

# DONELSON HERMITAGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Women in Business



## Award Finalist Information



## Beyond The Glass Ceiling

This award recognizes a woman who has utilized her position, stature, expertise and influence to break down barriers and effect innovation and positive change in her profession, industry or enterprise.

### **Amy Bryant, Director of the Office of Conservatorship Management for Davidson County**



As the Director for the Office of Conservatorship Management (OCM) for Davidson County Amy is working to change the scene for those that care for the elderly and disabled in Middle Tennessee. They oversee the management of over 2,400 conservators. Additionally, Amy launched the first and only statewide online training for conservators in the state of Tennessee. The program has been shared with all of the judges and clerks across the state and nationally. Over 400 conservators have been trained under this program. The OCM is one of a kind in the state of Tennessee and one of the only in the southeastern United States. Amy currently leads a task force with the mission of statewide conservatorship management and oversight. Amy leads an office that will set the pace for other organizations of this kind in Tennessee and beyond.

### **Ashley Eller-Cottrell, President of Hermitage Golf Course**



Growing up in Old Hickory, she spent her days playing golf and swimming as a young kid at the country club where her father was the head pro. After graduating from the University of Alabama in Public Relations and Marketing, she took a job in Los Angeles, California, where she met her husband, David. They returned home to Tennessee two years later, where Ashley took a job as the director of tournament and corporate sales at the Hermitage Golf Course. She is currently the president of the course where she runs day-to-day operations for the 36-hole award-winning facility. In a male-dominated industry, Ashley has pushed the envelope, always on the search for female pros to lead up and coming female golfers at the Hermitage Golf Course. Among many accolades, the course received the award "50 Best Courses for Women" by Golf for Women's magazine. Ashley continues to support the LPGA amateurs who play weekly at the course, along with previously hosting the Women's Tennessee State Four-Ball tournament. And during the pandemic, Ashley worked tirelessly to keep her employees fully on staff as she adjusted the golf business model for the safety of all.

### **Judge Lynda Jones, District 6 Director, National Association of Women Judges**



Judge Lynda Jones was elected to the bench on August 7, 2014. She practiced law in middle Tennessee for 22 years prior to becoming a judge. She was the Presiding Judge of Davidson County General Sessions Court from September 1, 2019 – September 1, 2020. She is a Chair of the General Sessions Court Committee for Nashville Bar Association and Fellow of the Nashville Bar Foundation. She was nominated and selected by her peers to serve on the Executive Committee for a five-year term for the Tennessee General Sessions Judges Conference, she serves as this year's President. Judge Jones also Presides over the Nashville Homeless Court. Judge Jones has been heavily involved in the Nashville Community after serving on the boards of several organizations while also active in her church. She has also won several awards such as the 2015 Nashville Business Journal, Public Policy Award, 2014 Athena Nominee, 2014 NAWBO Woman of the Year Award, 2013 Athena Nominee, and the 2013 Mid-South Super Lawyer. Lynda is widowed and has one child. She serves as a Girl Scout troop volunteer and mentor to women in the community.



## Heart of Donelson-Hermitage

This award recognizes a woman who is making outstanding contributions to their community. This community advocate demonstrates how people with passion and determination can use their lives to make a difference in the community.

### **B.J. Keener, Executive Director of the Donelson-Hermitage Family YMCA**



B.J. Keener has been in wellness for over 27 years and enjoys helping people find balance in their life. She started working for the YMCA in Michigan in 2005 as a Lead Fitness specialist/personal trainer. She maintains her certification as a personal trainer (ACSM-C-PT) through the American College of Sports Medicine. She has held the positions of Wellness Director, Operations Executive and now Executive Director with the YMCA of MID TN. She still trains a client or two through the year to stay active and hosts a 6 a.m. Yoga class. She is a trainer for YUSA where she trains courses for new leaders, a trainer for VitalSmarts "Crucial Conversations" and each year serves as a mentor to a young professional through the YMCA. In her role as the Executive Director, she has enjoyed strengthening and building community between the Donelson Hermitage Family YMCA and local businesses since her move to Nashville in 2007. Seeing people from diverse backgrounds connect and build long lasting relationships is something she's grateful to support in her role at the YMCA. She is an alumni of L'Evate; A Leadership Community where she serves on the board and is the co-chair of the Programs Committee. She is also a member of the Donelson Hermitage Chamber.

