

2011's Women Who Move the Valley

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen, Shala Marks, Elizabeth O'Malley, Claire Perkins and Christine Whitton/Photographed by Cassandra Tomei

One is the voice of the Valley, filling the local airwaves for more than 20 years. Another is an educator who is helping to transform college-level education with the introduction of Arizona State University's Downtown Phoenix Campus. Third is an award-winning designer who is encouraging Valley dwellers to ease stress on themselves and Mother Earth by changing the way they look at homes. Seven other inspiring women round out 2011's Women Who Move the Valley—all of whom are at the top of their respective fields and making the Valley a better place to be, both in and out of the office.



Deborah Bateman

Executive Vice President of Specialty Banking and Marketing for National Bank of Arizona

A second-generation Valley native, Deborah Bateman began her 40-year banking career as a teller trainee at Valley National Bank. Now at the helm of National Bank of Arizona in Phoenix, Bateman says it was being a teller that influenced her to stay within the banking field. "I can't say that was what I focused on being but, once I got into the industry, I recognized my ability to serve others and help our community," says the University of Washington in Seattle graduate.

Bateman notes that working in banking requires more than just taking deposits and cashing checks. "You're put in a position of influence where you can support your community and help others to be financially successful," she says. "That absolutely held me to this industry."

Today, Bateman develops, implements and monitors the sales and service marketing strategies while also dedicating time to serving on the bank's board. "My life is completely intertwined," Bateman says. "My involvement—community, work and family—is core to who I am and that translates into me being that in every solitary environment that I am in."

Looking back, Bateman considers the women before her in banking as exemplary role models, including Barbara Ralston, now the executive director for Fresh Start Women's Foundation, a Valley nonprofit dedicated to helping women help themselves. "Barbara Ralston not only broke the glass ceiling for many women in Arizona banking, but she was a sponsor and mentor of women and brought them with her," she says. It is that giving spirit that encourages Bateman to volunteer her time outside the office and sit on the board of three Valley nonprofits: Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Homeward Bound and Arizona Foundation for Women. While she's passionate about volunteerism, Bateman very much cherishes those quiet moments shared with her husband, Tim, and daughter, Tara, at home.—C.W.

Kari Yatkowski

Founder and CEO of Haven Charitable Foundation

A former product manager for Insight Enterprises in Tempe, Kari Yatkowski left the corporate hustle in 1995 to start a family. She soon found herself devoting her spare time to volunteering for compelling causes. "I started to bear witness to what organizations were doing and got more and more deeply involved," says the South Dakota native. "It was not a conscious thing. I just started out volunteering like a lot of young moms do and...I caught the charity bug." In 2003, Yatkowski founded Haven Charitable Foundation, a Valley nonprofit providing resources of time and money to help agencies make lasting changes for families in need.

While her life may have been more regimented as a corporate go-getter, Yatkowski always felt a pull to do more—more for others. With the support of her family, she is able to do just that. She credits her loving husband, Paul, whom she has been married to for eight years, and her three boys, Griffin, 14, and twins Tate and Tyler, 6, for their unconditional love and tremendous support. "My kids understand what I am doing, and I think part of the lesson is to see that I am out helping other people," Yatkowski says. "Sometimes I have to be very committed and focused on what I am doing outside of the home, and then there are the times that I really need to focus on my kids. I am never not there for the most important moments."

In addition to her work with Haven Charitable Foundation, Yatkowski is also the co-chair for the MD Anderson Cancer Center's capital campaign, an 18-month commitment, and chairwomen on the Homeward Bound board. She also founded a consulting company called Activate Now Strategies. "As I was talking to corporate donors about giving, I was recognizing that the smaller companies didn't necessarily have a corporate-giving staff or personnel like a big company would and lacked clear strategies," says the Arizona State University graduate. "[They] were hungry to give but didn't know how. So I started [consulting] for people I knew and, before I knew it, there was an avalanche of people in need." And even though she admits life is a balancing act driven by appointments, Yatkowski fills "blank boxes" on her calendar with time outdoors with her family.—C.W.

