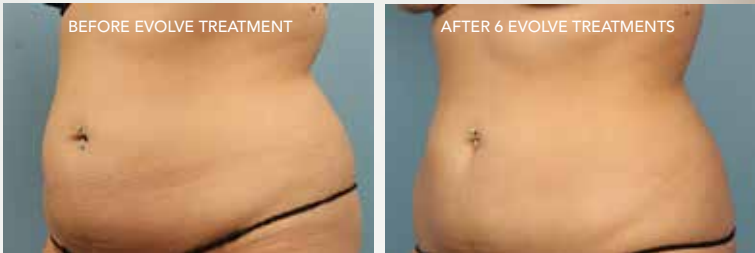
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LATINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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## LOOKING FORWARD

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!** I'm guessing that for most of us, a new year and fresh start has never been more welcome than 2021.

A year ago, I joined BRAVA Magazine as editorial director. I was excited for the challenge that lay ahead in 2020, and knew I had big shoes to fill when it came to continuing BRAVA's legacy of covering Madison-area women and the phenomenal, inspiring things they are doing. While 2020 brought its challenges, we've never lost sight of what we're here to do at BRAVA. I hope you've enjoyed the changes we've implemented thus far, and I look forward to bringing forth a fresh, new look in 2021 in the pages as well.

For the last nine years, our January issue has marked the Women to Watch issue. It seems appropriate when we're all thinking about a fresh start to recognize and celebrate the women that have already been leading the charge in making a difference in our community and have big goals for the year ahead. I was fortunate to meet all 10 women at our photo shoots at Garver Feed Mill and interview each one for videos we have posted on our website (watch them at [bravamagazine.com/w2w](http://bravamagazine.com/w2w)). I got to hear about how our cover woman Dominique Christian overcame an incredible amount of adversity in her life to thrive in her position at The Road Home, start her own business and earn her master's degree — all while being a mom to three beautiful children. Or how Jasmine Banks started her own body care product company after her mom passed away of cancer to normalize and elevate Black-owned

businesses in Madison. Luz del Carmen Arroyo Calderon came to the U.S. from Mexico as a 12-year-old who spoke no English. She shared how she's used her experiences to guide and assist students like herself at Madison Area Technical College, so they can be successful in their academic journey. (Read their stories starting on P. 28.) At the end of our interviews, many of the women became teary-eyed when I asked what it meant for them to be a BRAVA Woman to Watch.

"The reason that [Women to Watch] means a lot is that it's a moment of validation. When you're working so hard every single day, and you're moving so fast, and you're doing the next thing, I feel like it was a moment [for me] of, 'OK, you're doing the right work and you're making a difference — so keep going,'" says 2021 Woman to Watch Mel Charbonneau.

Also, I love our other stories in this issue that are a breath of fresh air, such as ways to maximize your side hustle (P. 20), checking out virtual therapy apps for mental wellness (P. 15) and ways to deck your walls with cool new art (P. 21).

I always welcome your feedback on what you'd like to see more of in BRAVA, or women we should know about. Please email me at [shayna@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:shayna@ntmediagroup.com) to share any ideas.

**Shayna Mace**  
Editorial Director  
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**MANY THANKS!** A project like Women to Watch doesn't happen without creative collaborators. I want to give a shout-out to photographer Hillary Schave for her brilliant photography in our "Women to Watch" feature. Truly, her photos were so good it made it challenging to select which images we would use of each woman within our pages. Videographer Faith Dey of Live Well Social Video ([vimeo.com/livewellsocialvideos](https://vimeo.com/livewellsocialvideos)) was a pleasure to partner up with on shooting videos of each Woman to Watch. She masterfully guided each shoot and made the women feel at ease. She's someone that inspires me! Ann Christianson has always been my go-to for creative art direction, and her design of this feature is my favorite yet. And finally, many thanks to Tia Ranney, director of event operations at Garver Events and her team at Garver Feed Mill, for making our shoot experience easy, fuss-free and fun. People like these make me grateful we live in a community like Madison.



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

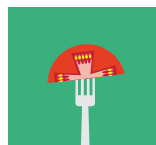
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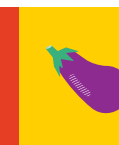
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Subscription information:  
(262) 729-4471 or kerri@ntmediagroup.com.

BRAVA (ISSN 1934-4317) January/February 2021,  
Volume 22, Number 01, is published bimonthly  
(six times a year) by Nei-Turner Media Group, Inc.  
Periodicals postage paid at 3902 Milwaukee St,  
Madison WI 53714 and additional offices. Subscriptions  
are \$12/year. Postmaster send address changes to:  
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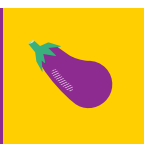
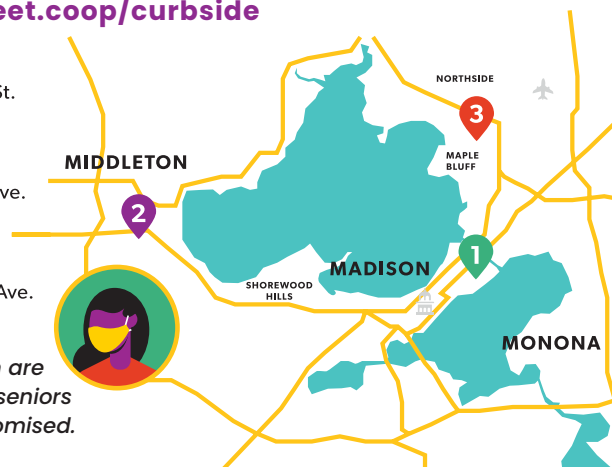
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## CONTRIBUTORS



### ANN CHRISTIANSON

A longtime BRAVA collaborator and art director mastermind, Ann designed our “Women to Watch” and “Ravishing Revival” features, as well as our cover of Dominique Christian. Ann is a people person, a go-getter and never says the word “can’t.” She enjoys helping people and telling their stories of perseverance through design, which is why she absolutely loves working with the BRAVA team. An enthusiast of good coffee, red wine and a well-curated accessory, she also loves her family; friends; and dog, Gibson.

@annchristiansonann



### EMILY MCCLUHAN

Emily is a regular BRAVA contributor and wrote the Wellbeing piece on virtual therapy apps and interviewed Sasha Stone and Mel Charbonneau in our “Women to Watch” feature. Through almost 20 years of freelance writing for local publications in Michigan, Montana and Wisconsin, Emily discovered a love for digging into the story behind the person. When she’s not writing or leading a team of program managers in her day job, you’ll find Emily paddleboarding; traveling; running with friends; or hiking with her husky mix, Raven.

@mcmadtown33



### SHALICIA JOHNSON

Shalicia photographed Angela R. Davis of the Madison Community Foundation for this month’s Perspective profile. Shalicia is a native of Madison and has been a photographer for BRAVA since 2017. She specializes in lifestyle portraiture and event photography. Through her boutique photography business, ArrowStar Photography ([arrowstarphotography.com](http://arrowstarphotography.com)), she creates stunning heirloom wall art for her clients’ homes.

@arrowstarphotography



### HILLARY SCHAVE

Hillary has photographed BRAVA’s “Women to Watch” feature since 2015 and has been an invaluable contributor to the package’s creative process. Her small business, Azena Photography ([azenaphoto.com](http://azenaphoto.com)), specializes in weddings, professional business portraits and boudoir out of her beautiful studio on the east side of Madison. When she is not working, she loves to escape in books, sci-fi/fantasy and the great outdoors. During the summer, her camping gear is always packed and ready to go at the door for last minute chances to spend time with her family and friends away from the city.

@azenaphotography

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2021 WOMEN TO WATCH

Don’t miss our videos with  
all 10 Women to Watch on  
[bravamagazine.com/w2w](http://bravamagazine.com/w2w)



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## A FACE BEHIND THE FUNDS

BY SHAYNA MACE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
SHALICIA JOHNSON

**WHEN YOU GET** to know Angela R. Davis, it's easy to form a quick rapport with her. She's whip-smart, friendly and laughs a lot. And she loves to talk about what she does as the development director at the Madison Community Foundation.

"It's pretty cool. I have the privilege and honor to work with people on their charitable giving," she says. "I work with so many philanthropic people in this community, and I work with our team who's responsible for working with individuals, nonprofits and our giving partners to support charitable causes that are meaningful to them."

Madison Community Foundation was established in 1942 as the Madison Community Trust. The organization helps individuals to support the community and the organizations they care about in a variety of ways. Supporting the community can be as simple as making a donation on the MCF

website, or as complex as creating an endowment for an organization or cause they love either during their lifetime or in their estate plan. Community foundations in general are defined by a geographic area, typically no larger than a state, Davis says, so funds are generally distributed locally (some donors also give to causes around the country as well). MCF focuses on giving to nonprofits in Dane County, and also has six regional giving partners in Columbus, Lodi, Middleton, Monona, Portage and Rio that work within their communities. In 2019, MCF gave out \$21 million in grants to a variety of nonprofits.

During the pandemic, Davis says MCF has fared well, because they're a funder of nonprofits and manage a staggering \$292 million in assets. In spring 2020, MCF was able to react quickly during the pandemic by handing out \$103,000 worth of grants to nonprofits through A Fund for Women, a component fund of MCF. The grants specifically benefit women and girls and were awarded to Centro Hispano, Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness, the Latinx Consortium Emergency Relief Fund and others.

"That's why I love that we can pool money through A Fund for Women, which has been around since 1993. Women and girls and families need help *now*. So, we were able to work with these agencies that we have relationships with. It doesn't matter if it's \$100 or \$100,000, those funds are pooled together, and when we work together as a community, that gives us the greatest impact. It's all about impact," she explains.

Davis got her feet wet in the development arena in Hammond, Ind., where she worked as a community development planner and director of a community center for 8½ years. After returning to school to get her master's in human resource development, she worked at Purdue University for a number of years, then came to Madison where she worked at the Wisconsin Historical Foundation before MCF.

"I had no idea you could help fund different projects or raise money [as a job]. There's not a lot of African Americans — or people of color period — in this line of work," so that was eye-opening for her, she explains.

Davis, who has been with MCF for 4½ years, admits that hearing the dire needs of individuals and nonprofits can sometimes take its toll, but it's something she's embraced.

"I cry [sometimes]. I'm human, we're all human," she says. "If I didn't have emotions, I wouldn't be good at my job. I want to save everybody, and that's something I've struggled with since day one. But then I say, 'You know what? We are doing the best we can.' That's what I think I was born to do, is make a difference and make this world a better place than it was when I found it" 🌸



## YOU CAN DO IT, TOO

Davis gives tips on how to make your money work when giving to charitable causes.

### **Listen to your heart to help you decide where to donate.**

"I always tell people, close your eyes and think about what it is you want to do. What drives you? Everybody has a passion for something — what's your passion to give back?"

**Any amount of money can make a difference.** "Don't think any assistance is too small. People think you have to be a millionaire to make a charitable gift. Twenty-five dollars can make a difference to an organization — that can buy some books or hand sanitizer."

**Think beyond dollars.** "If you don't have money, can you make other connections? Or is there other volunteer work you can do for an organization, like tutor, or teach a class or be a guest speaker via Zoom to inspire people?"



## CHIC AND CONTEMPORARY

BY SHAYNA MACE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANNA WOLF

**AS THE NEW YEAR** rolls around, it feels good to organize, purge and possibly replace items that need it. And, swapping out an old item with something special, one that's also beautifully designed, is even better. Since 2013, Madison Modern Market has inspired shoppers to introduce stylish, useful home and gift items into their lives.

"In our buying, we look for how an item is made, the material, its function and if it's aesthetically pleasing. It could be something [you use all of the time], like a dish. If it's colorful and cheerful, that's important to us as well," explains manager Emma Stepien.

Rows of candy-colored Pantone mugs, rainbow swaths of reusable water bottles and eye-pleasing handbags in earthy and pastel shades tempt shop visitors with their technicolor attractiveness. Also find housewares, kid's gifts, creative pursuits (journals and puzzles) and jewelry.

"You don't have to be a design lover to appreciate the products we sell," says Stepien, whose own design background informs her buying decisions. "We just like to find the joy in the little things — and we strive to bring joy to your day." 🌸

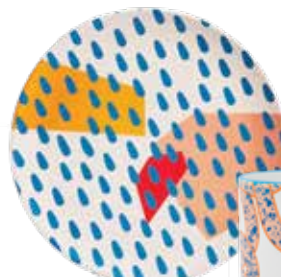
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### SHOP THE LOOK



Store manager Emma Stepien says puzzles have been a hot seller during the pandemic, like this one by Dusen Dusen. \$25



Enjoy your morning coffee a little more with this design forward The Completist mug. \$16

This Poketo bamboo plate is eco-friendly (bamboo is a fast-growing, renewable resource); dishwasher-safe; and, oh yeah — pretty cute. \$12

We've never heard of gin and tonic flavored chocolate, but we're sold with this COCO bar. \$7



These hand-painted wooden dolls by Goose Grease are technically a kid's toy — but we don't blame you if you want to buy the set for yourself. This collection features artists Salvador Dalí, Frida Kahlo, Andy Warhol and Vincent Van Gogh. \$38



This Baleen bangle, like all of their jewelry, is made out of recycled materials. \$28



Wisconsin Waxworks is based right here in the capital city, and their candle scents are heavenly. \$20





## WEAR YOUR WISCO

These hip brands proudly broadcast Dairy State affection.