### **Carolyn McClain, Hostess at The Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theatre**



Carolyn McClain is a longtime resident of Donelson whose involvement and impact on the Donelson Hermitage community has been immense. As a young stay at home Mom, she provided care for the children of the working mothers in the neighborhood, and in the process gave them educational experiences they still remember today. She was very involved with both the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. When the annual Christmas Parade was abandoned for a time, Carolyn assisted Helen Harper of Harper Donuts in re-establishing it ... admitting it was so her Baton Twirlers could be seen! She continued to support the parade providing celebrity participation and judges. Carolyn, along with a handful of concerned parents was one of the founders of Donelson Christian School, which later became Donelson Christian Academy. They even successfully raised funds by renting the new Grand Ole Opry house and hiring Boots Randolph for a concert. In her current position as Hostess at the Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theatre, she is lovingly known at the Queen of Music Valley making sure everyone who visits Nashville feels welcome.

### **Lisa Cathcart, Executive Director of The Pregnancy Care Center**



Lisa has served as Executive Director for The Pregnancy Care Center for 12 years and has 16 years' experience in non-profit leadership. Lisa has over 22 years' experience in Christian ministry including youth ministry, women's ministry, domestic and foreign missions and spent 3.5 years as a foreign missionary in Scotland alongside her husband Curtis. She holds a degree in Psychology and Biblical Studies from Lipscomb University. Lisa is a graduate of L'Evate class of 2018 and has been an active member of the Donelson-Hermitage chamber for many years. Lisa currently serves as Chair for the Women in Business committee and as a board member for the Chamber. In addition, Lisa serves on the community advisory council for the Hermitage branch of Wilson Bank and Trust. Lisa is passionate about empowering women and families to thrive whether through her engagement in the community and involvement with Women in Business, or through the services provided by the ministry she leads at the Pregnancy Care Center. Lisa values collaboration and enjoys connecting individuals and agencies across different segments of the community to work together for greater impact.



## Champion of Women

Recognizes a business or organization who has demonstrated outstanding efforts to empower women through its policies, programs, culture, diversity and inclusion. These efforts have supported women's economic empowerment and achievements in the business world as well as the local business community.

### Ryman Hospitality Properties

Ryman Hospitality Properties has long been committed to cultivating a people-first employee culture that celebrates diversity. The Company believes that inclusion means more than just a "seat at the table" and has taken an active role in mentoring and developing women so they are ready to take on leadership roles within the company. They believe that caring for the people who work in their businesses and communities leads to a more positive experience for their guests and gives them a competitive advantage in the industries in which they operate. At the end of 2020, 47% percent of Ryman Hospitality Properties employees in leadership roles were women. Through their "Spotlight" program, Diversity and Inclusion Council and Diversity Champions group, the Company is committed to identifying and engaging with high-potential individuals who are ready to grow their professional careers here at the company and also within the community. They know there's an opportunity to do more and remain committed to continuously improving their programs to better support women at all stages of their careers.

### The Law Office of Jennifer McCoy

As an attorney and business owner, Jennifer McCoy exemplifies what is possible for ambitious women. Her law practice, The Law Office of Jennifer McCoy, PC, is a manifestation of these possibilities, as it has achieved an impressive level of success, shattering the glass ceiling of a male-dominated field. Employing almost an entire female staff, Ms. McCoy and her office work diligently to ensure exceptional customer service to each of their clients by thoroughly communicating and training her staff on their client's unique needs, business goals and expectations. Offering legal representation in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and Alabama to those who are requiring collection and eviction services, The Law Office of Jennifer McCoy delivers the highest level of success while maintaining respect and consideration for their clients' debtors. Through her practice and charitable works, Ms. McCoy demonstrates integrity and leadership, and champions other women, both in her field as well as in her community, to strive for greatness.

### Wilson Bank & Trust

Wilson Bank & Trust has always valued the contributions of the incredible women who help to keep their business running each day. More than 60% of the bank's workforce is female and more than 30% of senior management positions are held by women. Within the organization, they have a well-established mentor program where women in senior management positions advise the next generation of leaders on how to navigate their careers within the finance industry. Through their employee-led "We believe together" charitable contribution campaign, the offices have raised funds for various female-focused nonprofits like, the Emmanuel House in Smithville, Tennessee, a transitional living facility and temporary shelter where homeless women and children can find temporary housing, spiritual mentorship, transportation, life skill training, education and access to recover and social services. Other organizations in the community that Wilson Bank supports include the Pregnancy Care Center in Hermitage. Their communities are a critical part of their mission and they value the continued relationships with those organizations and countless others.





## Lifetime Legacy

Recognizes a woman who has demonstrated superior leadership over several years and who has a significant track record of long-term achievements and accomplishments in business, industry and/or enterprise.