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Susan Levine

Executive Director of Hospice of the Valley

Born in the Midwest, Susan Levine moved to Pennsylvania as a teen and spent most of her adult years on the East Coast. Even though her roots are far from Arizona, it only took one visit to get her hooked—and she's lived here on and off ever since. "I was working in retail in Pittsburgh in the management training program at Gimbels department store," she says. "And [I found out] that the first Saks, which was owned by Gimbels, was going to open on 24 Street and Camelback. So I came out to visit my grandparents and applied and got the job the first day to be the sportswear manager."

Levine, who briefly attended Chatham University, later returned to Philadelphia to enroll in Temple University and pursue a teaching degree. Her role as a teacher soon took her from the classroom to the hospital where she formulated a training program for nonclinical managers. While working in Abington Memorial Hospital, Levine quickly fell in love with the health care industry. After relocating back to Arizona and joining St. Luke's Hospital, Levine enrolled at Scottsdale Community College and earned a nursing degree.

After graduating, Levine joined Hospice of the Valley and has been with the company ever since. "I wanted to do something clinical," says the mother of three, stepmother of three and grandmother of 14. "I always stuck my nose into the clinical [side of] things and checked in on patients even though it was not my job. I was drawn to the intimacy and the importance of excellent health care, taking care of people when they are vulnerable, and doing it beautifully. Treating patients in the way they should be treated, to me, was quite a privilege."

At 70, Levine has no desire to slow down. Married to William for eight years, she enjoys their summer weekend getaways to Coronado, Calif., their intimate dinner-and-movie dates, and the time she gets to be with her family. "[I know] I can't work for Hospice of the Valley forever. I just hope to work until the time is right to retire and hope I have the wisdom to know when that is. After that, I hope to enjoy a long, old age and always [find a way to] make a contribution and give back."—C.W.

Debra Friedman

Vice President and Dean of College of Public Programs at Arizona State University's Downtown Phoenix Campus

As a leader at Arizona State University's Downtown Phoenix Campus, Debra Friedman works to not only enhance her campus, but the entire Phoenix community. In 2005, Friedman moved to the Valley, living in the state previously while teaching at the University of Arizona, to take part in establishing the Downtown Phoenix Campus. She was drawn to the values of ASU's president, Michael Crow, and the devotion the city demonstrated to its post-secondary education system by passing a \$223 million bond to construct the new campus. "That's the only example in the world of a city investing at that level in its state university," Friedman says. "I think Phoenix is an absolutely phenomenal and fascinating city."

The College of Public Programs, of which she is the dean, was one of the first two colleges to move to Downtown Phoenix. Friedman believes the campus has the opportunity to change the relationship of the urban communities that surround it and ASU as a whole. "We have the capacity to really make a difference in people's lives," Friedman says.

Because of her involvement with and belief in the campus, Friedman was named vice president of the Downtown Phoenix Campus in 2008, acting as an academic advocate. That same year, the campus was awarded the C. Peter Magrath University Community Engagement Award, one of her greatest accomplishments. "It's been one wonderful, unexpected opportunity after another," Friedman says. In addition to her commitment to the college, Friedman holds board memberships on the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Downtown Phoenix Partnership and the Heard Museum. She also enjoys cooking, hiking, traveling and being with her daughter, Eliana.

Looking up to the likes of Luz Sarmina of Valle del Sol, Letitia Chambers of the Heard Museum (a fellow Woman Who Moves the Valley) and Kit Danley of Neighborhood Ministries, Friedman finds that her strongest motivation is the fact that higher education transforms lives. Her love of helping others is evident in her new initiative, Spirit of Service Scholars, which brings together ASU students who want to devote themselves to public service. "I get to spend most of my time working with people who care more about others than they do about themselves," Friedman says. "That's a fabulous way to spend a life."—S.M.