BY SHAYNA MACE

### FORWARD APPAREL CO.

Forward, the state's motto, was the inspiration for Joe and Kelly Leschisin's company, founded in 2016. With items for men, women and children ranging from apparel to drinkware to prints, the brand celebrates "the beautiful state of Wisconsin and honors all of the things we're surrounded by — nature, history, sports and so much more." The enterprising couple also own KELLA in Mount Horeb, an inspirational shop that showcases — of course — Forward's apparel, but also other local artists' work as well. [forwardapparel.co](http://forwardapparel.co), [madebykella.com](http://madebykella.com)

### GIRL WONDERFUL

A line that's called GIRL WONDERFUL is already a win with us. Verona-based mother-daughter duo Deb Kusmec and Elizabeth Medina run the company, which was started in 2014. Medina's motivation to start the company came when she was pregnant with her daughter. "I decided I wanted to create something for girls that came with a different kind of message — a meaningful one that was focused on their real-life potential," explains Medina. Shirts like "Girl President," "Girl Astronaut" and "Girl Artist" proudly showcase every girl's capability. [girlwonderful.com](http://girlwonderful.com)

### LAKE EFFECT CO.

In the Midwest, we love our lakes, and so does Hartland-based Katherine Gramann, which is why she founded Lake Effect Co. in 2016. The robust brand has tanks, T-shirts, sweatshirts and hats, plus an entire line of home goods. Her "Chase More Sunsets," "So Cold" and "Lake Day" branded merch are her signature pieces. Part of her proceeds also benefit charitable organizations, including DigDeep's Navajo Water Project and the NAACP. [lakeeffectco.com](http://lakeeffectco.com)

### MADISONIAN APPAREL

Madisonian Apparel was born in 2016 out of Jon Siebrecht's love of his native city. "We are a very proud, kind community with very quirky and regionally-specific attributes. I try and pull the most relatable bits and translate those to apparel graphics," he says. That means a cropped black T-shirt emblazoned with "Madisonian" in edgy font hints at Metallica's logo or a burgundy sweatshirt with the cheeky "Midwest Nice" phrase. We dig it. [madisonianapparel.com](http://madisonianapparel.com)



FROM LEFT FORWARD APPAREL CO., GIRL WONDERFUL, LAKE EFFECT CO.



## SHOP LOCAL

**GILTEE**

Started by Wisconsin natives (and couple) Lisa and Adam Gilson, Giltee's line is next-gen Wisco cool. Pieces have a clean, modern vibe with a touch of retro panache — like their “Wisco” T-shirt with a graphic of an Old Fashioned on it. The Wauwatosa-based couple is proud to have a “community-inspired brand” and notes that Lisa “seeks out apparel that looks and feels good — the stuff you’ll want to wear all day, every day.” [giltee.com](http://giltee.com)

**UP NORTH CLOTHING & BOUTIQUE**

Started by sisters Nicole Howarth and Megan Schiel's love of — what else — Up North, the brand celebrates “where the stars shine brighter and the sun feels warmer. It’s all about shared memories, familiar feelings and a return to our happier times.” Howarth and Schiel recently opened a shop at 404. W. Lakeside St. to showcase their self-designed graphic apparel and jewelry, and other local artists’ work, too. [upnorthboutique.com](http://upnorthboutique.com) ✨

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## MENTAL HEALTH ON-CALL

Virtual therapy apps are one way to talk it out.

BY EMILY MCCLUHAN

**THE PANDEMIC HAS** been trying for everyone, and some have found that if they weren't seeking counseling or therapy services already, they are now. Social distancing, stress, anxiety, and not being able to see family and friends regularly can all exacerbate an unhealthy mindset.

The prevalence of smartphones, coupled with society's heightened focus on fostering mental wellness, has played a large role in the rise of virtual therapy apps like Talkspace, BetterHelp and Lifehelp, offering licensed professionals who can work with patients in the channel of their choice: video, text or chat.

Therapists in brick-and-mortar offices like Dr. Lesley Chapin, vice president of the Center for Psychological Services at Pauquette Center in Madison, also had to quickly adjust to not being able to meet with patients in person. Chapin says Pauquette had already been considering telehealth options before the pandemic, but by April, the majority of their eight locations in Southern Wisconsin were offering remote services.

"The good news is that the whole world was thrust into this domain, so there is a fast and furious look at the data to make sure [telehealth therapy services] are effective and to evaluate if modifications need to be made," she notes.

Chapin says that although in-person therapy allows patients to be more vulnerable and encourages a personal connection, she's thankful that online access has allowed her practice to cast a wider net to those who may need it. She also sees the rise in the popularity of apps like Talkspace and BetterHelp as a solution.

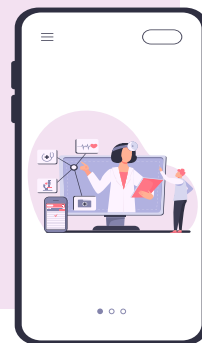
There is a caveat to using virtual therapy services, Chapin says. Her focus is dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), or working with high-risk suicidal behaviors, eating disorders and personality disorders, as well as prolonged exposure therapy

### VIRTUAL THERAPY 101

The advantages of virtual therapy include affordability, flexibility and access.

#### WHAT TO KNOW:

- Insurance plans differ in coverage for telehealth services — be sure to check your plan benefits for the number of sessions allowed and coverage amount.
- Therapy apps are generally not meant to treat severe mental health conditions like suicidal thoughts, bipolar disease, schizophrenia or court-ordered therapy. Seek out a board-certified therapist to build a relationship with and have a plan for in-person visits when possible.
- Most apps offer monthly billing with cancellation anytime. Fees can range from \$240 to \$400 per month.
- Set-up typically starts with an initial assessment, choice of a provider and booking your first appointment.



for trauma. She notes that this particular type of work is best suited to in-person sessions and requires an evidence-based approach — and that evidence hasn't caught up to being able to counsel these types of patients virtually. However, as the need for therapy increases, Chapin says virtual offerings will be needed.

*Cont. on P. 16*

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Cont. from P. 15

"We're in the middle of an opioid and suicide crisis, and the pandemic has exacerbated this. The reality is, that we as a nation do not have enough providers to meet that need," Chapin says, and adds that if therapy apps can help most people in need gain easier access to therapists, she's on board. 🌸

**Emily McCluhan** is a program manager and freelance writer. She considers herself a Madison native now that she's been exploring, running around, eating in and paddling the city for 13 years.



## APPS TO CONSIDER

**Talkspace** allows a choice of three plans: unlimited chat; phone; and live, scheduled video conversations (for an additional fee) available five days a week. They also partner with employers to offer online therapy through insurance plans and employee assistance plans.

**BetterHelp** offers unlimited access via chat, video or phone seven days a week, with no scheduling necessary.

**Lifehelp** centers on women's mental health with a focus on pre-marriage counseling, children and parenthood, parent and family relations, and sex and intimacy.

**Doctor on Demand** is akin to a true telemedicine app with board-certified clinicians available for scheduled video consultations across a range of conditions. The setup is similar to other apps, but the fee structure for behavioral health is on a per-session basis, similar to in-person therapy.



## Family

### Health Series



**P**arents are wearing multiple hats this year – the role of teacher potentially being the most difficult. With all of the extra responsibilities, adding one more thing to your already-full plate may seem overwhelming. However, making sure your child is getting enough physical activity throughout the day can positively impact other areas of their life, including increasing their attention span and regulating their bodies. Here are some simple ways to encourage movement and keep your child active.

**1.** In the morning, when transitioning “to school,” consider doing animal walks or making the route into an obstacle course consisting of bunny hops, frog jumps, log rolls, crawling and matrix-style stunts to avoid objects in the way. Added fun/ bonus: Blanket rides or box rides to their school area!

**2.** Kids should be taking breaks from the screen for about five minutes every 25 minutes. If this isn’t realistic, consider 10 minutes

# Make A Break for Movement

Simple ways to incorporate activity into your child’s day.

for 50 minutes of class time. The best break will be taken outdoors. Go for a quick walk, sit and read a book outside, play with toys outside or play in the snow. While it’s ideal to have 30 minutes of outdoor time when taking a break from screens, do what you can with the schedule you and your family have.

**3.** Small ways to add movement into the day can include chores as well! Kneading bread dough, rolling out cookie dough, stirring batter/mixtures, washing windows, shoveling, raking leaves, moving firewood, taking laundry to the laundry room and sweeping are all great opportunities to move and use those muscles.

**4.** Consider activities such as yoga, tag, swimming, wrestling (on a soft surface and supervised) and minute-to-win-it games. Or for more creative ideas, consider placing tape around the house for a “path” and having kids move cars or toys along this path or use boxes to make a tunnel and use this during play. Kids should get movement daily. It helps

them develop muscle strength, coordination, regulation skills and is extremely beneficial for sleep.

**5.** If you are strapped for time because of work or demands of life, try making the movement time your quality/positive interaction time with your child. Don’t do extensive movement within one hour of bed, but you can get a two-for-one with your quality time by doing something active with your child. For example, take a family walk, do a family scavenger hunt around the house or build something together. If this is still a challenge to incorporate, use your transitional times. For example, a bear walk to the bathroom, a slithering snake crawl to the kitchen for dinner or a log roll to the living room to watch a movie together.

These movement breaks will not only help get us through the next few challenging months, but may also be fun ways to get through bad weather days as well!

—Brenna Patterson, pediatric occupational therapist, UnityPoint Health – Meriter

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## DON'T OVERLOOK THIS PERIOD (OF LIFE)

Perimenopause, the precursor to menopause, has an array of vague symptoms — and they're important to know.

BY CANDICE WAGENER

**WHILE MOST WOMEN** are familiar with menopause, many are unaware of the often lengthier preface to menopause, known as perimenopause. However, since symptoms of perimenopause vary for each woman in terms of frequency, intensity and duration, it can be difficult for a woman to pinpoint exactly when it starts for her. Overlooked yet very real, perimenopause is a common occurrence in a woman's life that deserves some attention.

Dr. Beth Wiedel with Madison Women's Health discusses this very topic with patients several times a week. Affecting women anywhere from their late 30s to their early 50s, perimenopause is a time "where the ovaries aren't quite functioning like they used to," says Wiedel. The ovaries haven't shut off, she says, but they're flickering like old-fashioned fluorescent lights.

In fact, the biggest indicator that a woman is going through perimenopause as opposed to menopause is that the symptoms are inconsistent. For some women symptoms may come and go for weeks or months at a time. For others, they may feel no changes at all but still be in perimenopause, says Wiedel.

The duration and intensity of symptoms are completely individualized. As hormones fluctuate, women may experience irregular bleeding, more intense PMS, vaginal dryness, hot flashes, night sweats and sleep disturbance. If, all of a sudden, you find yourself waking up throughout the night for no good reason, perimenopause could be to blame. Women who have a history of depression and anxiety may see an increase in symptoms there, too.

Also common is weight gain, because decreasing estrogen levels may lead to a reduction in metabolism. Women who maintained a certain weight for years will suddenly find themselves with an extra five to 10 pounds they just can't shake. Increased exercise and decreased calories are your best bets for counteraction. "You need to do things to speed up your metabolism again, because it's notched down a bit," says

Wiedel. "And I always warn women that [metabolism tends to slow down] even a bit more when you hit menopause, so this is a good practice run."

In fact, 30 minutes of moderate- to high-intensity cardio daily can improve nearly every symptom of perimenopause (and menopause). Eating an array of healthy foods and limiting your intake of carbs, sugar and unhealthy fats will also keep you feeling better.

Women might seek treatment to help alleviate symptoms if they're interfering with everyday health and happiness. Wiedel stresses the importance of exploring those symptoms and their impact with your healthcare provider. "This is actually a natural thing for you to go through," says Wiedel. "But if this is impacting your ability to function the way you want to, then we'll talk about treatments and pinpoint the symptoms that are really bothering you."

Wiedel also says a lot of patients ask her about testing their hormone levels to see if they're in perimenopause.

"Lab tests are just a snapshot in time," she explains. "If we check your hormone levels two months later, we'll have a different result. That's why we treat perimenopause on the basis of symptoms — and not lab tests."

To cover the broadest range of symptoms (including period regulation, PMS and hot flashes), options include the birth control pill or hormone replacement therapy (which contains smaller doses of estrogen and progesterone than the Pill). To address vaginal dryness specifically, options include hormonal and non-hormonal oral and topical medications that are absorbed into the genital tissues to help them become more elastic and moist.

Unfortunately, these medications don't address sleep disturbances. When necessary, Wiedel will recommend a non-habit-forming sleep aid, some of which were designed as antidepressants originally, so they may have the added benefit of helping with mood fluctuations.



Although there are supplements out there like ginseng and soy to help alleviate perimenopause symptoms, Wiedel doesn't recommend them to her patients because herbal supplements aren't as strictly regulated by the FDA.

Like any major change in your health, whether it's impacting your daily routine or not, it's important to have an open discussion with your healthcare provider in order to rule out any other scenarios and narrow these changes down to perimenopause. Because every woman's symptoms and intensity can be so variable, it's important to get support and an outside perspective on what you're experiencing. And, keep in mind, the average age of onset for menopause in the U.S. is 51½. Once you've reached that milestone of going an entire year without a period, you can hopefully breathe a little easier and lean into this new chapter in your life. ✨

**Candice Wagener** is a freelance writer who enjoys telling stories that inform, intrigue and inspire. Her 14-year career has taught her more than she could ever have imagined.

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## SIDE HUSTLE KNOW-HOW

Money tips to turn your passion into profit.

BY KATY MACEK

**QUITTING HER FULL-TIME** job to pursue her jewelry-making passion was the hardest, scariest and, ultimately, best decision Judy McNeal, founder of Madison-based magnetic jewelry company QB's Magnetic Creations, ever made.

"You have to give your business 100% — just like I did when I worked for someone else," McNeal says. "You have to treat it as a job, because it is."

Treating your business's finances the same way a corporation does is the best thing any woman with a side gig can do, says Amy Raven, a certified public accountant with Sorge CPA in Madison.

"I have watched some of my clients go from side hustles to LLCs to full-blown corporations," she says. "It's the most rewarding thing for me to see."

