

ADVANCING MARKETPLACE TRUST | SPRING/SUMMER 2018



SPARK

YOUR BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU SERVING WISCONSIN

EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN

SIX EXTRAORDINARY WISCONSIN BUSINESSES AND THE
EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN WHO OWN THEM

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Email: spark@wisconsin.bbb.org

BBB Serving Wisconsin

Main Office - Milwaukee

10019 W. Greenfield Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53214
(414) 847-6000 (main)
(800) 273-1002 (toll-free)

NE Regional Office - Appleton

1047 N. Lynndale Drive #1A
Appleton, WI 54914
(920) 734-4352

SPARK MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTORS

Content & Imagery

Julie Albrecht
Morgan Kielisch
Amy Kutka

Design & Layout

Leith Johnson

Guest Contributor

Dr. Daniel Sem, Dean of the Batterman School of Business at Concordia University Wisconsin, has over 20 years of experience in healthcare entrepreneurship and innovation, first in the biotechnology industry, then in academia. His passion is helping students and community entrepreneurs turn their dreams and innovative ideas into sustainable business models with lasting economic and social impact.

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Build Trust, Advertise Honestly, Tell the Truth, Be Transparent, Honor Promises, Be Responsive, Safeguard Privacy and Embody Integrity—these are the BBB Standards for Trust, and the foundation for the code of business practices that you, as a BBB Accredited Business, promise to abide by.



Lately, the press has been actively reporting on many issues regarding gender and mistreatment of women. The more light that is shed on these issues, the more everyone will come to realize that ethical behavior, especially in business, is always the right thing to do.

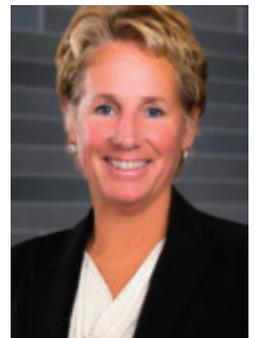
This spring issue of our *BBB Spark* magazine features some incredible women-owned, BBB Accredited Businesses in our state of Wisconsin. My hope is that these stories inspire you to support any women you may know to take the leap and start their own business. Wisconsin should be a leader in all business start-ups, especially by women.

All the best,

Jim Temmer

President/CEO
BBB Serving Wisconsin

As a business woman, especially in a historically male-dominated field, I know the challenges that women can face in the workplace. Building a culture based on the values of trust, ethics, integrity and honesty is the best place to start within any business. These are some of the core values we, as BBB Accredited Businesses, share.



In this issue of *Spark*, you will find that women in all types of businesses and from all types of backgrounds can usually relate to one thing—security. Women tend to put great stock into making sure both they and their families are safe and secure in a variety of ways. As a Certified Public Accountant, I help business owners to feel secure by offering ongoing consulting and planning strategies. If you create a strategy and stick to that plan, you will feel secure in your future, too.

I hope you will find enjoyment as well as inspiration from these truly impressive women-owned, BBB Accredited Businesses.

Yours in trust,

Barbara Ecklund, CPA

Principal-in-Charge
SVA Certified Public Accountants, S.C. Milwaukee
Board Chair, Better Business Bureau Serving Wisconsin

EXTRA- *Women* ordinary

**DISCOVER SIX EXTRAORDINARY
BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESSES
AND THE EXTRAORDINARY
WOMEN WHO OWN THEM.**

From overcoming obstacles that men generally don't have to face, to giving back and helping others, these Wisconsin business owners have proven time and time again that sometimes the best man for the job is a woman.





DYNAMIC DUO

FOR 22 YEARS,
ELLENBECKER INVESTMENT GROUP
HAS BEEN STRIVING TO PROVIDE THE
BEST SERVICE FOR THEIR CLIENTS,
EMPLOYEES AND THE COMMUNITY.



Karen Ellenbecker has a background in traditional brokerage. She worked for two major firms in Wisconsin, both requiring her to sell investments for commissions, making her job solely commission-based. Every new month meant starting at zero. Karen did very well, earning Broker of the Year in her second year of business.

But when she was offered a position as Vice President of the Personal Trust Department at a Milwaukee-based regional bank, she took it. It was a great opportunity that meant a steady paycheck and safety for her family.

Eventually, Wisconsin laws changed and Karen would have lost her broker's license if she stayed at the bank. She went back to the brokerage firm, but quickly found that she had a passion to start her own business.

