WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Winners of a YWCA Woman of Achievement Award embody the mission of the YWCA by giving generously of themselves to make Spokane a better place for all citizens to live. They must also demonstrate leadership through their professional work or service to the community in one or more of the following categories: Arts & Culture; Business & Industry; Carl Maxey Racial and Social Justice; Community Enhancement; Education; and Science, Technology, and Environment.

ARTS & CULTURE

Gina Freuen’s 40-year career in Spokane has been one of exemplary leadership in our region’s artistic and arts education community. Gina is an exceptional artist in multiple mediums, showing her work in numerous juried exhibitions and receiving many awards throughout her career. Her reputation is also equally strong as a supporter of other artists, arts organizations, and importantly, as a teacher and an organizer in the promotion of others’ art.

Thirty-two years ago, she helped found, with co-creator Beth Sellars, and managed for many years, the annual outdoor festival, ArtFest, that continues to this day in support of artists and the MAC (Museum of Art and Culture). She also helped organize and served on the board of Inland Craft Warnings, providing the format, structure, and audience development process. Ten years ago, along with three other participants, Gina helped form the Little Spokane River Artists’ Studio Tour, in which artists living along the river open their homes to other artists, displaying their work for the viewing public. This event has become a cherished annual arts tour event for Spokane.

Gina’s artwork is award-winning with a long record of published works and acceptance into juried exhibitions. She has served on many panels and exhibition juries, as well as a number of grant application committees, selecting artists and providing seed money and public art funds to deserving artists. She brought her marketing skills to many artists’ endeavors, most currently Trackside Studio, a ceramic studio and gallery. Gina retired this year from a 20-year teaching career at Gonzaga University, where she touched the lives of countless students as an instructor of introductory design, drawing, ceramics and a culminating senior seminar course.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Born and raised in Spokane, Kristin Goff grew up working for the family business. She became the third generation owner and operator of Wendle Motors, which has a long history of demonstrated servant leadership in the region. Kristin’s mother Carol Wendle was a Woman of Achievement (WOA) recipient for Education in 1994 for her role as the Spokane Public Schools Board of Directors. Together, they are the first mother-daughter duo to both be honored with WOA Awards.
Kristin is at the heart of Wendle Motors’ community support and contribution, including sponsoring food for entire school sites for the At the Core weekend backpack program, donating a vehicle to Spokane Youth Sports Association to ensure every child gets the opportunity to play a sport, and more.

Kristin is willing to help out not just with funding but with her own time. She packs Bite to Go packs at Second Harvest. She has been matched with two children through the Big Brothers Big Sister mentorship program. She has also been matched with a wonderful veteran who she helps with transportation, paying bills, and health care assistance. She has also been a reading tutor for many years in elementary schools.

She is a sought-after board member for her values, work ethic and track record. Much of Kristin’s charitable giving and volunteer commitments centers around her passion for education, mentoring and children. She has served on the boards of Northeast Community Center, Spokane County United Way, Big Brothers Big Sisters, YWCA of Spokane, and Greater Spokane Incorporated. She is also a proud member of the National Automobile Dealers Association, Washington State Automobile Dealers Association and the Spokane New Car Dealers Association.

CARL MAXEY RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Juliana (Julie) Christine Matthews Repp is passionate about social justice and civic engagement. She is a Nez Perce tribal member attorney and was one of only two Native American women in her class at law school. She has experienced racism, which has spurred her to empower more minority women into leadership positions.

Julie has a background of championing causes for the under-represented, under-privileged, and those with unique needs such as Native Americans. In law school, she served as President of the Multi-Cultural Law Caucus, mentoring minority law students and providing support for those who experienced racism. She assisted in bringing speakers with racially diverse backgrounds to the law school. After law school, she was admitted to practice law in state and federal courts and within the Coeur d’Alene, Colville, Kalispel, Nez Perce, Spokane, Standing Rock and Yakama Tribal Courts. In addition to practicing law she continues to volunteer her time to combat racism and to work toward social justice causes.