Below, she and McNeal share their best advice on how to make your side hustle profitable.

### SEPARATE YOUR INCOME

This is something McNeal says she was taught early on and does religiously, and Raven says it's the most important piece of advice she can give.

"Mixing [your personal and business's] money is the biggest mistake," Raven says. "Make sure you have separate bank accounts for business and personal."

### TRACK YOUR EXPENSES

Keeping a simple Excel spreadsheet, like McNeal does, is the easiest way to do this.

Raven advises separating spreadsheets by month, putting income at the top of each and separating expenses in "buckets" by the purpose of the purchase (i.e., label the electric bill "utilities," not "MGE.")

"The more descriptive expenses are, the easier it is for [an] accountant to understand," she says. "The expense should be for the purpose of the purchase, not the purchase itself."

### FILE FOR AN LLC

Filing for a Limited Liability Corporation at [wdfi.org](http://wdfi.org) reserves your business name within the state and establishes taxation as an LLC, Raven says. You'll still report the information as a Schedule C (if you're the sole proprietor of your business) on your personal tax return. But LLCs can elect to be taxed differently down the road, which Raven says, depending on circumstances, could save tax dollars in the long term.



### OBTAIN AN EIN

An Employer Identification number, or EIN, is a free federal ID that separates your business from your personal Social Security number for tax purposes. The application can be completed online, and Raven says this protects your personal information.

### MAXIMIZE YOUR DEDUCTIONS

Two major deductions Raven sees her clients miss are tracking vehicle mileage and the use of a home office. For mileage, she suggests keeping a log of the date, purpose of the drive and miles.

If you have an area of your home, such as a second-bedroom office, dedicated exclusively for business, that can be a deduction.

"There's a couple different ways to do that," she says. "Talk to your accountant to see which is best for you."

### FOLLOW THE LAWS

This may seem obvious, but Raven says it's important to check local, state and federal laws. She's seen clients overlook fees they don't realize are taxable. She suggests checking laws specifically related to your industry, but says websites such as [revenue.wi.gov](http://revenue.wi.gov), [countyofdane.com](http://countyofdane.com) (for the Madison area) and [irs.gov](http://irs.gov) are good places to start. It's also a good idea to ask peers and mentors.

"Leaning on professionals who live and breathe the information contained in these websites can save someone an incredible amount of time," she says.

### BUILD YOUR A-TEAM

Both McNeal and Raven say having a successful team behind you is key — such as an accountant, attorney, financial advisor and a banker.

That way, if you specialize in creating a product, like McNeal does, you have experts in your corner helping you on the other aspects of running your business.

"Each person can bring a 'what-if' to the table, and another person can answer that," Raven says. ✨

**Katy Macek** is a copywriter and freelance journalist who enjoys bearing about her community through the stories she gets to tell.





"Barnwood Nest" by Nicci Martin,  
\$145, **Hatch Art House**



"Spinner 4" by Judy Pfaff, woodcut/hand  
painted dye, \$500, **Tandem Press**



"Floral" by Katherine Watson, block print,  
\$26, **Good Day Shop**

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"Hippo Griff Forest" by Papio Press,  
poster print, \$27, **Anthology**

"Aurora" by Upton, screenprint, \$67, **Good Day Shop**



"Hummingbirds" by Janet Hill, poster print, \$29, **Anthology**

"Astound" by Nikki McClure, poster print, \$15, **Anthology**



"Ensign" by Suzanne Caporaal, relief, \$950, **Tandem Press**

## ARTFUL WALLS

BY SHELBY DEERING

Hanging wall art is, well, an art form. Perfect your art collection with these tips from Marty Smith, owner of Middleton Art & Framing.

### CREATE A BALANCED MIX.

Even if you're aiming for a creative look for your gallery wall, you can still make it look purposeful and streamlined. Smith refers to something called "visual weight" as it pertains to wall art — some framed pictures appear heavier than others. While reds, greens and blues are visually heavy colors, according to Smith, they can be balanced out with lighter hues, such as yellows, pinks and whites.

### CHOOSE OPTIMAL LIGHTING.

"A picture light attached to a frame gives the work the most direct light," Smith says. He adds that it's important to know that light and heat can damage original art over time, which is why it's key to use LED bulbs instead of UV bulbs.

### USE A TEMPLATE.

Smith advises using paper to create true-scale templates of your picture frames, "then use painter's tape to figure out the best arrangement," he says.

So, what's the no-fail method for hanging a piece of wall art so you don't end up with dozens of nail holes from multiple attempts? Follow these steps from Smith.

- Aim to hang the picture at a height of 57 inches from the floor to the bottom of the frame.
- Use two hooks, which will pull the picture tighter against the wall.
- Utilize hooks with nails that go through them and confirm how much weight the particular hooks can hold. 🌸





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## HOW TO CHOOSE A CONTRACTOR

Thinking about having some work done in your house? You're not the only one.

BY MAURA KELLER

**THANKS IN PART TO** the ongoing pandemic, which is forcing people to spend more time in their homes these days, homeowners' attention is turning to home renovation projects. In fact, the online home remodeling platform Houzz conducted a study that found a 58% annual increase in project leads for home professionals in June 2020.

Hiring an experienced and reliable contractor is crucial to a streamlined and successful home construction or renovation. But how do you know what to look for in a contractor, and what are some of the key questions that need to be asked when choosing a contractor?

According to Tom Miller, former president of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, it's important to start with the local contractor licensing board, which can be found by simply searching online for your state's contractor licensing board website. (Wisconsin's can be found on the Department of Professional and Safety Services website [dps.wi.gov](http://dps.wi.gov).) You can see what kind of complaints may have been registered against a prospective contractor, and to make sure they carry the proper license, bond and insurance.

"If there are any complaints, check to see if they have been satisfactorily resolved," Miller says. "And ask to speak to, or visit, a past client or two. Online review sites, which are fairly anonymous, have much potential to be unreliable."

Nicki Hebgen, co-owner of Washa Remodeling & Design in Madison, says some common mistakes homeowners make when hiring a contractor is assuming the lowest bid is the best deal. That could mean lower-quality craftsmanship or something was missed — and you may have unforeseen overages later in your project.

"Make sure to get a signed contract from your contractor with an accurate scope of work. Make sure the contractor is licensed and insured and that they pull permits and do things the right way," Hebgen says. "Just be sure to keep the line of communication with

your contractor open — a good contractor will be there to answer all questions throughout your whole project."

Also check to see if the contractor belongs to NARI, or a similar professional organization. NARI members sign a code of ethics and are committed to promoting professionalism in remodeling.

### WHAT TO ASK

When interviewing potential contractors two key questions to ask are, what is your warranty and what does it cover? The industry average for a warranty is one year. More established contractors will warranty their work for as many as five years or more.

Regarding references, any contractor should provide the names of three (or more) homeowners that can provide useful, realistic feedback of their experience with said contractor. Also consider using the measurement tool called Guild Quality, a third-party survey firm who contacts clients after project completion for an in-depth, detailed survey/report about their remodeling experience.

In our virtual world it's inevitable that you'll still probably try to research a company online — but as Miller noted previously, you'll need to do more than just that. Hebgen says how long a company has been in business and if they are making their customers happy is important, too.

### THE PRICE IS RIGHT

According to Miller, professional contractors do not have time to provide estimates for every potential client who asks; typically, a phone interview can narrow the field for both homeowner and contractor, to see if the project and schedule appear to be a good fit for both parties.

"Many professionals are willing to make a first visit, to meet the homeowner and see the environment, and can often offer a rough estimate of price range based on what they see, but

working up a reliable 'scope of work' and budget takes an investment of time and would typically involve a fee for services," Miller says.

When the team at Washa Remodeling & Design price out a project, they provide an initial budget range based off a loose scope of work.

"If the customer decides to move forward with the preliminary agreement then we work toward final selections of materials and a detailed scope of work along with subcontractor walk-throughs," Hebgen says. "With all that information we can produce a detailed, accurate proposal. All of this information is detailed out on the final scope of work contract for the customer."

### QUALITY CONTROL

Assuming you have thoroughly reviewed your contractor, talked with references and looked at many photos of their work, you should feel confident and excited to start your new project. Prior to starting, you hopefully have developed a relationship with the contractor and design team so that you feel the lines of communication are open.

The way Hebgen and her team communicate with clients has changed over the years. "With Zoom calls and email, we often can have the initial meeting and not even step foot into the customer's home; however, the same trust that forms throughout the building or remodeling process remains the same," Hebgen says. "Often friends are made and repeat customers are common."

As such, you should be able to communicate with your contractor about any issues or questions. Hebgen suggests that if the company has a website, it may also be helpful during the vetting process to read the bios of the carpenters or the subcontractors, to see how many years of experience they have.

"A couple issues to look for in poor quality work would be carpenters showing up late, not taking proper worksite safety measures and not protecting completed work," Hebgen says.

If you find yourself in this situation, you need to be upfront and see if your contractor can resolve the issue. With most contractors it's usually a simple miscommunication or something that can be resolved.

During the construction process, Miller says it's also important to pay attention to whether schedule disruptions are discussed openly. And is the site cleaned up and made orderly daily? Do the workers conduct themselves professionally? "These are signs that you're dealing with a trustworthy professional," Miller says.

Of course, all projects involve some degree of demolition or deconstruction and it is not uncommon to uncover some issue needing correction not covered in an agreement. Miller says that homeowners should expect some surprises, but it's important to make sure there is a discussion about the process and cost of a solution.

"Expect some punch-list items to pop up, even several months after the project is done and you are living in it," Miller says. "Materials dry out, things settle, cracks in caulk, grout or paint will appear. This is normal and a professional should come back to take care of them."

And at any sign of a problem, make sure to deal with the issue promptly, in person and with an open mind. Miller says that if the issues continue to seem unresolvable, discuss with the contractor whether you can agree on discontinuing the project, knowing that you would have to pay for services rendered.

"Local licensing boards often have a complaint resolution process, where a third party works with both sides to reach a suitable compromise," Miller says. "If the contractor simply will not deliver what was promised in the agreement, there is almost always a claim process that a homeowner can go through. But remember, if you choose a true professional, none of this will be necessary." ✨

*Freelance writer Maura Keller frequently writes about home-related topics for regional and national publications.*

## KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK A CONTRACTOR

- How long have you been in business?
- Do you maintain a current license, bond and insurance?
- Do you belong to NARI or another professional trade association?
- Are there past clients I can check with, and can I see some of your similar work?
- What is the timeline for the project?
- What permits will be needed and will you obtain them?
- What is the price of the project and payment schedule?
- Who do I contact if I have questions?
- How are overages or change orders handled?



**Finally, ask to see a sample contract from the contractor and have it reviewed by an attorney. Pay special attention to:**

- Start and completion dates.
- How are payments made? A significant project should be paid through monthly draws based on percentage of completion with inspections and payout through a title company. This protects both the contractor and the owner.
- Insurance requirements and limits — the homeowner and contractor have to protect each other.
- How are changes to the scope of work handled? They should be based on real costs.
- What is the warranty period and how are warranty issues handled?





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THE CULINARY CHANGEMAKER

# Francesca Hong

With her long tenure in the restaurant industry, Francesca Hong excels at taking care of people. When something isn't working or someone is being left out, she is quick to speak up and offer support. For Hong, uplifting others is what strengthens the community, and that's what keeps her pushing forward.

Since opening Morris Ramen with husband Matt Morris in December 2016, Hong has been dedicated to paying equitable wages and blending the front and back of the house into one cohesive unit — an innovative model for the industry.

In 2017, Hong co-founded the Culinary Ladies Collective, a networking group for women and nonbinary allies to support and empower one another. Last February, CLC celebrated its third cookie drive for Planned Parenthood and its first Femmfestival, an event celebrating and uplifting womxn (coined to include nonbinary and transgender women), femmes and entrepreneurs, artists and producers in the culinary, visual and charitable arts industries. Both were huge successes, which Hong co-organized with Garver Events. Then COVID hit.

On March 17, Morris Ramen closed their dining room to customers; today they are just scraping by on carryout and delivery business. They've kept staff employed through their work with Cook It Forward Madison, a collaboration between restaurants, grassroots organizations, small farms and nonprofits providing meals to food insecure individuals with mobility or accessibility issues — something Hong

developed last spring with Josh Berkson and Patrick Sweeney of Rule No. One Hospitality. Despite forming because of the pandemic, Hong foresees a need for the program lasting well into the future.

Through Cook It Forward Madison, Hong began working alongside Alnisa Allgood, executive director of Collaboration for Good. Allgood was impressed by Hong hopping into delivery trucks and chatting with the drivers. "She was learning about each of the individuals, the organizations, and thinking about what it is that they need to not just survive, but thrive," says Allgood. "A lot of the times the difference between survival and thriving is just a compassionate ear."


On Mother's Day, Hong took the ultimate leap of advocacy, announcing her run for the 76th State Assembly District seat — which she won in November 2020. As 2021 kicks off, Hong steps into this role with the working class, independent businesses, mental health advocacy and racial equity as top priorities.

"I want to be able to navigate the legislature as someone who is committed to still being a servant of the community," says Hong. "It's definitely a goal of mine to continue to work with the community and continue to learn from them and stay involved. I've been warned that this is a 24/7 job, but being from the restaurant industry, you don't really shut off work ever. You don't really stop feeling connected to people and that's what the industry's about, and that's what government should be about."

— CANDICE WAGENER ✨







THE FORWARD-THINKER

# Kristie Goforth

**H**er last name being what it is, it's certainly kismet that Kristie Goforth has been a catalyst for change and momentum throughout Dane County. Having grown up in poverty with low career expectations, Goforth rose above it all.

In April 2020, she became the first person belonging to a native tribe elected to Monona's City Council and is the newest executive director of Free Bikes 4 Kidz Madison, an organization providing bikes to underserved populations in Dane County.