Where are they now? "I've seen Local First Arizona grow by an average of 55 new business members per month this year, have moved the small staff of three into an office, and have successfully launched a new campaign called Shift Arizona, which encourages citizens to shift 10 percent of their spending from national to locally owned establishments. I have also worked on changing procurement policies in several Valley cities and played a role in upgrading the city of Phoenix's adaptive reuse process. I joined the team at the Discovery Triangle and continue to work on revitalizing our urban centers."—Kimber Lanning, 2009 honoree

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Tracy Dempsey

Pastry chef at Crudo and The House at Secret Garden and founder of Tracy Dempsey Originals

Tracy Dempsey's girlhood memories have more to do with dough than dolls. "My first memory is taking leftover crepe batter that my mom had made and making crepes," says the celebrated pastry chef. Instead of diving directly into the baking world as an adult, Dempsey was first an instructor at Arizona State University, teaching English as a second language. "I found that my weekends were spent dreaming up things to make," Dempsey says. "I was so into entertaining and planning big menus that grading papers was really getting in the way." So while in her 30's, Dempsey enrolled in the culinary program at Scottsdale Community College, with her big break happening in 1999 when she was hired as a baker at Marriott Mountain Shadows Resort.

Over the next few years, Dempsey morphed into the Valley's first lady of pastry thanks to her inventive work (i.e., the chef's ever-popular bacon brittle) at Lon's at The Hermosa Inn, Restaurant Hapa and Cowboy Ciao. Today, the 16-year Valley resident dishes up incredible after-dinner eats—using local, organic ingredients, when possible—at Old Town's Crudo, the new House at Secret Garden and via her own line of baked bliss, Tracy Dempsey Originals.

When her whisk isn't in hand, Dempsey enjoys spending time with her husband of nearly 19 years, Chuck, as well as reading and gardening. She's also passionate about

supporting local animal and arts organizations and nonprofits that aid women and children. For example, partial proceeds from her line's Original Bacon Pecan Brittle benefit Cat Nip and Tuck, a group that provides spay and neuter services. Most recently, Dempsey paired with her fellow pastry pro, Kelly Garcia of Butter & Me, for the Cupcake Love-In. The event, which took place in October, not only brought the joy of cupcakes to the masses but awareness and funds to the Valley's Safe Haven for Animals and Singleton Moms.

Though one would think that sampling sweets would be the highlight of her day, Dempsey—who's been known to make a marshmallow out of everything from beets to rosebuds—says being a pastry chef is all about broadening people's horizons. "I love introducing people to something new, to something different—and it's in dessert form," she says. "How can that be bad?" —*M.L.*

Dr. Letitia Chambers

President and CEO of Heard Museum

With national and international reputations, the Valley's Heard Museum added yet another notch to its belt with the appointment of Dr. Letitia Chambers last January. Not only is Chambers the only female director since its founder Maie Bartlett Heard, but she is the first person of American Indian heritage to fill this position in the museum's history. "My love of art and my interest and involvement over many years in American Indian issues and in the art of American Indians made this the perfect job for me," Chambers says.

Though she grew up in Oklahoma, Chambers visited the Heard Museum as a child. She began collecting American Indian pottery, contemporary paintings and

sculptures. After earning her Ph.D., Chambers headed to Washington D.C. where she landed roles as a senior policy analyst on the senate budget committee, a staff director of the United States Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources and a lead role as the ambassador to the United Nations General Assembly, to name a few of her previous careers. Chambers lent a hand in writing major legislation, including legislation that generated funding for specific programs directed toward tribes.

One of Chambers' most significant accomplishments was in the 1970's when she became the first woman to head a major standing committee for the U.S. "Seeing how many more opportunities there are for women now, I feel that being a part of the generation that was able to open doors for women...was probably the thing that I did that was most important," Chambers says. "I've always been motivated by trying to change things for the better."

Further into her career, Chambers founded a policy consulting firm, Chambers Associates, Inc., which she later sold to a large globally based firm. She then moved to New Mexico—where her daughter, Melissa, currently resides—to head up the system of higher education for the state before settling in the Valley in 2010.

Although Chambers devotes most of her weekly time to her challenging position, she enjoys gardening and spending the weekends with her husband, Peter Smith. As a new addition to the Valley, Chambers hopes to educate people about its original inhabitants, the importance of people coming together and the value of being respectful of each other and of the land on which they live. —*S.M.*

Where are they now? "My Banner Health Foundation team and I have been laying the groundwork for a number of new initiatives that will greatly improve health care in this community. One of the most rewarding projects underway is a campaign for the new Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center opening this fall on the Banner Gateway campus. I have the pleasure of working with community volunteers who aspire to make a difference through this noble endeavor. It doesn't get much better than that." —*Andy Kramer, 2010 honoree*

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Elise Eberwein

Executive Vice President, People, Communications and Public Affairs for US Airways

In her 20's, Elise Eberwein was uncertain about her future but knew she was young enough to do anything and go anywhere—so she did. Enrolled at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo., Eberwein was working part-time when she heard about a job opening for a flight attendant position with area-based Trans World Atlantic Airlines (TWA). For Eberwein, it was the perfect way to see the world while also earning a living.