Two years after going back to the brokerage firm she started her own company, Ellenbecker Investment Group. Based on her previous experience, she created a fee-based financial business that strives to provide the best service for their

clients, employees and the community.

Julie Ellenbecker-Lipsky began her career with her mother at the brokerage firm, and left with her on Christmas Eve in 1996. She is now the President and works directly with clients as a Wealth Advisor.

“When she decided to start Ellenbecker Investment Group I was right behind her!” Julie said. “I don’t see us as a second-generation business because we have been in this together, staying focused on the same dream.”

Karen started Ellenbecker Investment Group to bring high quality services to clients. She also wanted to encourage her employees to grow with the company and help change the perception of the industry.

Both Karen and Julie believe every client deserves high-quality, comprehensive financial planning. Ellenbecker Investment Group does not have minimum investment thresholds.



“I thought it was important for everyone to have the same opportunities as wealthy clients. We have never changed that since 1996,” Karen said.

Karen was a pioneer in the fee-based financial planning business. She taught her employees to be fee-based advisors and in the beginning she faced scrutiny from her competition.

“We want to serve our clients the best we can,” Karen said, “Our philosophy is if we can’t help somebody, we want to make sure they leave in a more financially prepared way.”

One thing Karen has heard a lot while growing her company is this: “You’re crazy”.

“I don’t know if I could count how many times people have told me I was crazy. Crazy for going into the brokerage business, crazy for leaving the brokerage business and going to the bank, and crazy for leaving the bank to go to the brokerage business. I was crazy for starting a fee-based company. I was

recently told I was crazy for donating gross revenue and not net revenue. They told me I was crazy for having the education center. I have this whole list of all the things that people told me I was crazy for,” Karen said. “I wasn’t crazy. I had a vision and I looked to the future and anticipated. All the times they told me I was crazy was because they were looking at the money side of it, and I was looking at something different.”

Money can be an emotional thing, according to Karen. People get anxious about it, especially nearing retirement age. People worry if they will have enough, as well as how to pass assets onto their children. They want to feel safe; they want to know how much they can spend and how they can enjoy their money.

“We empower everyone that comes to us. What we really want them to feel is safe,” Karen said.

The team at Ellenbecker Investment Group is trained to do things differently than most investment firms. They will facilitate legal and tax meetings with their clients, they will get to know the clients’ children and sometimes host family meetings. They come to know their clients’ dreams and their biggest fears, which helps them to be an advocate for their client.

“Most people start by looking at the investments first, we start by looking at what matters to them the most first. It really is a beautiful way of learning about that client,” Karen said.

Not only does the staff at Ellenbecker Investment Group strive to be an advocate for their clients, but they are also active in the community. They offer employees a paid Volunteer Day, where each employee can volunteer in the community however they want. They also have the opportunity to participate in charitable giving and EIG matches their charitable donations.



“We’re very committed to giving back,” Julie said, “We have a really generous spirit of giving here.”

This past January, Ellenbecker Investment Group started a new radio show, *EIG Community Connection*. Every other Saturday they feature a non-profit organization doing good in the community. The new radio show is in addition to *MoneySense*, which has been helping educate the public about financial decisions for 27 years. Both shows air on weekends on WISN AM1130. Past shows can be heard on: moneysenseradio.com.

They also made a decision this year to donate 1% of their gross revenue to charity. Karen has always tried to look at what could be done better or what the community. They also have several special interest groups, that meet each month in their Education Center located in Pewaukee.

Karen is backing away from some internal responsibilities, leaving them to her daughter, and focusing more on the needs of the community.

“It’s not always that we can give money, but we can make our Education Center available and highlight the community on the radio. Sometimes people don’t realize how great it is to give opportunities, which is also a form of giving back,” Karen said.

To Karen, a succession plan is important, and that plan is Julie. The mother-daughter pair are driving towards the same goal, and have been forever. “I’m very blessed to have a daughter that loves the company and has the same kind of value system that I do, and wants to grow the business for the reasons I started it,” Karen said.

“When you look at how a business is run, it takes different types of people to help you have that successful growth. I often refer to her (Karen) very lovingly

as the gas, and I’m the brake. If you drive and you only step on the gas you’ll implode very quickly. If you only step on the brake, you don’t grow. And together we’re in sync. We’ve learned how to drive the company forward, minimizing risk, but maximizing potential,” Julie said.

The industry has changed, it’s going more towards fee-based business. EIG has a head-start on the industry, and is creating a community built on trust.