"When I make up my mind to do something, I'll work as hard as I need to, to be successful," Goforth says. "because I don't see failure as an option."

For example, instead of one large FB4K bike collection date in January — not ideal in our Midwestern climate — Goforth extended the collection by a few months, starting in the fall, and plans to give away bikes in the spring. She's aiming to give away 2,021 bikes in 2021, about 521 more than the current record, and 3,000 bikes in 2023.

Goforth is passionate about opening up the world of cycling to populations that have historically been excluded. Beyond providing bikes, she's partnering with organizations to eliminate additional barriers, like access to safe storage, safety equipment (locks and helmets) and trails. The benefits outweigh the barriers, as kids gain independence, healthy habits, a


reliable mode of transportation and an escape from what can be a stressful lifestyle.

"It's a huge honor to be a part of seeing that all people get to experience cycling, especially young kids, because that's when the love for it starts to blossom," says Goforth.

FB4K has also provided bikes to essential workers during the pandemic. One recipient was riding a push scooter one hour to and from his job as a CNA in the COVID wing at SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital. Having a bike has changed his life, she noted. He has more time for himself and his family.

Goforth is also wholeheartedly committed to promoting diversity, including on the board of FB4K and the City of Monona, where she is a strong proponent of greater access to public transportation and housing options. "Having less diversity makes systems weaker," says Goforth. "If we all just acknowledge that to be factual, then we know the direction we need to move in."

Heidi Duss, a 2020 Woman to Watch who nominated Goforth, admires her friend's willingness to challenge the status quo and admires Goforth's transparency, ability to elevate other women, help her neighbors and fundraise like a powerhouse. "She is a force. She's setting such a great example for her children; she shows up for her community, and she brings a sense of belonging to everyone." - CANDICE WAGENER ✨

A full-page photograph of Mel Charbonneau, a blonde woman with a warm smile, sitting on a black metal stool. She is wearing a green button-up jacket over a blue top, black pants, and grey suede boots. The background is a blurred brick wall.

THE CHAMPION OF WOMEN

# Mel Charbonneau

Mel Charbonneau often reflects fondly on her journey toward founding Fellow Flowers in 2012, a community of women runners united by a collection of colorful flowers worn while running. Today, her business has expanded to include retreats; the FFCrew online community of 1,000; and Tell Her, a line of cards and products that encourage women to lift one another up.

"I've learned that it's often the thing you're told to tame down or conform, that is your magic," she says. "I want other women, especially my [three] daughters, to see you can be inconvenient, disruptive, loud, bold. It's not only OK, but the best and truest path you can take."

In January 2020, Charbonneau and her team started planning Made to Move, a women's running series that is accessible for women that often face barriers for this type of event: women of color, new moms and the LGBTQ community.

"We brought in perspectives of other women whose stories look different, particularly from mine, so that I can understand the blind spots and the barriers that exist for women at the fringes or in marginalized communities," she says.

She admits she can't eliminate all barriers, but hopes that she can lighten the load and raise up these stories. She also wants to be a bit disruptive.

"The majority of my online followers are white women. Many of us, particularly this past year, have had to reckon with our privilege. My personal commitment is to use my platform ... to elevate the voices of Black and brown women whose stories [our followers] need to know," she says.

This June, the inaugural Made to Move series will be held in Madison. The three-day event will feature speakers, workshops, a marketplace, a race and a celebration event. (Registration opens in February.)

"We're creating an exceptional community-building virtual experience and an in-person event, so that we have flexibility for whatever is thrown at us," Charbonneau says.

Katie Vaughn, communications director for Fellow Flowers, says this flexible approach is one of Charbonneau's guiding traits.

"One of the things that I love about her is that she faces challenges honestly and openly," Vaughn says. "She's not fearless, but rather she recognizes the fear, identifies it and lets that be part of the story as she moves forward."

Charbonneau says the Made to Move series is the future of her business. It might turn into multiple events in Madison, possibly adding a second location after 2021. True to her spirit, Charbonneau sees endless possibilities for bringing women together to challenge themselves, face their fears and tell their stories, each one unique and worth telling.

— EMILY MCCLUHAN ✨





Jasmine Banks is building community in Madison through education and entrepreneurship.

Banks has worked at Operation Fresh Start (OFS) for four years, a Dane County nonprofit that supports disconnected youth ages 16-24 through education, mentoring and employment training. In early 2020, she piloted a program she built called Drive, which helps OFS' clients obtain learner's permits and driver's licenses, and pays the fees for driver education training. The life skills program also includes invaluable and relevant presentations on topics like getting a car loan, interview skills and what to expect when being pulled over.

Amid the pandemic, Banks has shifted the Drive program online, and has graduated four cohorts totaling about 40 people since last summer. Through Drive, Banks is addressing the racial divide in the community. She guides young people in accessing resources and opportunities they might otherwise not be aware of.

Banks also coordinates the classroom portions of the Strive construction and healthcare employment training programs at OFS. Within these programs, she invites speakers from the community to educate program participants on how to be proactive in equity, mental wellness and financial planning.

"They may not use [the information from these programs] right away, but that's OK. As long as they have the information," Banks says.

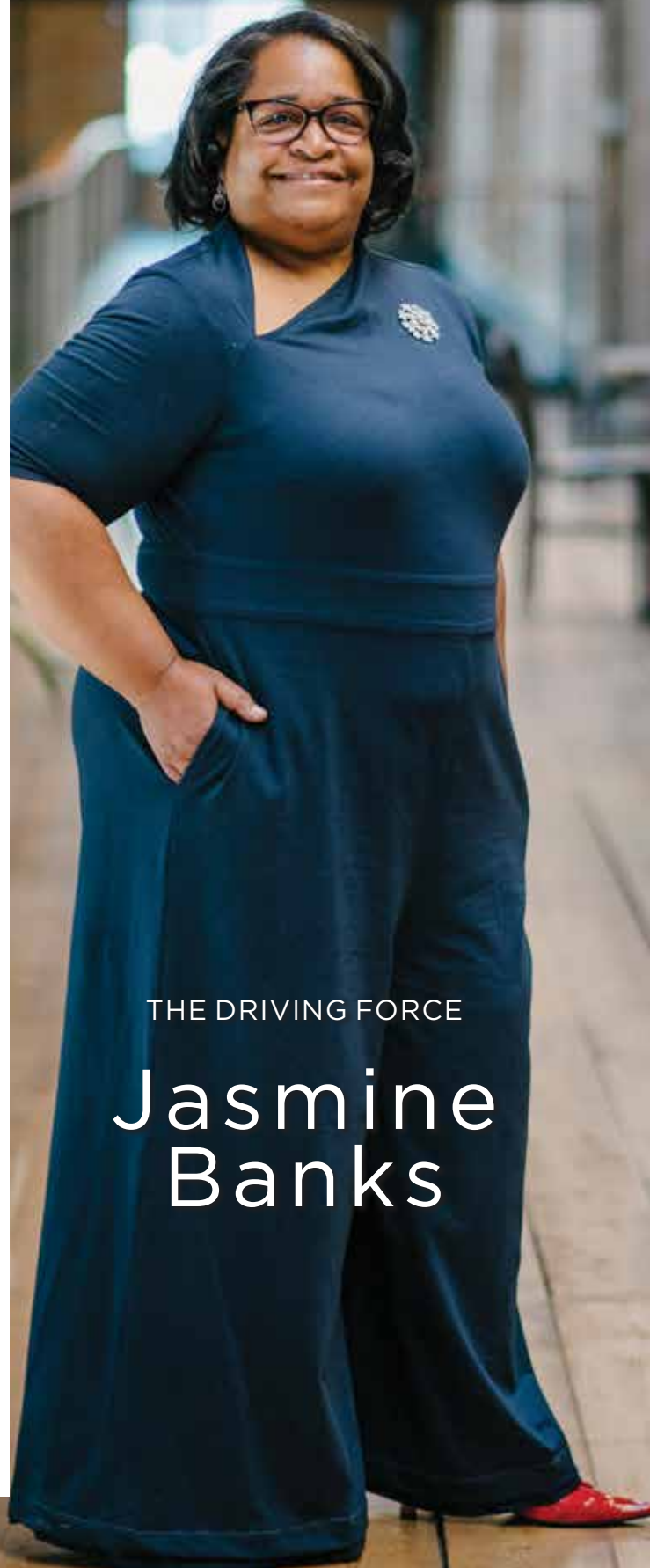
Joe Collins, Banks' on-site co-leader in the Strive construction program, says she helps young people "envision a bigger, broader future for themselves instead of just working at an entry-level, low-paying hourly job with no benefits." At the same time, he says Banks offers a listening ear and the feedback program participants need to hear to achieve their goals. "She's fabulous," Collins says.

Banks, a third-generation Madisonian, didn't attend college. Instead, she moved right into a community-building career path. She was a case manager at Community Action Coalition, and also worked in intake at what later became Wisconsin Works (known as W2). Her first job, at age 20 and with a 2-year-old, was at the original Madison Community Health Center, now called Access Community Health Centers.

She's also an entrepreneur. Banks is founder and CEO of Perfect Imperfections, a natural body care product company. She began the enterprise in 2016, following her mother's death from cancer. Banks says Perfect Imperfections is a platform to normalize Black-owned businesses in Madison in hopes of closing the racial divide in the community. In 2017, Banks was named Sabrina Madison's 2017 Entrepreneur of the Year and given the Madison Black Chamber of Commerce's Home Based Business Award. In 2022, she'll have a spot at the Madison Public Market.

As a community member, Banks says her role is to make Madison a place where everyone wants to live. Part of that role is helping her young program members work toward finding their places — possibly near her own.

"I don't want them living in a neighborhood where people don't want to go. I want to prepare them to buy the house next door to me. We should all be doing that," she says. — HOLLY MARLEY-HENSCHEN 🌸



THE DRIVING FORCE

# Jasmine Banks





THE MUSICAL MODERNIZER

# Carol Carlson

Representation matters, and Carol Carlson is working to bring inclusivity of all backgrounds into classical music, one of the most stereotypically white, upper-class, male-dominated genres.

Making high-quality classical music lessons accessible to all children is why she co-founded Music con Brio in 2011, an after-school instrumental music program that admits children on a sliding-scale tuition. The program runs out of Emerson Elementary School and is open to all students in first through fourth grade (once admitted, they can remain enrolled through the end of high school).

"It's about quality, affordability and accessibility," Carlson says. "We've literally never turned away a student because of financial need."

As the organization celebrates 10 years in 2021, Carlson feels she's succeeded in many ways. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck in March, Carlson noticed McB lost many nonwhite families as instruction pivoted online. As summer gave way to social unrest and protests downtown, she found herself reckoning with a "crisis of consciousness."

The program, she realized, hadn't done enough to meet nonwhite families where they are and incorporate their interests and needs into programming.

She turned to McB board member Kimberly Gilmore, who joined because it reminded her of an after-school music program she had done growing up in Detroit. Gilmore, who is Black, put it bluntly to Carlson.

"We were having trouble getting young people of color to stick with the program," Gilmore says. "Well, there's no teachers that look like them. It goes even past that to the composers you're using, the songs you're teaching. How many Black composers do we have? What's the context of the music?"

As McB kicks off its next decade, Carlson is overhauling the curriculum, including curating three pieces of music per year by composers of minority backgrounds.

She's also hoping to expand McB by partnering with Goodman Community Center to host programming, starting with a community arts showcase this summer. They'll also ask Goodman Center families what kind of programming would be appealing, and eventually, hold weekly sessions at the center.

"We've been guessing what the Black community wants, and [we're] not very good at that," Carlson says Gilmore told her. "A much better tactic would be to ask them."

Gilmore believes McB has the potential to expand outside of Madison.


"Carol has the blueprint and the structure that's just phenomenal," Gilmore says. "She did the groundwork, and we have to extend that vision."

2021 could be a pivotal year for Music con Brio. Carlson looks forward to putting in the work, starting with ULTRAVIOLET, a 10th anniversary celebration and fundraiser that will feature Chicago-based The CoverGirls Violin Show, a violin group her sister plays in.

"I'm excited about moving in a direction where we can truly be inclusive and diverse," Carlson says. "We are a community music program, so we want to make sure we're representing the community." - KATY MACEK 🌸







THE PROBLEM-SOLVER

# Kiah Calmese Walker

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Dane County, Kiah Calmese Walker didn't miss a beat making sure hospital staff had the supplies they needed.

"Personal protective equipment, [air filtration systems], masks and supplies were a major concern at the beginning of our COVID response, but she wasn't rattled," says colleague Leah Huibregtse. "She led with both urgency and coolness."

Originally from California, Calmese Walker is the director of supply chain services at UnityPoint Health-Meriter and materials management for UW Health at the American Center. Essentially, she ensures staff have what they need to provide patients with quality care.

Within her role as a leader in healthcare, one of her overarching goals is diversifying the industry with more BIPOC — Black, Indigenous and People of Color — leaders and clinical workers. Support services roles, like supply chain, are a great front door into other healthcare careers, she says. She mentors her staff, helps with their resume, introduces them to people in other departments and recommends them for jobs. One of her employees started in food service and is now a facilities manager, where he has a direct impact on patient care.

In doing this work, an underlying question she constantly asks herself is: "How do you show people

that their perceived weaknesses, barriers and insufficiencies are actually strategic opportunities to help move forward the very thing that we all claim to need and want at the end of the day? Which is to help one another have better health outcomes, better community outcomes and better unity within our communities."

Outside of work, Calmese Walker serves on a few boards of directors, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County (BBBS). There too, she aims to bolster diversity by bringing more women of color into the organization, so more "Littles" are matched with "Bigs" that look like them.

Coming into 2021, her family is a big focus as well.