### **Dorothy Ewin, Retired Educator from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**



Mrs. Ewin is a retired educator from the Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County School System with 35 years of service. She has a Bachelor of Arts, a Master's degree and an additional 45-degree hours from Tennessee State University with a Certification in Elementary Education and a minor in Special Education. She has extended studies from Fisk University and Vanderbilt Peabody College for participation in a completion of the Metro Institute for Aspiring Administrators. She was awarded the Metropolitan Nashville – Davidson County "Teacher of the Year" in 1997 and served as the Treasurer for the Dodson Elementary P.T.O. and member of the Dupont Elementary School Accreditation and Advisory Board. Mrs. Ewin is a member of MNEA, TEA, and NEA and remains active in the Donelson-Hermitage community through her participation in various organizations such as L'Evate; A Leadership Community and the Donelson Hermitage Chamber. Of her numerous accolades from the Donelson Hermitage Chamber, she has received the "Ambassador of the Year" award for 4 straight years after which she was inducted into the Ambassador Hall of Fame. She has been inducted as an Honorary member of the State of Tennessee's House of Representatives twice; in 1997 by the Honorable Ben West Jr. and 2006 by the Honorable Mike Turner. Mrs. Ewin has been a poll worker with the Davidson County Election Commission from 1997 to present and serves as a member of the Leadership Board of the Evans Hill Missionary Baptist Church.

### **Laura Carrillo, Metro Nashville Parks Liaison & Events Coordinator for Two Rivers Mansion**

Laura Carrillo's career with the Metro Nashville Davidson County Parks Department started in 1991; reaching 30 years of employment this past March. Growing up in Donelson, her family has deep ties to the area as well as the Two Rivers Mansion she currently oversees. In 2010, she had a chance meeting with then Councilmember Phil Claiborne where they began the plan to ask Metro Nashville for funding to restore the exterior of Two Rivers Mansion. From there, the Friends of Two Rivers Mansion 501c(3) nonprofit was formed with a mission to raise community awareness and to raise funds to preserve this piece of local history. A goal for Laura was to provide more family friendly events to the Two Rivers Mansion at no cost to the community; one of which was asking to be the new host for the HipDonelson Farmer's Market. Other nonprofit involvement also includes Stones River Woman's Club and the Parthenon's Conversancy. Laura has worked to secure funding and complete numerous restoration projects for the Two Rivers Mansion making it a historical hidden gem for Donelson.

### **Pamela Gentry Salas, Realtor with Benchmark Realty, LLC**

Pamela Gentry Salas was born in Nashville and raised in Donelson. She has been a realtor in Middle Tennessee for 33 years. From finding her clients their dream home or listing and selling their current residence to managing a real estate office and mentoring other realtors, Pamela loves the real estate profession as much as her hometown. She has received the Lifetime Gold Award of Excellence from the Greater Nashville Association of Realtors. She also loves to problem solve and give back by volunteering her time. She has served on the Grievance Committee and Professional Standards Committee for the Greater Nashville Association of Realtors, has been a past advisory committee member with Volunteers of America, and volunteered at Room At The Inn and through local food and clothing drives in Middle Tennessee. She is an alumni of L'Evate; A Leadership Community. One of her proudest achievements is being a mother and grandmother.





## Woman to Watch

Recognizes an up and coming business woman under 40 who has demonstrated success and vision, made noteworthy contributions and is on her way to making a meaningful imprint on the future of her organization and the local business community.



### **Allyson Reis, Catering Manager for MISSION BBQ**

Allyson Reis was first introduced to the Donelson Hermitage Chamber of Commerce when she was active in the Donelson community as a Patrol Officer (Officer Ally) with the Metro Nashville Police Department. She attended Women in Business for months before beginning her engagement in the Chamber. She created the first ever Donelson Day in 2019 where about 40 local businesses were able to showcase and network with other businesses and the community in the area. Ally loves to support all things local in the Donelson-Hermitage area including shopping and eating! In March 2020, she resigned from the Police Department and is now the Catering Manager for MISSION BBQ handling all of their weddings, corporate events, and everyday catering needs. She has been a Board Member of the Donelson Hermitage Chamber since 2019 and serves as the Co-Chair for the DH Chamber Events Committee. She loves to network and volunteer any chance she gets.



