

No One Does It Better: 10 Unique Phoenicians

Written by Melissa Larsen

From the luxury fields of fashion, food, design and more, these 10 local VIPs are at the top of their respective fields. So, how did they get to where they are today?

Elycia Marie

Stylist and founder of Arcadia Vintage

“Collecting vintage clothing and accessories was a hobby of mine for many years. I call it treasure hunting. I launched Arcadia Vintage online in 2011.



To my surprise, the shop sold out within months. Most of my buyers are overseas, looking for quality American-made items from the 60's, 70's and 80's. In London or Sydney, a girl is wearing a winter coat from Arcadia Vintage—I love it! I set up a studio in Phoenix and downtown Los Angeles where I could focus on styling and marketing, in addition to selling. Taking the leap from hobby to business has been an absolute blessing.”

Brandi Nuttall

President of Dolce & Spa

“The past seven years seem to have been the hardest to make it through. Unknowing of the recession coming and without idea of how rough or long it would be, 2007 hit Dolce Salon & Spa hard. In the same year, I lost my sister to cancer.

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Though it seemed like an impossible journey, we did it. The fact that we've overcome these hardships is one of the highest points in our 11 years of business and a true accomplishment that cannot be underestimated. It took a phenomenal amount of passion, creativity and hard decision-making for all of us to reach this point.”

Amen Iseghohi

Founder of Amenzone Fitness

“When I reflect on Amenzone and where I am today, there is one thought that stands out: I would not have made it if I had simply given up.



When you are pushing yourself through your workout and that thought pops into your mind that you cannot go any further, you have to ignore it. You have to keep your eye on the prize. Fifty percent of the battle is just showing up,

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the other half is that drive to go the distance. It is this mental toughness, and physical strength, that Amenzone members gain and is a lesson they take with them—for life.”

Christopher Gross

Executive chef of Christopher's & Crush Lounge

“Sometimes in life you make opportunities for yourself and a career path opens. When I was a kid, I wanted to race motocross more than anything, but you need money for that.



I got my first job in a kitchen at 13 just so I could buy my first bike. One restaurant job led to another—and one bike led to another. With a lot of patience and time, I slowly moved my way up the ranks learning everyone’s jobs in the kitchen. All these years later, I’ve got Christopher’s & Crush Lounge, my 16th motorcycle and a passion for both.”

Berkley Vallone

Founder of Berkley. Interior & Lifestyle Design



“I’ve been fortunate to have so many sources of inspiration throughout my personal and professional life. Starting at an early age my parents exposed me to a vast array of style and design aesthetics, and entertained and

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supported my crazy ideas and aspirations including attending college in New York City. As a business woman, I'm inspired by my husband's never-ending encouragement, support and belief in my dreams. Finally, as a designer, I draw inspiration from the kindness of numerous mentors over the years, my amazing and trusting clients, and my precious son who inspires me every day in more ways than I can count."

Rio Telischuk

Model with FORD/Robert Black Agency



"Modeling has taught me so much about myself, and I have grown tremendously from it. I was first signed when I was 13 and, after seven years, I still love it. I have met so many amazing people and had countless opportunities. It has also taught me a lot about keeping healthy and learning to take care of my body, because, lord knows, I have the worst sweet tooth! It has honestly shown me a better side of life. For anyone wishing to start up this career, find out who you are and rock it; stay positive and stay hungry."

Letitia Frye

Auctiontainer



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"I have to admit I never exactly envisioned myself where I am today by definition of 'auctiontainer,' but I always knew in my heart I was here to make a difference and to entertain. I felt that even as a child. I learned that keeping my head down, my heart open, and trying to come from a place of genuine intent for the well-being of others is truly the magical pathway to joy in life. A tree bares fruit when it is ready, but the growth from seed to tree is where the magic and beauty lie."

Jeff Low

Artist/Interior Designer at Jeff Low Design



"Coming from a creative family I always add the element of surprise and the unexpected in all I undertake, included here are my artwork and interior design projects as well as my life. Truthfulness and balance are my life's cornerstones. These elements keep things fresh, fun and real. I design warmth into my work along with comfort. While so many seek inspiration in the works of others, I seek to be creative as well as innovative. My art is meant to give visual answers and awareness to our life's aims and challenges. I aspire to inspire others."

Bing Hu

Founder Manager of H & S International



"We are the expert in this country in truly affluent, luxury design. I have been practicing on my own for nearly 20 years. I was fortunate to start my practice in those luxury communities, like Desert Mountain and DC Ranch. I

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started with residential design. Dealing with those very affluent people to design their personal homes, that led us to move our practice into luxury mixed uses. I am always inspired by my client; all my clients are extremely successful in their field. I am driven by them to continue to elevate to the next level to help them create their luxury lifestyles.”

Werner Schumacher

Owner of Schumacher European, Ltd. Mercedes Benz



“In business, above all: keep your focus. Don’t allow doubt to become your adversary. Once you’ve done your research and made a decision, don’t deviate from that path. There will always be people putting doubt into your head. And self-doubt will sneak up on you. Stick to your business plan and give it some time to work. Don’t worry about what others are doing if you’ve developed a successful formula—stick to your core values and don’t try to be what you’re not. Keep motivated and, when you celebrate, do it quietly; enjoy it for a short while and then move on to the next challenge.”