"I've spent the past five to seven years building professionally. I want these next five years to be focused on continuing to take care of my family," she says. "[My husband, Brett], is one of the most amazing, supportive men who walks the talk; believes in empowering women; understands, protects and upholds my life example and knows that it's a direct investment into our daughter's life."

Alongside Brett, Calmese Walker plans to create opportunities for their 10-year-old daughter to "cultivate a constructive body image," as well as coach and support their 16-year-old son as he prepares for his future and finishes the last two years of high school. - HYWANIA THOMPSON ✨



THE ECOPRENEUR

# Sasha Stone

A passion can take a lifetime to develop, but Sasha Stone found hers at a young age.

"I always had a love and appreciation of nature, paired with knowing how privileged I was," she says. "I saw how large companies could exploit communities with less resources, and I knew it wasn't right."

This sparked her fire for what she calls environmental equity — the idea that environmental issues and climate change impact Indigenous and communities of color first. It drives her to help wealthy, mostly white westerners to make responsible environmental choices and contribute more to an equitable world.

In 2018, Stone launched the online store Green Life Trading Co. as a way to make sustainable products more accessible. In May 2020, she opened a brick-and-mortar store on Williamson Street, which certainly came with pandemic-related challenges (everyone was buying up refillable containers to make their own hand sanitizer, making it difficult to secure them for the refillery in her store). But part of the joy of having a physical location is the ability to talk to customers about the bath, body and home goods she carries and to dispel some sustainability myths.

"One of my favorite topics is educating my customers about toilet paper, and how what you wipe your butt with directly affects climate change," she says, chuckling. She offers three-ply bamboo toilet paper in her store, wrapped in reusable patterned paper (use it as gift wrap!). Bamboo grows quickly and doesn't require much water or pesticides, making it an easy switch on a journey to sustainability.

In her spare time, Stone co-runs the Zero Waste Madison Facebook group, an online community of crafty locals sharing ideas on how to create sustainability at home. And in 2020, a fellow zero-waste business owner, Callee Ackland of Rapid City, SD, came up with the idea of creating a Zero Waste Business Alliance, a membership organization that offers low- and zero-waste business owners content and networking opportunities to start or grow their businesses. Stone loved the idea and joined Ackland to help make it a reality.

"Sasha and I get asked all the time how we got started, and we want to share that knowledge," Ackland says. "That's really who Sasha is. She wants to make Madison, and the world, a greener place by sharing what she's learned."

Once funding is established through membership fees, Ackland and Stone hope to offer grants for aspiring zero-waste business owners. They plan to officially start the group in spring 2021.

Stone is on a mission to help all of us start a journey toward sustainability, and that impact is immeasurable.

— EMILY MCCLUHAN ✨





Jessica Cavazos personally understands the challenges Latin community members face. She grew up in Milwaukee, but lived in Texas with her grandmother for three years while her single mother worked to save money for the family.

Now, as president and CEO of the Latino Chamber of Commerce in Dane County, Cavazos preaches and practices economic inclusivity. “Whether they’re workers or entrepreneurs or both, our economy is much better because they’re in it and they’re playing a part,” Cavazos says.

Her mission as the chamber leader is to help facilitate sustainable economies and a stronger future for Latinos, who continue to face gaps in advancement and feel the effects of marginalization — despite their rising demographic numbers. Though Latinos have been vital to the U.S. economy for generations, Cavazos says they’ve yet to see a significant accumulation of wealth.

To help bring this to fruition, the Latino Chamber of Commerce offers six classes a week on topics like scaling business and operations, while offering mentorship to members and others in the community.

Because of its small business focus, the chamber has been able to react and assist their members quickly during the pandemic. They have translated application materials when the State of Wisconsin distributed loans and grants in early 2020. It has helped restaurateurs adapt to the COVID economy by advising on the shift from dine-in service to pick-up and delivery operations, paring down menus and building on marketing.

Her passion and drive for helping small businesses hasn’t gone unnoticed. Cavazos was given the key to the Hispanic community in Milwaukee and the La Movida Hispanic Heritage Award in 2017. And in 2019, she was named an SBA Small Business Champion.

“It is in my blood, that desire to make a difference and be intentional fills me more so than anything. It’s being able to use the chamber as a vehicle for change,” Cavazos says, which is likely why she’s so involved in other aspects of community advancement — like co-founding the Wisconsin Latino Economic Development Corporation and serving as the Midwest representative for the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Her 2021 plans include building her consulting firm, Intrinsica, which will be an advocacy arm for Latino businesses nationwide that need support securing investment from governments as a way to get out of poverty. She also wants to create a podcast to empower women.

“She leads with her heart,” says Tiffany Kenney, executive director of Madison’s Central Business Improvement District. “I don’t think there’s anyone who works harder for her constituents.” — HOLLY MARLEY-HENSCHEN ✨

## THE SMALL BUSINESS MASTERMIND

# Jessica Cavazos

THE EDUCATOR

# Luz del Carmen Arroyo Calderon



Luz del Carmen Arroyo Calderon grew up in a small town in Mexico and was 12 when she moved to Milwaukee with her mom. That first year was hard, she says, in part because she didn't speak any English. Arroyo Calderon wanted to move back, but her mom said they should stay — give it a little more time.

The bilingual school she attended made the adjustment a little easier, and as she advanced through her education, Arroyo Calderon decided she wanted to teach. She wanted students, especially immigrant children, to know they had someone in their corner — that if she could do it, so could they.

When she graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2010, though, Arroyo Calderon wasn't able to get her teaching license because she was an undocumented citizen.

After spending two years waitressing, waiting to see if the government would change its laws for undocumented citizens, Arroyo Calderon was giving up hope. She was ready to move back to Mexico but was convinced to stay just a bit longer.

A few weeks later, the federal government began accepting DACA applications (a status granted to adults who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children). Two months later, she was approved, and a month after that, she started her first teaching job.

Arroyo Calderon left teaching a few years ago but

has remained connected to K-12 as a board member for the dual-language Nuestro Mundo Community School in Monona. Today, she manages the newly formed RISE Student Success Center at Madison Area Technical College — which provides coaching and wraparound services to any student at the college.

"We need to do a better job reaching out to students and letting them know we're here," she says. "I've seen so many students get here and then have to step out and take a break. But if they have someone who can hold them accountable or provide other resources to help them navigate school, there's more of a chance that they'll complete their degree."

She's also laying the groundwork for a mentorship program for employees of color, citing a similar need for staff to have someone they can turn to with questions and concerns, but who can also provide a sense of belonging.

"It's not enough to have diversity," she says. "We need to make sure we're including them and making sure everyone feels valued and like they're part of the team."

It would have been nice to have had these types of resources when she was coming up through her education and early career, she says, which is now her life's work: building community with an ethos that "every voice is important." — SHELBY ROWE MOYER 🌸





It wasn't until Dominique Christian had an all-consuming mental breakdown in 2015 that she sought help, even though she was aware there were resources that could help her.

"There was that fear that if I go into a space with a white provider and tell my story, what is going to be the punishment behind that?" she says. "Are you going to remove my children because you may fear I'm not going to be able to provide for them? ... There's still a fear amongst the Black and [nonwhite] community that when you're accessing resources, the outcome could still be negative."

Christian has experienced a lot of trauma in her childhood and adulthood, including poverty and homelessness. This accumulation of pain and hardship has led her down a fierce and passionate path to serve the Black community in Madison, so they can get support from someone who not only looks like them, but has also overcome similar experiences.

In addition to working for The Road Home, an organization that serves homeless families, Christian is growing AYA Advocacy Group, which she founded in 2019. She created AYA as a multi-pronged organization where she aims to empower marginalized communities with supports and resources for kids, teens and adults — whether that be access to youth activities or mental health programs.

Right now, under AYA, Christian is mostly acting as a peer support specialist for adults dealing with mental health and substance use. She describes the role as a "significant friendship," of sorts. Unlike a client-therapist relationship, being a peer support specialist allows Dominique to share her own experiences with the people she works with.

This year, she plans to graduate with a Master of Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, so she can become a licensed clinical therapist — one who has an understanding of the ripple effects of mental health and substance use. She also wants to open a youth center where kids can explore their interests and tell their own stories through the creation of a youth magazine.

While describing all of this, Christian pauses. She feels like she's rambling. The lack of equity, justice, culture, accessible activities for Black children and the greater societal struggle to provide compassionate and nonjudgmental resources for Black people have all weighed heavily on her.

When asked if she's hopeful about the future, though, she answers with a resounding "absolutely," because of the people who are doing this work and because of those who are supporting it.

Christian explains, "When individuals from marginalized communities — who have experienced a greater number of traumas — are humanized and given an opportunity, we can overcome those obstacles." - SHELBY ROWE MOYER ☆



## THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

# Dominique Christian



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

We checked in with some of our 2020 Women to Watch to see what they've been up to.

## SAMANTHA BEAVER

*Founder and linguist, Memra Language Services*



Samantha Beaver's Memra Language Services analyzes companies' naturally occurring language processes, which could include conversations, meetings, Slack feeds or survey responses to help employers better understand how teams work together.

Beaver says her projected 2021 revenue is higher than ever before, and her proprietary linguistic analysis software platform was finished in December 2020. She says launching LinguaZone, her new language immersion program, has been postponed until COVID restrictions are lifted.

"... The virtual workplace has actually given companies more access to good language data. This means that interest and understanding of my work has grown, instead of diminished, as a result," says Beaver.

## ROWAN CHILDS

*Founder and executive director, Madison Reading Project and economic development director for the Village of Mount Horeb*

Rowan Childs' reading nonprofit provides books to kids and community organizations free of charge, as well as holds other literacy-related events. During the pandemic, MRP ceased taking book donations for three months.



"[However,] the need for books for children who had none or few and were stuck at home with only virtual learning, grew larger — and was more evident than ever before," Childs says. Despite the pandemic, MRP gave out 70,000 books in 2020, exceeding their goal by 10,000.

In May 2020, Childs also accepted a position as economic development director for the Village of Mount Horeb.

## LAUREN RUDERSDORF

*Entrepreneur and co-owner of Raleigh's Hillside Farm*



For the past eight years, Lauren Rudersdorf has helmed Raleigh's Hillside Farm alongside her husband, Kyle. In spring 2020, Rudersdorf left her "off-farm" job at Midwest Environmental Advocates to pursue her 2020 goals.

"I launched an online course to help farmers pivot towards CSA in a pandemic,

launched a CBD oil business with hemp grown on our farm, joined the team of Edible Madison and started consulting for other small business owners," she shares.

## CHANTEL SOUMIS

*Founder, Stardust Creative*

Chantel Soumis' marketing agency specializes in personal branding and offers pro bono consulting for people with disabilities. At age 26, Soumis was diagnosed with MS and was unable to find work in a conventional sense — so she founded Stardust Creative.



The pandemic has offered opportunity for Soumis' business. "Due to the increased need for digital differentiation as professionals seek new roles or grow their businesses virtually, I've been staying busy growing my brand agency," she says.

She also began volunteering with the Wisconsin chapter of DisabilityIN to assist with content and social media support. Soumis says she continues to spread awareness of diversity and inclusion for the differently-abled community.

## SHELIA STUBBS

*Dane County Board District 23 Supervisor and Representative of the 77th Assembly District*

Shelia Stubbs ran for reelection twice in 2020 — and maintained both her Board Supervisor and Assembly District seats. In 2020, Stubbs says, "As a community leader, I attend many community events and make direct connections with the neighbors I represent. Due to the pandemic, these connections had to be made virtually, which left much to be desired."



Much of Stubbs' work centers around diversity and inclusion, so 2020 was a pivotal year for her. She led press conferences and participated in marches demanding racial equity and police reform.

"My fierce advocacy and criticism of the status quo led to my participation on the Speakers Task Force on Racial Disparities, where I serve as co-chair alongside Rep. Jim Steineke, the Republican Assembly majority leader. This bipartisan taskforce, which prioritizes community input, is set to introduce legislation that will reform policing practices in our state," she says. "This next legislative session will be critical to seeing real change in our state. If we want to see racial equity become a reality, now is the time."

— SHAYNA MACE ✨





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## COME ON IN

"When you walk in the front door, you're immediately drawn into the gorgeous view out the windows that comprises the back of the home. This was a key element in the home's design," explains interior designer Shannon Figaro. The black and white palette keeps the space simple, yet elegant.



# RAVISHING REVIVAL



**AFTER A FIRE DESTROYED MOST OF A SEMINOLE HILLS HOME,  
A FAMILY REIMAGINED THEIR NEW DREAM HOUSE.**

BY SHAYNA MACE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANNA WOLF



## GORGEOUS SPACE

↑ Figaro says the kitchen's seamless mix of white inset cabinetry, Silestone quartz countertops, cherry wood island, herringbone backsplash and mixed metals (brass, chrome and matte black cabinet hardware) makes the space look polished and pulled together. The stainless steel and brass stove hood was custom-fabricated by Madison-based Custom Metals.

It's every parent's worst nightmare: A fire starts in your home when your kids are there and you're not, which is what happened to the Trudgeon family on July 3, 2018. Parents Karisa and Casey were out and daughters Ellie and Avery and puppy Maisie were at their Fitchburg home when an electrical fire broke out in the attic. (Their son Jackson wasn't in the house.)

"The girls called 911, got the puppy and left the house. The firefighters were able to get there quickly ... but when they arrived, the roof was engulfed in flames," explains Karisa.

Between the fire damage to the home's top floor and all of the water and chemicals used to extinguish the flames, the home was a complete gut from the roof down to the foundation. They were, however, able to save the home's three-sided colonial brick façade.

"We had a sentimental attachment to the brick colonial look, but decided to modernize the home's floor plan. We kept the brick exterior but basically built a new home around it," says Karisa.

It was important to the family they stay in their beloved neighborhood. Although traumatic, they tried to find the positive in their situation and see the fire as an opportunity to design the home they always wanted.