Ellenbecker Investment Group has grown from three employees to 25. They have three locations, in Pewaukee, Whitefish Bay and Bonita Springs, Florida. They have received the Torch Award for Ethics three times. Maybe, just maybe, crazy is the wrong word for Karen and the EIG team.

“Listen to your intuition and follow your dream and don’t let other people dictate what you can and can’t do. Don’t let them define you,” Karen said. ■



“You have to be a good follower to be a good leader, and I follow well. A lot of chefs just want to cook and leave, they don’t want to clean. Everything takes teamwork, and a lot of people don’t want teamwork.”

— Lisa McKay
Lisa Kaye Catering



top chef

Lisa McKay, Owner and Executive Chef of Lisa Kaye Catering From Real Estate Agent, to Executive Assistant, to Award-Winning Chef.

“I would never have thought that I would be cooking for somebody,” said Lisa McKay, Owner and Executive Chef of Lisa Kaye Catering. “Never in my life would I have thought that.”

The off-site catering company had an almost comical start. Chef Lisa didn’t always like to cook. Her husband comes from a large family, and hosting card games would turn into a party of over 40 people. The sister-in-laws of the family would each take a holiday to host and do the cooking. Lisa found herself buying store-bought food and asking her sisters and mother to help make some of the dishes.

“I started to cook some things and buying chafers because I wanted to do something different than my sisters-in-law,” Lisa said.

Her first job was catering her niece’s wedding, which was about 200 people.

“I had to figure it out. I didn’t realize until that day that I needed a lot of other people to help out. But everything worked out perfectly, and then everyone started asking me to cater.”

After a few years of catering for family, friends and referrals, Lisa decided that if she wanted to keep doing this, she needed to go back to school. So she went to MATC in 2010 and received degrees in Culinary Arts and Culinary Management.

Being a woman chef has had its challenges. Even though Lisa went to school and runs her own business, she also received extra training at restaurants by shadowing other chefs. But a lot of the male chefs she encountered didn’t want women to have important roles in the kitchen. Most women are relegated to being garde manger chefs, who handle cold foods like salads. Still, Lisa didn’t let the slights of some chefs bother her. She also never let them know that she owned her own business.

“I didn’t want them to think that I knew everything, because I didn’t. I wanted to learn their way. I let them talk to me in layman’s terms,” she said. “If you come across as a know-it-

all, then they change towards you, and I just have that respect. I didn’t care that some of them were younger than me. They had many years of training, and I could learn from them. You can learn from anybody if you’re willing.”

Lisa’s hard work and willingness to learn paid off when she received the Student Chef of the Year Award from the American Culinary Federation (ACF), and, immediately after that, the Rising Star Award through the ACF. In 2015, Lisa was awarded Chef of the Year, and she was recently awarded the Steady Eddie Award, which is one of the most prestigious awards from ACF.

As the Director of the ACF Chef and Child Foundation, Milwaukee Chapter, Lisa now works with local schools in areas like Milwaukee, Pewaukee, Mequon and the South Side to promote healthy eating to help the fight against childhood obesity. She works on educating children and parents on buying and cooking healthier options within a reasonable budget.

“I love going to schools. A lot of kids don’t know what kiwi is, or blueberries or blackberries. Some kids don’t know what spinach is. I don’t underestimate anything,” she said.

Each year, Lisa also hosts children for a summer camp where they learn about cooking and trying new healthy foods. She and the campers go to the store together and pick up the fruits and vegetables that they have never heard of. Then, they look it up online to learn what it is, as well as its health benefits.

The future for Lisa Kaye Catering is going to be an exciting one. Last year, Lisa participated in Near West Side Partners, Inc.’s RevUp Milwaukee competition, and she won first place. Part of the prize was being able to connect with large local businesses like Aurora, Harley-Davidson Motor Company, and Potawatomi Hotel and Casino. As a result, her business has grown and many more companies are utilizing her services. To add icing to the cake, Lisa will soon be leasing a kitchen from Potawatomi, opening up new doors in the Near West Side area. ■



AUTHOR, AMBASSADOR, BUSINESS OWNER,

BADASS

Laura Gallagher advocates for women entrepreneurs every day—as the President of **The Creative Company**, a public relations and digital agency based in Madison, and as Wisconsin’s Ambassador for Women’s Entrepreneurship Day, a Global NGO. Laura is also the author of the book *#180in120 - How to Recharge Your Business in 120 Days*, as well as one of 75 women to be recognized as a Trailblazer by the State of Wisconsin, and a 2017 graduate of the Babson College Goldman Sach’s #10KSB program, a rigorous scholarship entrepreneurship program.