Julie accepted appointment by two U.S. Senators to serve on federal judicial bi-partisan committees to ensure that a professional minority woman had a chance to review candidates before any potential nomination. She testified before the Idaho Geographic Names Board to successfully assist the Nez Perce Tribe in changing vulgar and offensive names within Nez Perce lands to more appropriate Nez Perce language names. She travelled to the Standing Rock Indian Reservation over four trips to volunteer at the Legal Tent at the Oceti Sakowin and at the Water Protector Legal Office in Mandan, North Dakota, to support the indigenous-led resistance against the Dakota Access Pipeline. During the winter trips to Standing Rock, temperatures of -20°F to -50°F were not uncommon. She continues volunteering with the Water Protector Legal Collective.

She is a frequent speaker at many Indian/Tribal Law Continuing Legal Education courses. She initiated the petition to the Spokane County Bar Association to create an Indian Law Section as a networking tool and for community legal education. It is the only Indian Law Section within any county bar association in Washington state, and she served as the Section’s founding chair.
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT

For 30 years, Mary DeLateur has worked and volunteered in the Spokane community. For the past 11 years, she served as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at the Spokane Vet Center. Her passion for helping veterans began when her own son was a Marine serving in Iraq. She saw the difficulty faced by emotionally and psychologically wounded veterans who tried to assimilate back into family, jobs, and society.

She went back to school to get her Master’s of Social Work. In her time at Spokane Vet Center, she saw more than 13,500 veterans and 1,600 family members. After pursuing additional training in Military Sexual Trauma and Bereavement, she has become a specialist in this area and has presented at national conferences to inform and train others in this difficult work.

She is recognized for her innovative and creative workshops aimed at empowering women, such as Growing Up Again, Whole Hearted Woman, and Warrior Review, which help women differentiate between functional and dysfunctional relationships, care for themselves, and work for a better life. Mary also organized the annual Women Veterans’ Recognition Day and coordinated the very powerful Veteran’s Heart to Art conference where local Veterans use art to tell their story and heal deep wounds.

Mary’s extraordinary leadership led to the expansion of the Spokane Vet Center (now the largest in the nation) by focusing more on long-term community building and group support. She created new workshops that expanded the services and support offered to veterans, particularly women veterans. She also built community partnerships with other agencies, therapists and experts to expand the breadth and depth of services offered to Veterans to include holistic therapies and non-traditional treatments for PTSD.

A life-long community servant, Mary has also taught high school, provided parenting classes at community centers, and served as president of the local American Red Cross board of directors.

EDUCATION

Dr. Patricia O'Connell Killen has devoted her life to higher education as a project that expands horizons of imagination and expands freedom of opportunity. Whether as a professor, faculty leader, departmental administrator, or provost, she has been an advocate for women. Killen has been extensively published, earning numerous honors and awards for her achievements as a teacher and scholar, and has served in professional leadership roles on a number of boards. She received her undergraduate degree from Gonzaga University and her graduate degrees from Stanford and returned to her alma mater in 2010 as the first female Academic Vice President in the institution’s 130-year history.

During her time as Gonzaga’s Academic Vice President, Dr. Killen oversaw the search for new decanal leadership in the college and professional schools, and expanded faculty professional development opportunities. She led the design and implementation of the Underrepresented Minority Teaching Post-Doctoral Fellows Program, which brings new University of Washington Ph.D. graduates of various ethnic backgrounds to campus for teaching experiences. She guided the establishment of the Native American Studies program, attracting a top Native American scholar to lead it, and supported the hiring of the first full-time faculty member into Gonzaga’s Women and Gender Studies Program. She has empowered our community’s women and families, establishing a parental leave policy at Gonzaga University, the sixth largest employer in the Spokane area.
Dr. Killen’s work is always grounded in the Jesuit aspiration to excellence on behalf of flourishing communal life. She has led cognizant of the rapidly changing needs, whether playing a key role in establishing the regional health partnership between Gonzaga and the University of Washington, expanding Gonzaga’s international education opportunities, or collaborating to incorporate career preparation into the curriculum across the disciplines. She has promoted initiatives that lead to Gonzaga graduates having a powerful impact on the communities they serve.