Within a few days, Karisa reached out to interior designer Shannon Figaro of Fig Interiors and Tom Nicewander of American Design Concepts to redesign the living spaces to make the





home more functional for their family. On a recommendation from friends, the Trudgeons also hired Brian Buss of Buss Construction to rebuild the home. Over the next nine months, Karisa, Figaro and Buss formed a close working relationship that was critical to keeping the project on its condensed, nine-month schedule.

## FROM THE ASHES

Working with Nicewander and Figaro, the Trudgeons outlined their wish list. In general, they wanted to open up the home's old, closed-off floor plan and make it open-concept.



## DESIGN DETAILS

↑ Karisa estimates they were only able to save about 5 to 10% of their belongings from the fire. One of them was the console (shown above in the dining room) that was Karisa's great-grandmother's, which the couple had restored.

◀ In the couple's master bedroom, they opted for a cool take on a coffered ceiling — which is also wallpapered.



## SPA-WORTHY

↑ The main floor powder room is small, but has major style. Black and white wallpaper, an ornate gold mirror and brass fixtures amp up the fun.

← “The Trudgeons love the contrast of a black and white palette,” says Figaro. “Because the flooring was the bolder element in the master bathroom, we were understated with some of the other accents [in here].” One of the couple’s must-haves was the steam shower.



They expanded the old galley kitchen's layout to make it more functional, and moved their master suite from upstairs to the main floor. They took the home's old dining room and turned it into a mudroom and laundry area. And, they added a bar and entertaining area on the main floor because of Casey's job in the beer industry. "Our whole goal was to have more entertaining space on the main floor," says Karisa.

The new design mirrored the old home's footprint, but expanded about 400 square feet. Part of the addition was Karisa's must-have in their new home: a screened-in porch to overlook the marsh.

"That truly is my favorite spot of the house," says Karisa. "I grew up in Missouri and Tennessee, and we always had big porches with porch swings. So, this is kind of like a retreat for me and a little nod to my Southern roots. We spent all summer out here."

Figaro says working with the Trudgeons on their rebuild was fulfilling, because they're also friends of hers.

"Karisa and Casey engaged me right away in this process because they are repeat clients of mine. Prior to this renovation, we had [talked about] things that weren't really possible in their old floor plan. We were able to get all of those things they wanted and rebuild this 20-plus-year-old home — but how you would build a house today, for a family of five."

Karisa says she wanted their new home to be casual but elegant — and not too fancy. "I wanted it to be a place where our friends and families can gather and be comfortable," she says. Figaro was then able to hone in on the couple's style to incorporate thoughtful design details throughout the home.

"Because of the home's traditional architecture on the exterior, we incorporated traditional design details on the interior like hardwood flooring, paneling and crown molding throughout," says Figaro. "But we also brought in modern elements like mixed metals, streamlined hardware, black window rails and encaustic patterned tile."

Figaro also masterfully wove in stylish touches, such as distressed wood beams throughout the first floor (which are actually load-bearing); shiplap walls in the



## Just Relax

Karisa's beloved screened-in porch, an addition to the new home, is her go-to spot, and a favorite gathering place for her family. Seeing the Trudgeons love every space in their home brings Figaro happiness. "That is my favorite part of this job, helping people and improving their quality of life," she says. "For me, it was about getting the Trudgeons back home and having it be a space they truly love."

home's entryway; and fantastic lighting, like the black sconces in the entryway and clear pendants over the kitchen island from Milwaukee's Luce Lighting.

For Karisa, who wanted a clean, classic home with little visual clutter, the house is perfect. And these days, having a home that's functional for a busy family of five during a pandemic is even more important.

"[The fire] was such an emotional trauma to go through. Thank God everyone was fine, and you realize very quickly that nothing else matters, so there's a perspective shift," reflects Karisa. "It was a labor of love [to build this home], and since our family had been through so much, I wanted this to be such a great space. And, it's a space that brings joy." ✨



# BRAUD POWER

By Joanna G. Burish

Many of us are thinking about New Year's resolutions right about now. One of the top two on every list historically is about money. With that said, how can we commit, persevere and achieve our 2021 financial goals? Who better to learn from than a diverse group of powerhouse women in our community. Women of all ages and backgrounds on their own journey to continual Braud Power successes!

A plan with no action is only a dream. Remember it's the little things done consistently over and over that help you go from ordinary, to extraordinary! To receive my top 10 tips and tools on how to Braud Power your 2021 New Year's resolutions, email me at [joanna.burish@nm.com](mailto:joanna.burish@nm.com) and I will share resource tools to Braud Power YOUR 2021!



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**Q:** How did you learn about financial planning for yourself, your family and your business?

**A:** Karla Angel

The most important lesson I've learned about money and finances is that we all have ideas about what money means, but often don't realize it. We can get stuck pretty quickly in our aspirations, if we don't know about these beliefs. Growing up, my parents did a lot to teach me about managing finances, but I had a very firm ideas about what constituted "a lot" of money or a "really good" salary. It wasn't until I was older that I saw how some of those beliefs were actually quite limiting. Learning that our mindset around money is equally as important as the skills to manage it was a big realization for me! Being aware of those beliefs and challenging the ones that keep me from my fullest potential is definitely a resolution I have for 2021 as my business continues to grow.

**A:** Annette Miller

As a business owner and CEO for the last 3½ years, and, being an executive in government and in the private sector for 20-plus years prior, I learned a lot about the intersection of women, money and business. From how others perceived my place in business and negotiation and how I perceived myself and what I believed I deserved. As such, my words of wisdom about us as women, and our relationship with money and a fair rate or salary has everything to do with how WE value and see the worth of ourselves! Moreover, our perception of worth and work has been absolutely shaped by how we have been socialized to believe our role and value in the business world.

**Q:** What can you share with us on how you financially got through difficult times — not just in 2020, but over the years?

**A:** Sarah Dunn

Since my first job, my philosophy has been to work hard and save a portion of my salary for retirement. As a single woman who has been separated and divorced for over 14 years, I have modeled the way and instilled these same beliefs into my three adult children.

**A:** Deb Archer

I learned at a young age that participating in any type of retirement and/or matching program through an employer was important — regardless of the amount I could contribute. In the past, in financially tight times, I had made decisions about discretionary spending, to help sustain me and my family.



Karla Angel, confidence coach  
at Karla Angel, LLC



Annette Miller, CEO at  
EQT By Design



**Q:** Looking back today, what would you do differently in regard to your finances?

**A: Ashley Quinto Powell**

I am forever telling clients how important consistency is — and I really wish I'd taken that advice and applied it to financial planning. Instead of investing and saving in fits and starts, I wish I had been consistently taking small steps every month, every quarter and every year.

**Q:** What is one key lesson you'd recommend we all do in our financial planning moving forward?

**A: Sandy Morales**

It's probably a good idea to find a trusted financial advisor early on in your life and career. Our lives and financial position change so much over the years, and it's smart to make sure that your financial planning adjusts to where you are in life.

**A: Sarah Dunn**

In addition to managing your wealth wisely, you need to evaluate all your risks and address them through insurance coverage, such as disability, life and long-term care insurance. A key part of my financial strategy was working with Joanna Burish to identify the right insurance solutions that fit into my portfolio and to ultimately manage risk.

**A: Deb Archer**

Carve out time to study your financial investment plan. Don't put it at the bottom of your to-do list.

**A: Ashley Quinto Powell**

I think we all assume that working with a financial planner is fairly straightforward and that all service providers are the same. But that's very far from the truth! I've learned that finding the right service provider is critical, and sometimes you have to kiss several frogs before you find the right one. It's been so valuable to know I have someone who understands my goals, my tolerance for risk and my history.

**Q:** Is there advice you'd like to share on smart personal and business financial planning?

**A: Annette Miller**

Once I came to value and see the worth of what I do professionally and personally, I gained confidence in myself. I liberated myself from what society believes my worth is and have set my own fair, competitive standard and valuation that I go to bat for at the negotiation table. I will not settle for less, knowing that I deliver the best of myself and the work every time, all the time. So, my advice is, believe in yourself, know your worth, trust yourself and bring that to the negotiation table every time you seek compensation. Never settle for less unless it is in your best interest to do so. Go to bat for it, and know you are worthy and deserving of every bit of what you earn every day!

**A: Ashley Quinto Powell**

I've started to consider financial planning to be the most important self-care I do, for both my business and personal finances. And working with the right person is key to making that a success and a joy!

**A: Deb Archer**

Be sure you have a financial planner and advisor. Having a third party that you trust to give you feedback on your investment and spending activity is critical to keeping you on solid financial footing.

**A: Sandy Morales**

You should not hold off on planning for the future for yourself and family. It doesn't have to be overwhelming if you work with a financial advisor that understands your needs.

**Q:** Do your 2021 resolutions include financial goals, and if so, how do you plan to stay committed and succeed?

**A: Deb Archer**

As someone retiring and leaving a nice paycheck behind, I have to pay closer attention to my money than ever. I am going to commit to reviewing my budget and finances once a month to ensure I am on track. I also will meet with my financial planner on a quarterly basis to have a third party provide me feedback on my investing and spending habits.

**A: Ashley Quinto Powell**

Ha! Money is always on that list. A big theme for me in 2021 is consistency and accountability. I already have an appointment with a great financial advisor (that's YOU, Joanna!) set for Q1 to start the year off right.



Sarah Dunn, vice president  
at CG Schmidt, Inc.



Deb Archer, recently retired president/  
CEO at Destination Madison



Ashley Quinto Powell, revenue generation  
consultant & speaker at Ashley Powell Consulting



Sandy Morales, CEO at Big Brothers  
Big Sisters of Dane County



# Retirement Communities Evolve to Offer Many Amenities

By Sue Sveum

As people age, many still crave a lifestyle filled with social events, activities and great cuisine, which is why senior living communities have evolved. They offer the comfort of home, without the hassle of upkeep.

**M**ovie theaters, restaurant-style dining, exercise classes, salons — it sounds like the benefits of living in a metropolitan area, but these days, this is what many retirement communities offer.

Without seeing them in person, many don't realize how much the atmosphere and amenities have evolved over the years. These communities are meant to feel like home, with the benefit of on-site services and social activities all under one roof.

Sue White, president and owner of Sienna Crest Assisted Living, and Katie Rasmussen, executive director of Noel Manor Retirement Living in Verona, says that senior living really has come a long way.

"There used to be a negative connotation to retirement homes, a stigma, that many of our older residents had growing up," says White. "And they don't want any part of the type of 'nursing home' where their parents lived. Senior living is very different nowadays — but some people still have that [stigma] in their heads."

The best way to change that perception? "I tell the family, they should just bring their loved one in to visit. Let them see for themselves what today's senior living is like — that it's nothing like the old days," White says. "Places today feel like home." Sienna Crest's assisted living and memory care communities are small and intimate, making it easy for residents

to get around — while really getting to know their fellow residents and staff. Fresh meals, activities and lively conversations are a part of daily life there.

According to Rasmussen, amenities in senior living today are often all-inclusive. "Utilities, cable TV, internet, housekeeping, laundry facilities, 24-hour staff, walk-in showers, transportation, restaurant-style dining, activities, a theater, salon and an emergency pendant are all part of the package at Noel Manor," says Rasmussen. "And retirement is a lot more carefree in a senior community where grounds upkeep, cooking, cleaning and activities of daily living are taken care of by a caring staff."



While today's senior living is quite different from the nursing homes of old, White and Rasmussen stress that it's important not to confuse those facilities with what's known as "skilled nursing."

"We don't replace skilled nursing homes," says Rasmussen. Federally regulated, skilled nursing generally appears more sterile and less residential than assisted living, she adds.

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**"Senior communities allow people to live a rich and active retirement with all of their needs being met, even as their needs continue to change."**

— Katie Rasmussen, Noel Manor Retirement Living

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Because many skilled nursing facilities now focus on rehabilitation, senior communities often partner with skilled nursing to care for residents that are in need of short-term rehab. It's a relationship that benefits everyone involved, White says.

#### LOOKING AT THE OPTIONS

So, what can one expect from modern senior living and how do you pick the best facility for your needs?

Individual options range from independent living to assisted living and memory care. And some, like Noel Manor, are continuum of care communities where a resident may start out at one level and make a change if more care is needed. It's important to note that while all of these options are good choices, they're not one-size-fits-all.



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According to White, there's a niche for all of the different options. Larger communities often appeal to younger seniors who enjoy the variety of activities and modern amenities, like fitness rooms, restaurant-style dining and happy hour. But other seniors with mobility issues or greater care needs may feel more comfortable in a smaller residential setting. And then there's memory care — similar to assisted living, but with a specially trained staff and meals and activities geared to the residents' abilities.

"Finding a community with a continuum of care makes it possible to age in place," says Rasmussen. "It's beneficial to seniors to be able to continue to live within a community they love — where close friendships are made with residents and staff."

She explains that having various levels of senior living in one place makes it possible to avoid having to move multiple times when additional care is needed — an aspect that's usually important to aging adults.

For some, that may mean starting



with an independent living apartment. "If a senior's needs change, additional services such as dressing, bathing and medication administration can easily be added while living in that same apartment," Rasmussen says. "Noel Manor can meet people where they are

with individualized service plans."

And that's also true for residents of assisted living — the next level up. "With assisted living, it's important to provide just the right amount of care," says Rasmussen. "Not too little and not too much."

Whether part of a larger campus or a stand-alone community, assisted living strives to nurture independence, while providing necessary care — often making it a better choice even than staying at home. "Residents can still do things on their own, and we often see them blossom," says White. "I've had families say, 'Mom hasn't looked this good or been this happy in ages!'"

Often, adult children do the initial search, so it's very important for them to think about what their senior parent would want or need in a community rather than what they would want. And she advises making a decision based on their current needs. "Kids may want to hold onto their memories of a vibrant, active parent," she says, "but that might not be who they are anymore."