Laura started her business when she was 21 after some encouragement from her consumer behavior professor, Mark Deadman.

“You have to be careful if you give me an idea, because I will run with it. It’s 30 years later and I’m still running with it,” Laura said.

The Creative Company offers all of the services found in a traditional marketing department. They provide the strategic direction, branding, public relations, social media, web development, graphic design and e-commerce services needed for a company to thrive.

“Outsourcing marketing services works well in an unpredictable economy. The Creative Company is essentially the marketing company for companies who aren’t quite in the place where they would have that in house. Or maybe they don’t want it in house,” Laura said, “We’re accountable for results, coordinate strategies, maximizing loyalty and profitability for clients.”

The company of six to eight senior level marketing staff manages and leads 20 or more clients on an annual basis, which are more like partnerships. Laura stressed the importance of these partnerships for both her and the clients.

“I want to have security, and this is the way I provide that to my staff. Clients benefit from revenue gains, decreases in salaries, an outside perspective on their business, high level expertise in marketing strategy, implementation and design and typically, a decrease in overall marketing spend,” she said.

Laura went on to say that security and safety are important to women, and taking risks isn’t something that comes naturally to most women. Women can need more encouragement and coaching than men to take risks, and fear can be a woman’s biggest barrier.

“Do it scared. You have to step into that fear, because that’s how you make it somewhere else,” Laura said.

“We tend to be afraid to try. Women tend to have less confidence across different generations. We don’t lead the lives we are capable of leading,” Laura said, “We are climbing, but man, we’ve got barriers.”

One of those barriers stems from the different reactions male and female entrepreneurs receive when talking about a new business venture. According according to a recent study done by Harvard Business Review, 67% of the questions posed to male entrepreneurs were promotion-orientated, while 66% of those posed to female entrepreneurs were prevention-orientated.

That means that people are going to ask a woman, “Have you thought about this?” versus reinforcing their ideas. It sup-

ports the idea that women are more afraid to make mistakes.

“We’re afraid to make mistakes. Just make the mistakes, learn from them as fast as you can and move on,” Laura said.

Laura is the Women’s Entrepreneurship Ambassador for Wisconsin. She became an ambassador because she had a feeling that she had to do something for women in Wisconsin. Last year she organized the first Women’s Entrepreneurship Day (WED) Conference in Madison, which was completely sold-out in its inaugural year. The date is already set for this year: November 19, 2018.

And Laura says that there are steps we can take to move forward. We can learn, read business books, listen to podcasts and in general know what’s happening in the world. One podcast she recommends is Wall Street Journal’s Secret of Wealthy Women.

Being educated is everyone’s responsibility, and being aware of what is happening around you can help you be prepared and turn the conversations around.

“I think taking the blinders off and being aware of [the barriers] helps. Being aware that there’s going to be bias,” Laura said. “When you’re pitching, for example, they’re going to ask you those prevention questions instead of opportunity questions, so you’re going to have to be ready for those moments.”

Laura explained that there are plenty of women who are successful. Surround yourself with the most confident and ambitious people you know.

“Surround yourself with people who are certainly focused, but are also balanced in life. If you want to have a successful life it’s about so much more than just making money,” she said.

Another thing that women can do is to walk through the doors. Take the risks, and even though it can be scary, do it anyway.

“We walk through lots of doors in our lives and sometimes you’re going to fall on your head. But you have to take that first step, sometimes wonderful and amazing things can happen on the other side. So that’s all I did, I walked through the doors and then I just kept going, kept growing and doing interesting things,” Laura said.

So what’s next for Laura and The Creative Company? 2017 was a year of learning, of returning to an academic program in entrepreneurship, and of producing the Women’s Entrepreneurship Day Wisconsin conference. This year is a year of doing.

“I really pushed hard last year, with everything that I touched. I have high expectations of myself, so I push myself really hard. I want to be present over perfect. We aren’t meant to be perfect, we’re meant to do our best.” ■

**You have
to step
into that fear,
because that’s how
you make it
somewhere else.**

— LAURA GALLAGHER
The Creative Company

ACCRUING TRUST

“Everyone has dreams and goals in life. People should not be fearful of taking some risk and be empowered to do what they want to do.”