Six months into her role as a flight attendant, Eberwein realized her love for the industry and her desire to learn more about it—so she went back to school. "I remember wondering why I was in school when my flying partners were sitting poolside on a layover having fun and I was in the [hotel] room working on a research paper," Eberwein says. Her hard work paid off as she earned a degree in mass communications and went on to work another 11 years for TWA.

Over time, she utilized her degree by writing for the company's internal and external publications. In the 90's, Eberwein was hands-on with assisting in the placement of TWA's letters on one of the first namesake dome sponsorships. "That's when the L.A. Rams moved to St. Louis, and the city built a new stadium and TWA got the naming rights," Eberwein says. "After that, I moved back into corporate communications and returned to my first love, which was communications for the airlines."

Over the next few years, Eberwein moved from state to state for her job before transferring to Phoenix in 2003 as vice president of corporate communications for America West. While America West has since merged with US Airways as of 2005, Eberwein still oversees all communicative efforts. Her high-powered role ensures that travelers are safe and constantly informed.

Though her morning routine is just as demanding as her career (she admits to waking up at 4:30 a.m. to track airline trends on the East Coast, take a 5:30 a.m. yoga class and arrive at work by 8:30 a.m.), she says she's regimented in what she does after work, too: spending quality time with her new husband, Russ Webber.—C.W.

Cathy Hayes

Owner of Hayes Architecture/Interiors

Growing up in a Chicago neighborhood filled with homes designed by the likes of Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, Cathy Hayes knew her calling from the time she was a young girl. As one of eight children, Hayes was often enlisted to work on her father's home-improvement construction crew. "My father was an engineer, and he always wanted to be an architect so he was constantly remodeling our house," Hayes says. Today, as owner of Hayes Architecture/Interiors, Hayes beautifies the Valley with her stellar eye for design.

After graduating from high school, Hayes studied at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and then its affiliate architecture program in Paris. Her travels didn't stop there; Hayes says that her time in nooks and crannies all over the world have kept her ideas fresh. "I've sat in cafes all over Europe, all over Asia, all over India and Africa. You get to see how people live and work and you think, 'I can bring that sort of feeling and idea and function to people's homes and their restaurants.'"

After time with architect George Christensen, Hayes built up a reputation that enabled her to start her own studio in 1993. Today, Hayes has a crew of six people with notable projects like Modern Steak and La Grande Orange under their construction belts, along with other residential, commercial and hospitality projects. Hayes is working on revamping the way Valley residents live by encouraging downsizing and creating the ability to live and play in low-maintenance homes that will relieve day-to-day stress. Such homes, she says, would also be better for the environment due to their use of sustainable materials and methods. "Nature... reconnects us to our senses and helps us to slow down and be present and grateful for each moment of time," Hayes says.

To prove small homes can be functional, Hayes and her team are currently working on an eight-home project in which Hayes will utilize solar power and outdoor living. "We, as architects, can lead what's going to happen in our society as we downsize. We can downsize to really great little houses with great outdoor spaces and things that people always want anyway."

Outside of work, Hayes enjoys spending time in her 7,000-sq.-ft. garden as well as giving back to the community at St. Vincent de Paul and the Franciscan Renewal Center. —E.O.

Where are they now? "I've been busy and blessed in my career and personal life. My medical concierge practice has continued to grow and be very successful. And my new book, 'The White House Doctor,' was released in June 2010 to rave reviews. More books are being planned for publication in the years ahead. I also re-married happily in June of this year. My life has moved forward professionally and personally. I hope I can inspire other women that life is full of wonderful opportunities."