No matter what setting you and your loved one ultimately choose, it's clear that today's senior communities have changed to meet the needs of modern living. "Our saying is 'Make it Matter,'" says Rasmussen. "And our mission is caring for your loved ones with compassion and grace."

## Sienna Crest

Assisted Living, Inc.

**"When I think of Sienna Crest Assisted Living..... I think we have good staff and the food tastes good."**

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*Resident Arlene S.*

Don't worry about making a move, Sienna Crest uses COVID-19 precautions to help keep your loved one and our staff safe.




**[www.siennacrest.com](http://www.siennacrest.com)**



## BOLD FLAVOR WITHOUT THE BUZZ

BY SHELBY ROWE MOYER | PHOTOGRAPHY AND STYLING BY SUNNY FRANTZ

**THERE'S SOMETHING THAT** feels intrinsically special about popping open a beer, a bottle of wine or sharing cocktails with friends. Forgoing alcohol used to feel more sacrificial, but many restaurants and beverage companies have saved the day with nonalcoholic options that feel just as special as the real thing. Luckily for us, several options in this list are even made locally. So, whether you're nixing the buzz for Dry January or because of your health or lifestyle, there's still plenty of options.

### FIX COCKTAIL SIMPLE SYRUPS

Made with pure cane sugar, these simple syrups crafted by Madison-based Quince & Apple are something special, and they make for a delectable base in any mocktail. So, what are you in the mood for? Craving a dash of summer? Go for the Rhubarb Hops! Add a heavy pour of seltzer to a festive glass and top with a fruity garnish. The husband-and-wife duo behind Quince & Apple pride themselves on their handcrafted products, and you can certainly taste the love. \$10.49, Willy Street Co-op.

*Cont on P. 57*



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Cont from P. 55



### KUL MOCKS

When Danielle Goss was pregnant, she wanted to be able to send her husband to the store for a six-pack of beer for himself and something tasty and nonalcoholic for her. At the time, that option didn't really exist. Sure, there were zero-proof liquors, but nothing ready-made you could throw in a cooler and enjoy with friends. The couple started doing research and realized there was a real demand for mocktails that were ready to go and tasted like the real thing. Not long after their daughter was born, so was KUL MOCKS, in three flavors: Mock Mule, Strawberry Mock-

arita and Blackberry Mock-jito. As a registered dietician, Goss ensured KUL MOCKS were manufactured with zero artificial sweeteners and infused with natural flavors that are non-GMO. The newly formed Wisconsin-based company is already in several stores in Wisconsin and Minnesota, making a mocktail easier to grab than ever. *\$6.99 for a four-pack, Woodman's.*

### MAD MAIDEN SHRUB

Mad Maiden owner and creator Janet Chen says, "Infusing vinegar is like making tinctures and salves with wildcrafted fruit and herbs." This practice of drinking shrub, also known as drinking vinegar, has long been venerated for its health properties and was also a precursor, of sorts, to the modern-day soda. Madison-based Mad Maiden shrubs have an electrifying taste with fizzy and tart flavors, including cranberry and honey ginger, and some of the ingredients are sourced right here in the Badger State. Its website has a handful of drink recipes (which can be converted to nonalcoholic), like mixing the Honey Ginger Shrub with orange juice, seltzer and orange zest for garnish. *\$19.95 for a three-pack, Orange Tree Imports.*



### RITUAL

The journey that brought these beautifully bottled, zero-proof liquors from concept to creation involved a long process of taste-testing ingredients from all over the world and consulting world-class chefs and bartenders. The creators note on their website: "We weren't interested in a glass of 'something.' We're not interested in new-age goop that defies explanation or fancy spa water that bears no resemblance to liquor."

The result? Tequila, whiskey and gin alternatives that look and taste like the real deal. *\$24.99, Total Wine & More.*



### SEEDLIP

The story behind Seedlip has ancient roots, dating back to a 17th-century physician using copper stills and herbs to create liquid tonics. Ben Branson came across these recipes and began his own experiment. Not long after that he created Seedlip, which married his farming heritage and "need for a sophisticated nonalcoholic option." The product names offer a nod to their flavor profiles, like Seedlip Spice 94, which is warm and citrusy with a bitter finish, or Seedlip Garden 108 (shown), a floral blend of hand-picked peas and homegrown hay

from Branson's farm. *\$31.99, Total Wine & More.*

### TOP NOTE SPARKLING SODAS

Just two weeks after Milwaukee-based Top Note Tonic launched in 2017, founders Mary Pellettieri and Noah Swanson received word that they'd won a Sofi award from the Specialty Food Association — the equivalent of a "food Oscar." For them, it affirmed all the years they'd spent researching the origin of soft drinks, back when they were handcrafted by pharmacists. The flavors pack a punch, because they're made with real ingredients, like grapefruit juice and date sugar. Plus, we love that their site is chock-full of drink recipes. *\$6.79, Willy Street Co-op.*



### SPARKLING BOTANICALS BY RISHI

Fruits, spices and herbs were gathered from around the globe and brought to the Rishi Herb Lab with the intention of creating a pure, sparkling beverage using only raw ingredients. The result is a light, refreshing and functional drink with zero added sugars, powdered extracts or flavor additives. Encased in a stunningly designed can, each of the six flavors

— like Dandelion Ginger, Grapefruit Quince and Patagonia Maqui — is crafted with a short list of ingredients you can actually pronounce. Fun fact: Rishi's corporate headquarters are in Milwaukee! *\$2.99, Willy Street Co-op.*

### HAIRLESS DOG

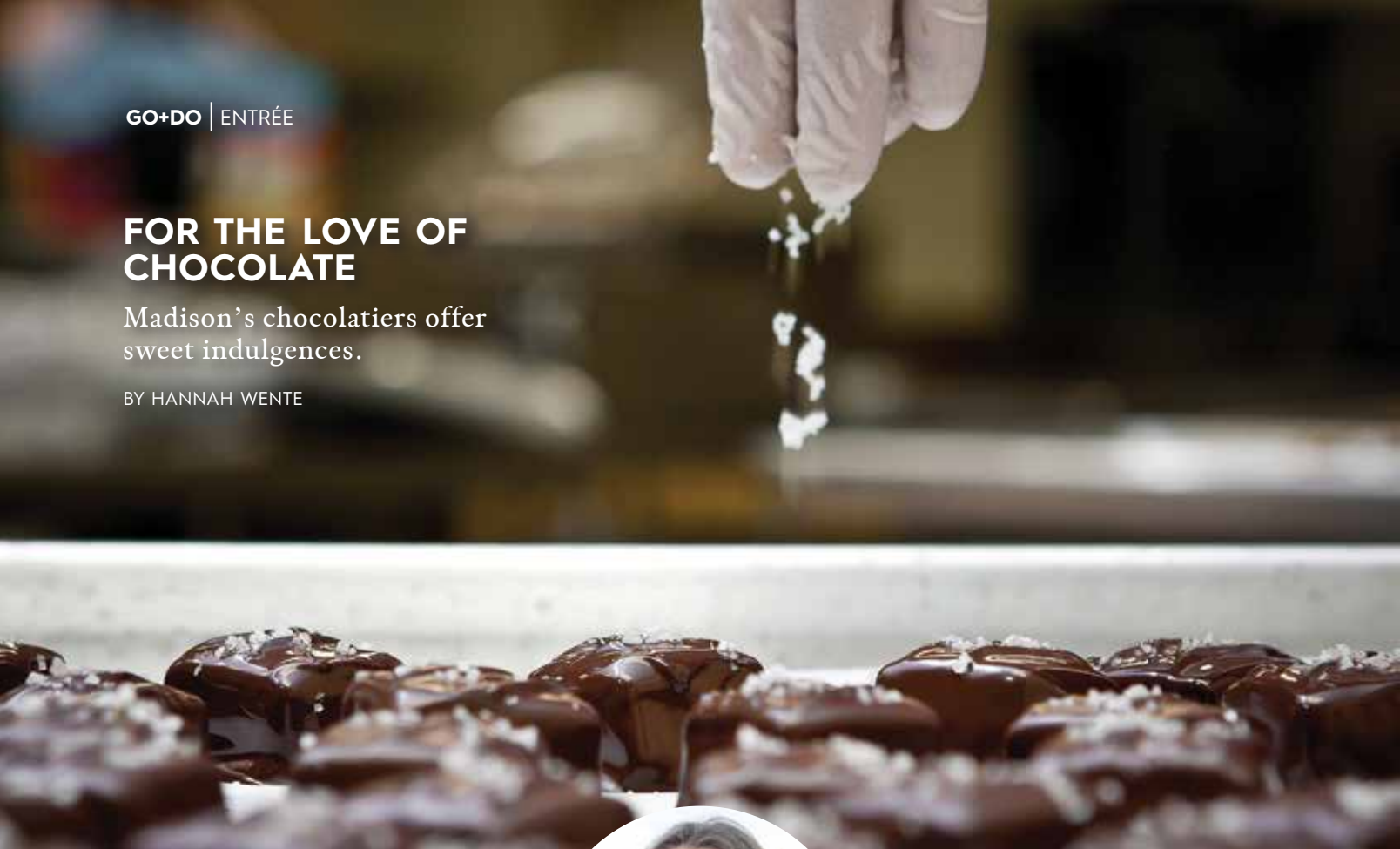
Two Minnesota friends who ditched drinking but still enjoyed having a cold one created this flavor-forward, 0% ABV craft beer. The sleek cans are emblazoned with names that sound pretty typical to any beer-drinker: Citra Lager, IPA, Black Ale and Coffee Stout. We'll cheers to that. *\$8.99-\$9.49 for a six-pack, Total Wine & More.* 🍷



## FOR THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE

Madison's chocolatiers offer sweet indulgences.

BY HANNAH WENTE



**A SOFT BITE** into a semi-bitter, bold and fruity morsel of dark heaven has the power to transform “I need a break” into, “Thank goodness for 2020.” Okay, chocolate may not be *that* powerful, but it can get us through tough times.

In Madison, we're fortunate to have chocolatiers in nearly every direction. These chocolate business owners teach us an important lesson — one they knew before a global pandemic hit: We are stronger together.

### GAIL AMBROSIOUS CHOCOLATIER

Gail Ambrosius grew up on a farm in Seymour, Wis., with a sweet-toothed mother. As a child, she loved watching family members' eyes light up when trying homemade holiday sweets. A school trip to France solidified her love of chocolate. She opened her store a sweet 16 years ago and is currently located on Atwood Avenue. Chocolate euphoria here arises from her single-origin dark chocolate truffles and bars.

Her travels abroad influence her recipes.

“I try all the foods I can,” she says. “I



love to eat, so when I find something I really like, I think, ‘How could I spin this with chocolate? What could it be?’”

A trip to Peru led to the creation of her Macchu Picchu truffle. Ambrosius was inspired by a dessert there with hints of cinnamon, vanilla and coffee. “It was this combination of flavors, memories and feelings, and I tried to put it into a flavor,” she says.

Early on, L'Etoile founder Odessa Piper lent Ambrosius kitchen space and taste buds for her now-signature caramel.

“She'd go, ‘Too soft, too hard, too sweet, blah blah blah.’ After many trials and errors ... her eyes lit up ... she said, ‘Gail, this is it. Don't change this. This is the one.’ And it hasn't changed since.”

Supporting other women is something

Ambrosius pays forward today. She offers advice and support to anyone who stops by for tips on starting their business.

Ambrosius sees the number of Madison chocolate-makers as an opportunity for both chocolatiers and consumers.

“We're all just doing what we love, we all have our own style, and I think there's plenty for everybody,” she says. “We're very lucky in Madison, having such great chocolate and such wonderful people making it. I look at it as abundance, not competition.”

*Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier is currently closed to walk-in traffic, but online orders and curbside pick-up are available. [gailambrosius.com](http://gailambrosius.com)*

### SJÖLINDS CHOCOLATE HOUSE

Sjölinnds (shoo-lean-ds) is a family affair. Tracy Thompson; her husband, Chris; daughters Erin and Melissa; and two sons pitch in to bake, handle orders and process cacao at their Mount Horeb chocolate factory and café. Tracy named it for her mother's family name, originating from an island off the coast of Sweden. It means “to make a living from the sea”



— an apt reference to the business's reliance on oceanic cacao shipments.

As a baker in Minnesota in the 1980s, Tracy thought, "There's got to be more to chocolate," in regard to what the major chocolate companies were putting out. Eventually this curiosity led her and daughter Melissa to explore the bean-to-bar process, which requires multiple steps.

"When you first make wine you have to let it age for a bit," she says. "The same is true for chocolate." Milk chocolate, like white wine, can be ready to go in about a week, while darker chocolates take up to about six months as the tannins in the chocolate develop over time.

Sjölinds processes thousands of pounds of beans each year, roasting, winnowing and grinding chocolate into countless flavors of bars, nine flavors of

hot chocolates and numerous confections. Their chocolate bars don't linger on shelves long because of their quality.

"We work with smaller bean brokers that work with family farms all over the world," she says.

Tracy is thankful for new chocolatiers in the area since Sjölinds opened in 2006.

"I think it's really exciting that in the years since we started, so many other people have gotten excited about chocolate too — that's so cool."

*Sjölinds Chocolate House is open from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. every day for drive-thru and pick-up orders. Chocolate factory tours and \$5 tastings will return post-COVID. [sjolinds.com](http://sjolinds.com)* 🌸

**Hannah Wente** *builds community through her freelance writing and nonprofit work.*

## YOU'VE ALSO GOT TO TRY...

### MADISON CHOCOLATE CO.

Whether you're craving something sweet, spicy or gluten-free, Madison Chocolate Co. has you covered. Megan Hile's hip Monroe Street locale is packed with dark chocolate truffles, specialty bars (like nutter fluffers and scratch-made BeTwixed), award-winning ghost pepper caramels and gluten-free waffles (weekends only). Want to try a bit of everything? Get the rainbow box with nine of the best-selling truffles and 10% of proceeds will go toward LGBTQ+ organizations. 729 Glenway St.