– Alice Zaganczyk
AM Accounting & Tax Services, LLC



Alice Zaganczyk is a CPA and the owner of **AM Accounting and Tax Services, LLC**, a BBB Accredited Business since 2013, that has been in business for over 20 years. Alice’s company does income tax preparation for individuals and small businesses, nonprofits, corporations and partnerships. She also offers bookkeeping, payroll, and financial statement preparation services for small businesses.

A small business, AM Accounting and Tax Services is located in a renovated office space on Water Street in downtown Milwaukee. Prior, the company's office was located on Brady Street for six years in Milwaukee after being located in the suburbs for several years. "I really wanted to come downtown. I like the people and I like the diversity, and that's the one thing you do get down here is the diversity of people and the diversity of businesses. I love Milwaukee and you get your finger on the pulse of things that are going on in Milwaukee."

"Being downtown, I did not want to be in a big high-rise building. I wanted to keep it quaint and humble."

While humble, Alice has accomplished a lot in the tax and accounting profession as a woman entrepreneur, given that the industry has continued to be male-dominated since she started her career (AICPA 2017 CPA Firm Gender Survey).

After graduating from UW-Whitewater, Alice got her basic knowledge of operating a small business while working at a small attorney business. Deciding she did not want to go to law school, she received her Master's Degree in Tax. She continued to work with the same attorney business after graduating, doing tax work for the attorney and his clients. "I just always loved the entrepreneurial mindset and the small business mindset. I never wanted to go work for the big firms and get lost as a number. So I decided to go out on my own. I had a base of business clients from working with the lawyer, so I started helping them more and more and it grew from there."

Education plays a large role in Alice's business model. Their niche is small businesses who may not be big enough for in-house financial staff, but still want someone knowledgeable and reliable to help and educate them.

"We try to offer services to individuals and small businesses at a more affordable rate, and to educate them about what's going on in the tax and the accounting world," Alice said. Educating people about tax is the most important, simply because

everyone hears so many bits and pieces about tax law.

"We try to tell people what's right," Alice said. As in any industry, educating yourself about new laws and trends is important. Alice takes some time each day to research and learn new things and stay up to date on the tax industry. Especially now with new tax changes coming into place, there is a lot of

information to learn and communicate to clients.

With the educational aspect of the business comes trust. As one can imagine, trust, ethics, and integrity play a very important role in any tax or financial services. "Our standards of trust, ethics, and integrity are core to who we are as a business."

Alice's commitment to ensure her business

holds high standards of ethics ultimately benefits her business. "Our business clients trust us."

Trusting and satisfied clients means good referrals and they promote your business, which helps Alice continue to grow her business.

Alice's niche of small businesses consequently allows her business to be very supportive of entrepreneurs who come to her for financial guidance when starting a business. Some of these entrepreneurs are women, and she is happy to see women supporting other women in the business world.

Alice encourages women to own their own businesses and not be afraid to take that step. "Everyone has dreams and goals in life. People should not be fearful of taking some risk and be empowered to do what they want to do. I am very vocal in that regard. If I have an opinion, I tell my opinion, and I think more women and people in general should be empowered to think that way."

Alice has goals for AM Accounting & Tax Services, LLC to expand in the future in order to help more small businesses in the area. With the staff, knowledge and experience her business has, Alice is more than confident in its future. ■



Alice Zaganczyk (center) and two staff members, Marissa Maldonado Perez (left) and Anna Sheteron (right).

women's work



Q&A WITH TINA MULTHAUF OF SKYLINE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

In a field that is mainly occupied by men, one accredited landscape company in Southeastern Wisconsin is a step ahead of the competition by being educated in Horticulture and through their attention to detail. We sat down with **Tina Multhauf**, the owner of **Skyline Landscape Design**, to talk about what makes her business stand apart from the crowd.

HOW DID YOUR BUSINESS GET STARTED?

TINA: I went to UW-Platteville, where I earned my Bachelor's degree in Horticulture, and started the business with a friend, Andrea Henning. The business started out as a Sole Proprietorship in Andrea's name, because I was still finishing college the summer we started. In the beginning we worked the business part-time on our days off from our full-time garden center jobs. The next season, after I graduated, we decided to make our partnership official and took the business full-time. I'm proud to say that to this day we are still working with our very first customer. This year marks our 10th year in business!