### **Emily Dorsey, Coach & Co-Owner of Vollis Beach**

Emily Bean is a beach volleyball coach and co-owner of Vollis Beach in Hermitage, TN. In 2017, Emily, alongside her partner Jay Dorsey, built a beach volleyball facility where she has been training, coaching, and hosting regional tournaments for players of all ages ever since. In the winter months, Emily also directs and coaches for Vollis' indoor volleyball team which competes throughout the Southeast. Emily plans to continue in her current role at Vollis as it expands throughout the Southeast and grow the sponsorship of their amateur adult athletes. Her passion is creating positive experiences around the game of volleyball for players both off and on the court by generating new opportunities for individuals young and old to train and play. Emily started playing volleyball at a young age in Indianapolis, Indiana. She played through high school and received a Division I scholarship to Kennesaw University in Georgia. Now, at 29 years old, she continues to play and nurture her own love of the sport. She's also a mom to two beautiful children Sol (3) and Lea (2) who are budding volleyball stars.



### **Maria Mauthe, Partner at HJL Properties**

Maria is a partner in HJL Properties. She has been instrumental in bringing new businesses to Donelson in recent years, including Chase Bank, Nectar Urban Cantina, Sunflower Bakehouse, Tennfold Brewery, and Donelson Hot Yoga, just to name a few. She spearheaded the business group that worked with Metro Planning and Councilman Syracuse to update the Donelson UDO, with the intention of building up the community while still maintaining its unique character. Maria also serves as a Board Member and Chair of Economic Development for the Donelson Hermitage Chamber of Commerce. Active in the community, Maria is a co-founder of HipEats, which is a program that helps local families experiencing homelessness or food insecurity to receive food boxes and meals during the summer and extended school breaks. She also started the Urban Garden at Grace Church of the Nazarene, which provides fresh produce for those that need a hand up. In her spare time, Maria enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, playing the flute, and reading.



## Woman-Owned Workplace

A woman-owned business that has demonstrated leadership, excellence, innovation, growth, strength, and has given back to the community.

### **Piccolo Marketing / Owner Anna-Vija McClain**



As the CEO of Piccolo Marketing, Anna-Vija McClain casts the vision of growth for her team while focusing on their leadership development, their impact on the community, and their clients. Anna-Vija started the company on her own and as her team grew, she shifted her focus to teaching. She worked with her growing team to create robust training programs for every department in the business and led them to make informed decisions as if they owned the company. She instituted a profit-sharing program, benefits, and bonus structures so they get the direct benefit of their hard work. Anna-Vija is passionate about helping small business owners create scalable businesses with amazing company culture. She is dedicated to helping the small business community through her coaching services and virtual program, Marketing Mentor. She is a regular contributor to Forbes and active in the Nashville community through numerous charities, Boards, and volunteer efforts. She is the youngest mentor at SCORE Nashville, a non-profit offering volunteer coaching to entrepreneurs, and a two time Finalist for the Nashville Emerging Leader Award. She has helped hundreds of business owners grow and is excited to launch her next endeavor, placing students with value-driven Internships through Maistro Mentor.

### **Prange Apparel / Owner Megan Prange**



Megan Prange created Prange Apparel from the ground up, and what started as a one women team has grown to over 15 employees. With a background in fashion, Megan has had to learn everything about running a business along the way by self educating herself as her company grew. Each growth opportunity brought new hurdles that Megan conquered by working harder and learning new skills in both manufacturing and business. The best part of owning the business is that Megan gets to help other women designers achieve their goals by providing them with small batch manufacturing so they can grow their own businesses. Over 80% of Megan's clients are other women business owners and it is amazing to work in an industry that is able to support so many other female entrepreneurs. This year, Megan is excited to be working on opening another location for the business that will offer product development services to help even more starting designers get their ideas off the ground and businesses up and running.

### **Varallo Public Relations / Owner Deborah Varrallo**



Deborah Varallo founded Varallo Public Relations, a full-service marketing, social media, public relations and crisis management firm in 1991. Because of the firm's solidity, they are able to provide free support to a number of nonprofit organizations. Depending on the need, the firm may provide marketing, consulting and leadership support. Presently Varallo Public Relations provides almost one-third of their services to nonprofits. VPR presently assist a number of nonprofit and faith-based organizations such as: Leadership Middle Tennessee, Leadership Nashville, Leadership Music, Rotary Club of Nashville, The International Women's Forum, Center for Nonprofit Management, Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee, Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee, Nashville State Community College Foundation, Catholic Business League, St. Stephen Catholic Community, plus more. The past list of nonprofits she and the firm have supported are at least three times those that are listed. Deborah believes in giving back to the community. She spends almost each weekend assisting on a community project. She says she has had so many leadership roles, that it's nice 'just to show up and volunteer where assistance is needed'.