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Leading the Way

We share inspiring stories of 11 remarkable women who are making a positive difference in our Valley

BY REBECCA L. RHOADES PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL WOODALL

A RIZONA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A STATE DRIVEN BY INNOVATORS, MANY of whom were women. From Nellie Cashman, famed restaurateur, gold prospector and anti-violence advocate; to architect Mary Colter, who designed some of the Grand Canyon's most famous buildings; to Isabella Greenway King, the state's first female U.S. senator, the list of influential and trailblazing women who lived here is long.

Today, there's a new group of women whose vibrant energies, imaginations and outlooks are transforming Arizona. They represent a broad range of careers: architect, designer, artist, chef, executive and more. And all are leaders in their fields.

We sat down with 11 of these women to learn how they got to where they are today, what inspired them and what help they received along the way. "We have an amazing group of women in this city," says one of our profiled women, Laura Capello, CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona. "We have some strong, really passionate women in this community who do a lot of good things."

Despite their differences, there are many similarities to their stories—and to each other. They're all smart, candid, creative and persistent. And they're defining the city in which we live.

Your home is your center.
It should inspire you and
be a place for both renewal
and celebration.

Jessica Hutchison-Rough, Architect, Urban Design Associates

Jessica Hutchison-Rough distinctly remembers the moment she knew that she wanted to become an architect. She was 7 years old. "My grandparents had come to town, and my dad [Phoenix Home & Garden Masters of the Southwest award winner Lee Hutchison] was taking them on some home tours, and I went with them. They were just the most beautiful homes I had ever seen, and I remember thinking that he had such a great privilege and honor to bring beauty to the world with his designs."

Today, the younger Hutchison is working side by side with her father as a partner in the family's architecture firm, adding her own beauty to the Valley's residential landscape. But if you're expecting a copycat version of her dad, you might be surprised. Following a 10 year hiatus from the Valley to live, study and work in Vancouver, British Columbia—"I needed to figure out my own path without my dad's influence for a while, and that was really good for me," she says—Hutchison-Rough brings a sleek design approach to the firm's projects. "My aesthetic tends to be cleaner lines, more Modern, more contemporary, she explains. "I still

draw inspiration from the desert. I think the Arizona sunlight is harshly beautiful, and I love what it does to buildings, so I tend to work in a warmer palette. But most of my stuff is contemporary."

Hutchison-Rough looks to the homeowners as well as the property for inspiration. "It all relates to who is going to be living there and how they want to live," she notes. For each project, she visits the site at different times of the day and during different seasons, drawing inspiration from the views, the winds and the patterns of the sun in order to create the perfect home for her clients.

"I get the privilege of creating places that are going to be lived in, whether it's every day or just a couple months each year," she says. "Your home is your center. It should inspire you and be a place for both renewal and celebration. You should have a place that you love."