I bought Andrea's share out three seasons ago. Her husband owns a landscape company in the area, and he needed

her help. She had to make a really hard decision to leave the business that she helped build. A year or so after buying her half of the business, I realized I needed to relearn how to run the company on my own. Andrea and I miss working with each other, but we still have a great friendship, and actually just returned from a girls trip, a cruise to the Bahamas.

WHAT KINDS OF SERVICES DO YOU PROVIDE?

TINA: Our main services are landscape bed design, installation and maintenance, mostly focused on the plants and landscape beds. We do some light flagstone path and boulder installation. We currently do not install retaining walls, or paver patios, and we don't mow lawns or snow plow. I went to school for

horticulture, so plants are my life. I'm a plant nerd.

HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DO YOU HAVE?

TINA: In the middle of the season I'll have about 10 employees. I remember when we were first starting out, about two years in, it was a big step to hire one person. The next year we hired another person and then another. I would say it's grown a person or so every year. I've always had a mix of men and women working for Skyline. Over the years I've found that the majority of the women who have worked for me have done a better job at paying attention to detail than men. And they've proven to be as hard of workers as the men. Having a good mix of both has contributed to the success of my business as both men and women bring good attributes to the table for this type of work.

WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS GOAL?

TINA: My main business goal is to always give my customers excellent service that my crew and I can be proud of. I strive towards having a great work environment for my employees - we embrace the "Above the Line" idea in all areas of our life. And being above the line to me means taking ownership of things that I do, being positive, and being present in the business. Jackie Zach of ActionCOACH in Elm Grove helped me develop this idea and utilize it in my own business.

WHAT GIVES YOU A COMPETITIVE EDGE OVER OTHER LANDSCAPING COMPANIES?

TINA: I think for one, I have my Horticulture degree, as does another person



Tina Multhauf (right) and Kimberly Peterson, Account Sales Manager

on my staff. Not a lot of small town landscape companies have someone on staff with the knowledge and experience that we have with plants. Secondly, we solve our customers landscape problems by listening to their wants and needs. When it comes to talking to customers, I think it helps that I'm a woman, because it helps me communicate. The majority of the time I'll meet initially with the woman of the house and I think it can be intimidating for a woman to meet with a male contractor. Lastly, we pay attention to the details. I think that has a lot to do with the fact that I have a lot of females on my team. We stick to what we know and do what we love to do!

HAVE YOU FACED ANY CHALLENGES BEING A WOMAN-OWNED LANDSCAPE BUSINESS IN A PREDOMINATELY MALE-DRIVEN FIELD?

TINA: It's hard to say, I've always been a very independent person and I don't feel I have to limit my capability just because I'm a woman. To be honest, I have a lot of landscape friends in the

area, and just about all of them are men. We all respect each other, and I think that we were able to prove that we have the knowledge about plants early on, which helped give us credibility in the world of landscaping.

The main challenge came for me when I became a mom. Before I had a husband and children, growing the business was my main focus and I worked all the time. Changing how I needed to do things was difficult, especially when I was pregnant. I had to learn when and how to separate work and home so that I was giving the proper attention to both. There are a lot of demands on a mother after having a baby, but luckily I have a wonderful and supportive husband and currently have two beautiful boys. I still feel really good about the business I'm building, but that is only part of my focus now.

OTHER ADVICE TO WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES?

TINA: Keep your eye on what you really want, and stick with what you enjoy. Be true to yourself and be honest with people. ■





Say yes to her dress!

Today, the big thing in bridal is the experience. Brides want to try on and say yes to that perfect dress. That experience is exactly what **Roxanne Schatz** of **Amelishan Bridal** strives to provide.

Roxanne started Amelishan Bridal in December 1995. She was familiar with the wedding industry, having been a musician that played at wedding ceremonies in the Milwaukee area for about 20 years. Roxanne's husband also had a cinematography business for more than 20 years. Roxanne never imagined getting back into the wedding business.

She was a teacher Friess Lake Elementary School for 18 years before deciding that it was time to open the next chapter of her life. She started a business designing and selling children's hair accessories.

Business was booming. She serviced over 61 stores in the Metro Milwaukee area, and soon got into the World Trade Center in Chicago and New York. While her business designing for a children's clothing company was certainly growing, everything remained out of her home.

Her work steadily evolved, and soon she was creating First

Communion veils and headpieces. Not long after, Roxanne's husband suggested wedding veils, which took off even more.

One day while Roxanne and her oldest daughter were out on a delivery in New Berlin, WI, they walked past a women's shop. Roxanne looked in the window and said, "If I ever had a bridal shop, these are the kinds of mothers dresses I want in my store."