### COCOAAA CHOCOLATIER

As a former trial lawyer, Syovata "Vata" Edari got her start in the chocolate world by creating holiday gifts for law firms as a side gig. This 2017 BRAVA Women to Watch's creations range from playful, crunchy cacao-nib-covered caramel hedgehogs to elegant hazelnut macchiato truffles. Want to have your chocolate and booze too? Her Black Box Spirited Collection boasts liquid alcohol fillings encased in dark chocolate like a Manhattan truffle made with J. Henry & Sons bourbon (produced 20 miles north of Madison). Order online or stop at her storefront on weekends.

1815 E. Washington Ave.

### INFUSIONS CHOCOLATES

Infusions opened at Hilldale in 2008 and moved to Monroe Street in summer 2017. "We want [people] to have fun, and have an experience unlike anything they've ever had before," says owner Ann Culligan. Graphic designer-turned-chocolatier Alyssa Haskins, who, along with the rest of the team, crafts around 30 milk and dark chocolate truffle varieties on-site. Popular flavors include exotic caramel with mango and passion fruit, smoked salted caramel and vanilla crème brûlée. Each truffle is brightly colored with tinted cocoa butter. "They make for a great gift with a visual impact." 2503 Monroe St.

COCOAAA CHOCOLATIER

## COVID Can't Stop Compassion

Agrace RN Case Manager Tisha Earle sings with Lance during her recent visit to his Boscobel home



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# THERE'S PLENTY TO SEE AND EXPERIENCE!

The search for alien life forms, social justice-driven musical performances and two very special milestones take center stage this winter.

BY SHELBY ROWE MOYER



## "FULL CIRCLE" AT MADISON MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Through March 21

With the recent retirement of the director emeritus, Stephen Fleischman, MMoCA is reflecting on its last 30 years under his helm. His legacy is visible throughout the museum's permanent collection with additions of contemporary photography, Chicago Imagism and works from Midwest artists. Through March 21 revisit a popular exhibition called "Mask" that was originally on view at MMoCA in 2008 — and you may have already seen this colorful addition from afar. Colorful ribbons hang the entire length of the building's iconic glass triangle at the corner of Henry and State streets. "Mask" is back as part of the museum's "Full Circle" exhibition dedicated in honor of Fleischman. [mmoca.org/art](http://mmoca.org/art)

## THE VERONA QUARTET

Jan. 29

Having performed all over the world, this highly sought-after quartet has risen to fame for its immersive and spellbinding take on contemporary music — which has earned the group accolades from publications such as The New York Times. Despite what the name might imply, the group doesn't have a connection to the area. The name Verona actually pays homage to William Shakespeare. Like the prolific playwright, the Quartet "believes that the essence of storytelling transcends genre." This virtual event is one you won't want to miss. [union.wisc.edu/events.com](http://union.wisc.edu/events.com)



## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE: LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS

Jan. 19 & 20

Sometime this year, a NASA rover will be navigating the terrain of Mars in search of evidence of ancient life. Meanwhile, scientists are pondering whether one of Jupiter's moons, Europa — which has a vast subsurface ocean — could offer clues of primitive life forms. During this ticketed National Geographic virtual event hosted by Overture, planetary scientist and astrobiologist Kevin Peter Hand and NASA engineer Kobie Boykins will present updates on this enthralling research. [overture.org/events](http://overture.org/events)



## GREATER MADISON MUSIC CITY KICK-OFF EVENT

Jan. 19

Ongoing conversations about diversifying Madison's music scene and offering equitable platforms for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) artists are coming to fruition during this virtual afternoon event with performances by local musicians, organized by Greater Madison Music City. "We began this work due to discrimination creating unequal access to stages for hip-hop artists and other artists of color," says Greater Madison Music City lead Karen Reece. "Racial equity will remain the focus of this work and our success will require broad community involvement with partners from music, government and private business sectors." [greatermadisonmusiccity.com](http://greatermadisonmusiccity.com)





## THE JEDI MINDSET

*The Children's Theater of Madison has taken it upon itself to undergo systemic change with the formation of its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.*

A commitment to justice, equity diversity and inclusion are sometimes considered icing on the cake, says Arlen Moss, but that's not really the right approach.

This kind of work is like baking a cake. To be truly successful, it has to be the main ingredient, Moss says. In other words, companies and organizations need to examine all of their operations and decision-making processes — from recruitment and hiring to the physical space it occupies to the programming and products being offered — with a justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) mindset.

And this is exactly what the Children's Theater of Madison began a few years ago when it established an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, Moss says, who joined the theater's EDI committee two years ago and is now vice president of the board. (When talking about this work, he uses the acronym JEDI to include justice.)

The committee, which is made up of staff, community members, parents and members of the board, are working to examine and revise any racist systems or processes that could undermine CTM's JEDI goals.

Erica Berman, the director of education and community engagement for CTM and co-chair of the committee, breaks down their JEDI mindset like this: "Access is about whether you can get into a space. Inclusivity is, 'Do I belong in a space?' Diversity is who is in the space. And justice is who has ownership and can make decisions about the space."

"That's the work we're embarking on at CTM," Berman says. "The hard work and necessary work that will ultimately change the way we serve the youth for the better."

In the past few years, Moss and Patricia Finn — who is also a board and committee member — say the committee has helped make a number of changes that further diversified the organization. Some of that work is more obvious, like the types of plays that are performed.

But a lot of the changemaking work is less visible. For example, Finn says, the group

redrafted the committee nomination form and process to help ensure the board was recruiting people who are already doing JEDI work in the community.

"A lot of boards have been sort of good ol' boys, or if you donate enough money, you get a board seat," Finn says. "That whole culture has to be torn down. You perpetuate that white wealthy board if you keep filling your board with donors."

They also reviewed CTM's general job descriptions and edited them down to a list of the minimum requirements needed, as opposed to a lengthy "wish list" of requirements that ultimately hinder equity, diversity and inclusion goals, she says.

Sobia Kirmani-Moe, a parent of three CTM children and EDI committee chair, says she's been amazed at the conversations they're having and what they've been able to accomplish so far.

Just last year, in fact, after the committee offered feedback on the productions CTM was planning to put on, a couple of the plays were replaced with content more in line with CTM's values, including a performance that discussed Juneteenth.

For Kirmani-Moe, who is Pakistani and Muslim, this work is also personal.

"It's been really important to me that what I see at CTM is inclusive of all races," she says. "No one has ever looked at my son and ever made him feel like he was an outsider. He's got a very Muslim name, and never at any point — whether it be in the CTM academy or on stage — did he ever feel like there was any bias against him."

For Finn and Moss, the work of the committee, and social justice in general, isn't just "the right thing to do." It's imperative.

"In nature, only a diverse ecosystem can survive. If you don't create diversity in the environment, it will die; it weakens it," Finn says. "We've created an unsustainable system. It's not only a moral obligation, it will make our community and our children stronger by recognizing the power of diversity." 🌸

## AN OUTDOOR WINTER WONDERLAND

You're not stuck inside with these "cool" options.

BY KEVIN REVOLINSKI

**THE SEASON OPPOSITE** "road construction" has arrived here in Wisconsin, but there's no reason to change your outdoorsy habits. Plus, being outside offers ways to socially distance while enjoying a favorite activity *and* the beauty of the state.

### SNOWSHOEING

Swap out your hiking boots and hit the trails (ungroomed only!). Or make your own path through the powder in wide open spaces such as Warner Park. Be aware that conservation parks — such as Cherokee Marsh, Edna Taylor or Owen Conservation Park — require you to stay on a designated trail. If there's four inches of snow on the ground, you're good to go!



### CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

A great cardiovascular workout and a marvelous way to slip through field and forest, cross-country skiing is possible in a variety of places. Elver Park produces its own snow and rents skis. Along with two other city parks — Odana Hills and Yahara Hills — Elver Park requires a daily/annual ski permit and all trails are groomed regularly for both classic skiing and skate-style. Golf courses, such as University Ridge, also offer groomed trails. Head out to Indian Lake County Park northwest of Madison for great classic trails through the woods.

### ICE SKATING

Tenney Park has a dedicated hockey rink, plus much of its encircling lagoon is kept clear of snow for skaters. Elver Park also has a popular rink. (Check for current COVID restrictions at either warming house.) The Edgewater Hotel features an ice rink with a Capitol view and vistas of Lake Mendota. There's a daily/seasonal fee, plus rentals available.

TOP IMAGES TRAVEL WISCONSIN | BOTTOM LEFT THE EDGEWATER HOTEL





## DOWNHILL SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING

Despite a lack of mountains, Madison has three ski hills nearby! Devil's Head Resort and Cascade Mountain are both 45 minutes to the north, and Tyrol Basin is to the west, near Mount Horeb.



## SLEDDING

Elver Park is home to a monster of a sledding hill that is lit at night. More modest hills for kiddos are at Olbrich Park or Hiestand Park. A 900-foot chute and, mercifully, a lift awaits at Cascade Mountain (above) for those seeking a tubing rush.

## FAT BIKING

With knobbed tires four inches wide or more, burly fat bikes make snow- and ice-riding fun rather than frightening. The city's bike trails, and even our frozen lakes, can become your playground. Eighteen miles of trails await near Cambridge at CamRock County Park — which also offers skiing and sledding. ❄️

**Kevin Revolinski** is a Wisconsin outdoors writer and author of *FalconGuides*' "Paddling Wisconsin," a guide to the best paddling throughout the Badger State.

## TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Snowshoes, skis, skates and fat bikes are all specialized equipment. Check out these outfitters for rentals before you commit.

**Rutabaga** sells and rents snowshoes (and accompanying trekking poles). [rutabagashop.com](http://rutabagashop.com)

**REI** sells, services and rents ski equipment and snowshoes. [rei.com](http://rei.com)



**Fontana Sports** also sells snowshoes, skis and snowboards. [fontanasports.com](http://fontanasports.com)

Daily and weekly rates are available for fat bikes from **Machinery Row Bicycles**. [machineryrowbicycles.com](http://machineryrowbicycles.com)

**Outdoor UW** at Memorial Union rents snowshoes and trekking poles. [union.wisc.edu/events-and-activities/outdoor-uw](http://union.wisc.edu/events-and-activities/outdoor-uw)

**The Edgewater's** ice rink rents ice skates. Otherwise you can buy skates at **Play It Again Sports**, **Suter's**, **Gold Medal Sports** or **Crossovers Pro Shop**.

[theedgewater.com](http://theedgewater.com),  
[playitagainsports.com](http://playitagainsports.com),  
[crossoversproshop.com](http://crossoversproshop.com)



## NO SNOW? NO PROBLEM

Mother Nature is fickle. If snow flurries aren't flying, we can merely bundle up and call it an extension of hiking season. As long as trails are not groomed for skiing, they remain open for hiking all winter. While you're out there, keep your eyes peeled for feathered friends.

One of the popular new hobbies of 2020 was birding. They don't all fly south, of course. When the ice forms, bald eagles congregate around open water, notably below the dam on the



Wisconsin River in Prairie du Sac. Along with Sauk City, the town hosts Bald Eagle Watching Days (this year, virtually) Jan. 15-16. Snowy owls may appear in Madison — and along with resident great horned, barred and screech owls — are easier to spot when the trees are bare. Rare waterfowl — such as harlequin ducks — mingle with the geese and mallards along the Yahara River. In general, the Arboretum, Pheasant Branch Conservancy and Picnic Point are good birding spots.



### BEHIND THE SCENES

Spread over two days at Garver Feed Mill in early November, our Women to Watch shoot brought together 10 of Madison's most inspiring women to capture the essence, literally, of what makes them shine. This year's shoot was slightly different than years past, as we weren't able to stage a group photo with all of our Women to Watch due to COVID-19. But these photos show us that even if our Women to Watch are not physically together, their individual strengths draw us in to their stories and show us the possibilities that just one person can accomplish. *Shown clockwise from top left:* Francesca Hong; Kiah Calmese Walker; Kristie Goforth; Mel Charbonneau and Jasmine Banks. 🌸



# MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

## Home Is Where the Art Is



## Young musicians shine.

The future is bright. Bolz Youth Artist Competition participants and winners of The Final Forte shared performances and stories about music and their lives from their homes with us this summer. Experience all of the “**Young Artist Series**” of video stories that are part of our “**Home Is Where the Art Is**” collection at [madisonsymphony.org/homewithartists](https://madisonsymphony.org/homewithartists).

[madisonsymphony.org](https://madisonsymphony.org)



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## GREG ZELEK STREAMED ORGAN PERFORMANCE

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Thank you to everyone who tuned into our virtual 20/21 Organ Season Premiere featuring Greg Zelek! This was our first performance in Overture Hall since March, and we are thrilled to share this with you virtually. The performance premiered on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, and was initially available for streaming through November 18th. **Due to popular demand, we're extending access to stream this concert for FREE!** Experience the performance for the first time, or relive the moments.

I opened our 2020–21 Season with César Franck's powerful *Pièce Héroïque*, followed by works by some of the most prolific and important French composers. After my special arrangement of Debussy's *Clair de Lune*, I closed the program with Boëllmann's well-known *Suite Gothique* that ends with a rousing Toccata. I am excited to share these musical gems that have cemented the great value of the French school of organ composition for centuries.

– Greg Zelek

Join us for the masterful organ performance recorded **LIVE** in Overture Hall — streaming **FREE** to your home. Go to [madisonsymphony.org/zeleklive](https://madisonsymphony.org/zeleklive).

# MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Greg Zelek is the Madison Symphony Orchestra's Principal Organist and the Elaine and Nicholas Mischler Curator of the Overture Concert Organ.

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