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WOMEN'S EDITION

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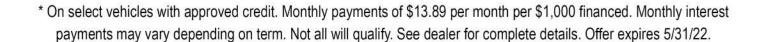
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Captain Kate has already blazed a trail at Celebrity, leading the U.S. cruise industry's return to service last summer on Celebrity Edge®. She's not alone. On International Women's Day, Celebrity's president and CEO, Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, announced that nearly a third of the line's bridge officers are female in an industry where less than 2% of mariners are women. Celebrity continues to push for gender equality in its ranks—and in the industry as a whole.



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## HCA Florida South Tampa Hospital Now Offers Scarless Robotic Thyroid Surgery



#### Young Former Patient Calls It The Best Choice She Made

Dr. Shaelyn Johnson, 34, was diagnosed with thyroid cancer during her fellowship in New York City. Although the standard, open thyroid surgery was recommended, she sought a second opinion and learned that HCA Florida South Tampa Hospital had an advanced

option – scarless robotic thyroid surgery.

Johnson underwent surgery in August 2022. Her experience was 10/10 thanks to friendly, attentive staff, a clean, quiet facility, prompt surgery and same-day biopsy results.

"It really was first-class

service," she says. "It meant a lot that there was a world-renowned expert (Dr. Hyun Suh) at a hospital in my hometown."

After surgery, Johnson experienced a speedy recovery and was thrilled with the results.

"When I look in the mirror, I don't see a neck scar staring back at me reminding me of the cancer," she says. "Instead, I see a proud, strong woman."

She adds, "I'm so happy I chose robotic surgery and was able to move on with my life. I'm a huge advocate, and I want more women to know that it's an option. It's been the best choice I've made."

Johnson encourages people to pay attention to symptoms (hers were fatigue, dry skin and hair loss) — and don't write them off (she blamed stress). She wonders how long her cancer would have gone undetected if it weren't for that rare downtime one day playing around with an ultrasound machine and noticing her own abnormal lesion.

"Don't hesitate to get evaluated because your symptoms could mean something," she says.



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For our second annual Women's edition, we're celebrating powerhouse women that USF is producing, including Melissa Seixas, state president of Duke Energy, pictured. (Get her look at Neiman Marcus Tampa: Alice + Olivia Cody Leather Jacket, Rails Kathryn Wild Cats Button-Up Shirt) \_DESIGN > JERRY POMALES \_PHOTOGRAPHY > GABRIEL BURGOS \_HAIR > KIRSTEN RITENBAUGH \_MAKEUP > EUGENIYA "JANE" SVERBILOVA



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50 Icing On The Cake





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# MORE THAN 1 IN 5 WOMEN STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH. LET TMS OF SOUTH TAMPA HELP.

TMS of South Tampa is the Bay area's leader in depression treatment



Women wear so many hats, from being leaders at work and in the community to their roles as partners, wives and mothers. The pressure to balance it all can take a toll on your mental health and conditions like depression, which have been shown to affect women differently than men. Dr. Pages and his team at TMS of South Tampa can help. After treating over 1,000 patients, TMS of South Tampa is the country's leading single-site provider of NeuroStar® Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) for depression. Dr. Pages has helped 74% of patients feel better and 40% achieve a complete resolution of symptoms.\* If depression is your issue, now is the time to get qualified help.

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TAMPA MAGAZINES



#### GROUP PUBLISHER'S LETTER

#### HATS OFF TO THE LADIES

Welcome to our second annual Women's edition, dedicated to all the amazing ladies of Tampa Bay. It's always fun meeting successful women and learning what drives them. Everyone featured in this special issue brings something unique to the table in her businesses or organization. Get inspired by their stories in the pages that follow.

This issue celebrates the triumphs of several phenomenal female University of South Florida (USF) graduates, one of which, Rhea Law, was recently named USF's eighth president and first alum to hold the title. She has been central to USF's success throughout the last two decades. Then there's Dr. Marlene Joannie Bewa, who is about as impressive as they come. She's a physician, Fulbright Scholar, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Goalkeeper, U.N. Young Leader, public health research advocate... the list goes on. She's achieved more in 32 years than I could ever dream of, and she's just getting started.

Our Big Book of Beauty starting on Page 71 brings you summer fashion accessories from Tampa boutiques and makeup tips by local artists for every age group.

Many of these story ideas were generated by our inaugural editorial board, with many more to come. We proudly welcome Renu Parker, senior vice president of Truist; Bemetra Simmons, president of the Tampa Bay Partnership; Richard Gonzmart, owner of the Columbia Restaurant Group; and Christian Leon, director of strategic initiatives for the Patel Family Foundation; to the TAMPA Magazines team.

I'd also like to introduce the awesome females on our staff who are a part of bringing this magazine to you, pictured below.

Take a moment to read about women you might know and others you would like to know. I hope they will inspire you with their passion, determination, expertise and most of all, their commitment to make Tampa an even better place.

Shawna Wiggs\_Group Publisher

Shawna. Wiggs@TampaMagazines.com

**FOR OUR ADVERTISERS:** Our June/July Food and Wine issue offers restaurant and alcohol discounts, as well as discounts for our Ultimate Burger Guide, automotive, summer travel, windows and doors. Email me for information.