All it took was some encouragement from her daughter, and the drive back from New Berlin and the business plan was created. She went looking for a storefront that same night. The following morning, she filed the paperwork for the space in Hubertus, and that's how it started. Roxanne named her new business Amelishan for her niece, Amber, and her daughters Elizabeth and Shannon.

"It wasn't ever my dream to own a bridal shop. I always



knew I wanted a business that I could hand down, so I had something to hand down to my daughters. I wanted a place for them to work in high school and college,” Roxanne said.

The shop fulfilled those purposes—and more. Her daughters both eventually joined the business full-time. Shannon graduated with a degree in Marketing and Retail Management, and Elizabeth had a degree in Art and Photography. They both brought with them previous experiences and new ideas. Roxanne’s son-in-law, David, also joined the team and brought his background, which included a business degree.

“It’s a powerful, strong team. We each bring something different to the table. Our goal always is not how much money can we make for ourselves, but how big can we grow our company,” Roxanne said. “How exciting is this to grow, to not put a cap on it and just watch it grow.”

The company has grown immensely. Because they are recognized as one of the larger bridal shops in the United States, they also have a lot of say in the

industry on a national level. Companies will fly them out to New York, Fort Myers, and other locations to get their opinion on new collections.

“My goal was never to be the top of anything,” Roxanne said. “It was just to do a good job and provide a good company for my customers and for my family, and for my staff. We have around 30 staff. I don’t know how it happened. Everything fell into place, it was meant to be.”

Roxanne also takes pride in carrying a huge selection of mother’s dresses. The shop carries about 1,200. They started with 12. The shop also has a large department of bridesmaid and prom dresses. They offer a wide variety of tuxedos and suits to either purchase or rent. And onsite they have alterations done by Sew Elegant.

The team at Amelishan is keeping ahead of the rapidly-changing trends in the bridal industry. The shop offers a great bridal experience, along with a huge selection at a variety of price ranges. Nowadays, brides want the experience, complete with the tears and picture-taking. Amelishan can serve

up to 10 brides at a time, and typically sees about 25-30 brides every Saturday. Right now, the look is all about the shoulders, replacing the long-time strapless style.

The biggest piece of advice that Roxanne offers other businesses is this: “You can’t beat yourself up with mistakes. You’re going to make mistakes, but they’re going to be learning experiences. You have to look at them that way.”

While Roxanne finds herself backing off a bit, she doesn’t plan on retiring anytime soon. But when she does, she knows the store will be in good hands with her family. She still loves being in the store, interacting with employees and customers.

“I love walking into the store, feeling the ambiance and greeting the staff. I love seeing my family put their heart and soul into this and I’m so proud of them,” Roxanne said. “It’s such a neat feeling knowing that when I’m gone, it’s here to stay, because that next generation has taken it to the next level.” ■



Celebrating Wisconsin's Entrepreneurs at Concordia University

Wisconsin has a rich history of entrepreneurship, and this needs to be celebrated!

A Kauffman study ranked Wisconsin 50th for startup activity; but, this ranking doesn't do justice to the entrepreneurial spirit we know that Wisconsin business owners have. In fact, Wisconsin ranked second for more lasting and sustainable businesses, in the "Main Street Index," according to Kaufman. Still, Wisconsin—unfairly—does not seem to have a reputation for being entrepreneurial. But, we are entrepreneurial. We are just too humble to brag about it and tell our success stories.

For this reason, Concordia University has decided to undertake a project we call the Wisconsin Entrepreneur Exhibit™, which will be housed in our new Batterman School of Business building (the Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center), and also at the

Mitchell Airport (in Terminal D). Information for the exhibit, being developed in partnership with the Milwaukee Historical Society, is being compiled on over 150 of Wisconsin's largest and most successful companies, and the most recognizable brands. The exhibit itself will have an interactive "touch-screen" interface that is searchable by industry sector.

The profiles of Wisconsin companies in the exhibit will focus on telling the stories of the entrepreneurs behind these businesses, about their journey to building the companies they founded. The idea is to share these stories as a way to celebrate our successes, to inspire the next generation of Wisconsin entrepreneurs, to encourage young talent to stay in Wisconsin, and to provide

valuable lessons in entrepreneurship and ethical business practices. With regard to the latter point, the second main feature and focus of the company profiles is the focus on explaining the underlying values of the founding entrepreneurs and their companies.