—Dr. Connie Mariano, 2008 honoree

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Kathryn Pidgeon

Executive Director of Phoenix Suns Charities

As if practicing adoption law at her self-titled firm doesn't keep her busy enough, Kathryn Pidgeon also serves as the executive director for Phoenix Suns Charities. "My problem is I have two fantastic jobs, and I'm one person," she says. Pidgeon was hired as the executive director for the Suns Charities in August 2009 after serving on the board for two years. "Working for the Suns complements me as an attorney because it allows me to use those skills but in different ways," she says. "I think it's an awesome distraction from the day-to-day stress of being an attorney."

Pidgeon, a Queens, N.Y., native, moved to Arizona the day after she and her husband, Steven, graduated from the University of Miami School of Law. At the time, they "didn't have a car, didn't have a place to live, a bank account and had no friends," Pidgeon says. Twenty-nine years later, Pidgeon is the proud mother to her three sons (Tyler, 25; Greg, 21; and Austin, 20), is partner with the Phoenix Suns, and has a home in Paradise Valley.

As a hands-on mom, Pidgeon constantly worked to find a balance between her career and family when her boys were younger. "I had an office in my home and did a lot of things that weren't traditional so I could always be there when the kids got home," Pidgeon says. "I gave up the fancy law office because it just didn't matter to me. What mattered was to be there for them." With her oldest son at Tufts Medical School, her middle son at Boston College and her youngest son at Santa Clara University, Pidgeon now makes her other Suns a huge priority. She is at every game, proudly dressed in orange.

Apparent by her roles with the Suns Charities and her law practice, Pidgeon is passionate about making a difference in the lives of children. In her first year as director of the Suns Charities, the organization gave a record of more than \$1.2 million to 157 charities that aid families and children. Her work with youngsters doesn't stop there; Pidgeon also is actively involved with notMYkid, Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation and the Family to Family Foundation. —E.O.

Beth McDonald

Host of "Beth and Friends" on 99.9 KEZ

"It's my job to know a little about a lot of things," says radio host Beth McDonald. With more than 30 years of experience, a family of six, a band of loyal listeners and a passion to inspire and influence the world, it's safe to say she knows a lot about a lot of things.

While McDonald began school at Indiana University with the hope of one day writing for a magazine, a career in broadcast journalism seemed to be ingrained early on. "When I was growing up, I'd stand there with a pencil and paper and interview [my grandparents] at the front door," she says. A broadcast journalism class rekindled her interest and, upon graduation, McDonald found herself in Arizona with a position at KTAR. She made the move to KEZ in 1984.

From the morning she co-hosted her first "Beth and Bill" radio show in 1990, McDonald has been paving the way for women in the industry. "When I took the job, it

was really unheard of for a woman to be the lead host of a morning show," she says. Since then, the Indiana native has continued to make an impact on the Valley with her voice.

Since the start of her hosting gig, McDonald says women especially have been extraordinarily supportive of her show and career. To recognize those who make a difference in the local community, McDonald launched the Beth McDonald Woman of the Year award in 2003. The program annually honors 12 women who fly under the radar, helping the Valley in a quieter way, with one Woman of the Year chosen each March.

McDonald has always managed to balance her community involvement, career and family, though she admits it wasn't easy when her kids were little (her daughter, Shannon, and son, Brennan, are college grads; her daughter, Bridget, and stepdaughter, Becca, are still at their respective universities). It was her late co-host, Bill Austin, who finally told her, "Beth, it's OK to say 'no' to some people." She's since found the best way to make an impact is through her mic, and she does so by voicing her opinion on issues like civil rights for gays and teen bullying. "I think it's important, when something in society seems to be inherently wrong, to speak out about it." —C.P.

Where are they now? "I am excited to still be connected with Arizona Foothills as one of the nominated 'Most Fashionable Woman' and 'Ms. Popularity' in the Best of [Our Valley 2011]. Arizona Foothills is [sponsoring me] as a celebrity dancer in the upcoming National Kidney Foundation's Dancing With the Stars charity event on Feb. 25. My new national spa franchise flagship concept launched at FATE salon in Scottsdale. I am regularly appearing on Channel 3 sharing Survival of the Skinniest vegan recipes and Survival of the Prettiest beauty tips."

—Mary Beth York, 2008 honoree