Not only is she an academic leader but she has great business acumen, laying the firm financial footing to support personnel and the research and academic leadership demands of a private institution. Her intelligent approach and commitment to mission has helped make the University sustainable and more competitive during one of the most challenging economic times for higher education.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Heather Rosentrater has worked almost 21 years in the utility industry and currently serves as the Vice President of Energy Delivery at Avista Utilities, where she oversees 800 people and is responsible for electric and natural gas engineering, operations, and oversees services such as fleet, facilities and supply chain. She is the youngest female officer with responsibility for operations at one of the most technical organizations in the region.

She has put together an amazing cross section of employees that are pursuing new innovations for the company. Heather has led Avista’s Grid Innovation and Smart Cities initiative along with key partners to set up the community infrastructure for Urbanova in the University District. She also has broad experience on both the electric and natural gas side of Avista, having managed departments and projects in transmission, distribution, as well as asset management.

She has served on multiple councils and boards, including Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery, Second Harvest, Urbanova, Smart Grid Northwest, and the West Valley Education Foundation. She is a member of the Washington State University (WSU) School of Engineering and Computer Science Executive Council and the WSU Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture Executive Leadership Board.

Heather has a passion for teaching. She was an adjunct professor at Gonzaga University for five years in the highly technical Transmission and Distribution Master’s Program. She worked as a math tutor for girls throughout high school and college and currently mentors several women at Avista. She is a huge advocate for women and minorities in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields. She speaks to a range of groups about how to build the pipeline of girls and young women in STEM fields.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Ellen Robey is a perfect example of the kind of volunteer that makes Spokane the great community it is. She takes on unsponsored, unprofitable, and sometimes unpopular causes, simply because they are what the community needs. She has worked both behind the scenes and in leadership roles helping numerous groups, including Spokane Symphony, Spokane Lilac Festival, Spokane Arts School, Spokane Public Schools, and more.

For 34 years, she worked as the business manager for ALSC Architects. She uses her skills in business to further the success of many community groups. She understands the complexities of developing a
nonprofit organization and building partnerships and consensus in groups. As an avid volunteer, she knows the value of having persistence and hope. She served as the chairman for Goodwill Industries, and she served on the Spokane Civic Theater Board for 37 years—and as its president twice. She assisted campaigns for public financing, including several campaigns for mayoral candidates, school bond and levy campaigns, and Catholic School budget.

She served as member and chairman of the Friends of the Davenport, protecting and leading to the renovation of The Davenport Hotel as a historic treasure of our city. After 30 years of fighting for the hotel, Ellen disbanded Friends of the Davenport early this year, donating the organization’s remaining funds to the Museum of Arts and Culture. Her efforts to preserve the Davenport helped pave the way for the revitalization of downtown Spokane. She continued her work for preservation by serving on Friends of the Bing and Spokane Preservation Advocates.

She has helped empower women through her work with Junior League, and she encourages other women to volunteer and be involved.

2017 WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS LUNCHEON

YWCA Spokane’s 35th annual Women of Achievement awards luncheon will be held on Thursday, September 28th, 2017 from 11:30am – 1:30pm. We will gather at the Davenport Grand Hotel with 1200 friends of the YWCA to celebrate amazing women and feel inspired by our community’s dedication to the safety and well-being of women, children, and families. More information can be found at ywcaspokane.org.

ABOUT YWCA SPOKANE

YWCA Spokane is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. In 2016, YWCA Spokane provided counseling, legal services, safe shelter, outreach, job readiness training, and early childhood education to more than 13,925 women and children. YWCA Spokane is the go-to place in the region for support for victims of domestic violence and services that empower women and children. The organization is a key resource for issues of racial and social justice in the community.