We believe it is the values of Wisconsin companies that will best distinguish us from other states, and will be a great source of pride for Wisconsinites. Ironically, one of those values is humility. But, the values often include a solid work ethic, integrity, a commitment to serving others, and sometimes values based on Christian or other religious beliefs; and, this particularly resonates with our mission at Concordia. But always, Wisconsin companies seem to be founded in solid ethical values that we think need to be celebrated and learned from.

This also resonates with the Better Business Bureau, which for years has celebrated ethical business practices through their Torch Awards, sometimes administered in partnership with local universities like Concordia University. Indeed, we are most excited to announce now that Concordia University is partnering with BBB to offer support and partnership for their Center for Character Ethics, and associated services, in our new Free Enterprise Center! This building and this Center will be completed in the summer of 2019, and will provide a resource for all Wisconsin business that need help and guidance when navigating ethical dilemmas. This resource will include a phone service hotline, seminars, and access to case studies that provide examples of best ethical business practices. Concordia University's Batterman School of Business and the BBB share a common goal of helping and celebrating Wisconsin businesses in their pursuit of ethical business practices! ■



The **WISCONSIN TORCH AWARDS FOR ETHICS** honor businesses that meet the highest standard of ethics and trust among their employees, customers and local communities—embodying BBB’s mission to advance marketplace trust.

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(1 to 10 Employees)



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CATEGORY II
(11 to 50 Employees)



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CATEGORY II
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HEALTH PAYMENT SYSTEMS

CATEGORY III
(51 to 500 Employees)



PARTNERSHIP BANK

CATEGORY III
(51 to 500 Employees)



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(500+ Employees)



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 CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
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**ABOUT THE STUDENTS OF
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The Students of Integrity Scholarships go to Wisconsin high school students who have demonstrated leadership, character and ethical values.

The scholarships are awarded for Wisconsin-based, accredited colleges—including two-year community and technical schools.

As the scholarship recipients pursue their careers, we hope to develop future business leaders who promote ethics in the Wisconsin marketplace.



Kayla Chambers
 MESSMER HIGH SCHOOL
 (UW-MILWAUKEE)



Laron Higgins
 MILWAUKEE HIGH SCHOOL
 OF THE ARTS
 (UW-MADISON)



Macailey Zipperer
 REEDSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
 (LAKESHORE TECHNICAL
 COLLEGE)



Mala Lue
 PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL
 (UW-MILWAUKEE)



Pranav Srivastava
 WAUSAU WEST
 HIGH SCHOOL
 (UW-MADISON)



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In the BBB Store, you can find plaques, certificates, decals, stickers, window clings and more. Best of all, all of these items are completely free, including any shipping costs. Not only do these items bolster your accreditation, but they can also encourage your customers to read or write positive reviews on your business. And, with 88% of people claiming that reviews impact their buying decision (Nielsen, 2015), that's a big deal for your business.

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1. Log in at bbb.org/wisconsin/login
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3. Select the quantity of any item you would like to receive
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5. When you have selected all of the items desired, click "Checkout"
6. Input your information for shipping purposes
7. Select "Complete Order"
8. Your order will be shipped to the address provided

NEED HELP?

If you have any questions, or need assistance, don't hesitate to contact our BBB Accredited Business member services line at 414-847-6060 or toll-free at 800-273-1024. We're happy to help.

Upcoming Events

Friday, June 22, 2018

BBB SERVING WISCONSIN NETWORKING EVENT: MILWAUKEE BREWERS VS. ST. LOUIS CARDINALS
Miller Park
1 Brewers Way
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Game Time: 7:10pm

Friday, July 20, 2018

BBB SERVING WISCONSIN NETWORKING EVENT: ROOFTOP COCKTAILS
Catholic Financial Life
1100 W Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Time: 5pm-9pm

Wednesday, October 3, 2018

LUNCH AT LAMBEAU

Keynote Speaker :

Mark Murphy, Green Bay Packers
President/CEO

Lambeau Field

1265 Lombardi Avenue
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Time: Starts at 11:15 am

Lunch: Noon-1pm

Lambeau field tours and hall of fame tickets will be available.

Registration information will be available mid-summer. Watch your email for details.

Thursday, November 8, 2018

BBB SERVING WISCONSIN ANNUAL MEETING & ACCREDITED BUSINESS APPRECIATION NETWORKING EVENT
BBB Serving Wisconsin
10019 W. Greenfield Ave.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Time: 5pm



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