#### The Women of TAMPA Magazines



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Rachel Prevatte
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Photography by Gabriel Burgos (Shawna Wiggs) & Rachel Prevatte (all other I



Dr. William Mack's name might be on the front door, but at the Mack Center, women run the show! From his wife and registered nurse, Stephanie, and his daughters Lauren, Madison and Morgan, to his amazing staff, Dr. Mack is lucky to be surrounded and supported by wonderful, strong women every day. The Mack Center is thrilled to welcome their newest team member Melinda McAlees. With over 14 years of experience in medical aesthetics, Melinda specializes in Ultherapy, laser hair removal, PRX peel, laser and Sublative skin rejuvenation.

For more than 25 years, William P. Mack, M.D. has been dedicated to helping patients achieve a natural and refreshed appearance through various surgical procedures, such as facelifts, upper and lower eyelid surgery and brow lift surgery. The Mack Center proudly offers many nonsurgical procedures, such as Botox® Cosmetic, multiple facial fillers, HydraFacial®, microneedling, lash lifts and customized skin care with medical-grade skin care products.

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#### Front Desk

Check In With Tampa



Story By Leah Garcia

#### 01. MAYDAY ICE CREAM OPENS IN YBOR CITY

Mayday Ice Cream opened its newest outpost in March in Ybor City. The St. Augustine-based frozen dessert maker also has branches in Jacksonville and Lakeland. The ice cream is handmade and the name is inspired by Americans who served in World War II. Fun, unique flavors include the perfect pear, made with fresh pears and a splash of riesling.

#### 02. YARD HOUSE RESTAURANT COMING TO WATER STREET TAMPA

Strategic Property Partners, the minds behind Water Street Tampa, plan to bring the popular chain Yard House to the lot just across from Amalie Arena. The proposed site for the 16,400-squarefoot restaurant and bar is on the northwest corner of Channelside Drive and Nebraska Avenue, Yard House is well-known for its large menu and wide range of craft beer selections, some locations having over 100 beers on tap.

#### 03. HILLSBOROUGH STATE PARK **ADDS GLAMPING**

Timberline Glamping Co., a North Georgia hospitality company, launched its first franchise location at Hillsborough River State Park in March. The company provides guests with one-of-akind luxury camping experiences in the heart of nature. Accommodations include large safari tents and bell tents equipped with beds, plush rugs, coffee makers, refrigeration, air conditioning, heating and more. Guests can pay for add-ons, like bike rentals, smores kits or use of pop-up dinner gazebos.

#### 04. HYDE PARK VILLAGE PLANS FIRST HOTEL, WELCOMES WARBY PARKER

Palihouse, a boutique hotel from Los Angelesbased hospitality company Palisociety, plans to open in 2023 as Hyde Park Village's first hotel. Palisociety operates hotels in California, Oregon and Miami. In other news at Hyde Park

Village, Warby Parker, a fashionable, quality prescription eyewear retailer, opened its third Tampa location in March. Local artist Reyna Noriega created a custom mural for the store.

#### 05. COLLABORATIVE RESTAURANT **OPENS IN SEMINOLE HEIGHTS**

FLocale opened in March in Seminole Heights as a collaborative project from King of the Coop (Tampa's first Nashville hot chicken restaurant), Westshore Pizza and Ybor City's Rock Brothers Brewing. The restaurant, bar and nightlife venue features the same menu items found at King of the Coop and Westshore Pizza, as well as a bar with 20 beers and other beverages on tap. Live music runs on Fridays and Saturdays.

#### 06. MIDTOWN TAMPA ANNOUNCES ITS LARGEST OFFICE TOWER

Development at Midtown Tampa hit \$1 billion with the announcement of Midtown East, a 16-story, 400,000-square-foot office tower to begin construction in late 2022 and start leasing by the end of 2024. It will be one of Tampa's tallest office towers in many years. As with its sister building, Midtown West, experts are anticipating that the tower will attract top-tier tenants long before the development is completed.

#### 07. TAMPA NEIGHBORHOOD RANKS MOST DIVERSE

Pittsburgh-based company Niche has ranked Tampa Palms North as the most diverse neighborhood in Florida. Just north of Temple Terrace, the location ranked highly for ethnic and economic diversity. The city of Tampa proper ranked No. 3 on the list. Niche calculated rankings using statistics gathered from the census. Im

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#### Tampa Confidential

Local Knowledge

Interview By Kathryn Deen Photography By Gabriel Burgos

#### ANDREA GONZMART WILLIAMS

5TH GENERATION OWNER AND OPERATOR OF COLUMBIA RESTAURANT GROUP

#### ABOUT ME

#### I started working in restaurants when I was

10. After graduating from the University of South Florida (USF) in business management, I became the first female to work in the kitchen at the Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City in 2001. I moved on to being assistant manager at various locations and then transitioned to corporate.

Outside of work, I serve on the board of directors for the USF Foundation and the Florida Aquarium, as well as the Humane Society Advisory Council. My favorite job is being a mom to Amelia. My wonderful husband, Beau, supports everything I do.

#### MY LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

For a cup of tea, I love The Blind Tiger Cafe. I have become obsessed with their chai tea by TeBella.

One of my favorite spots for brunch is Counter Culture for something savory. I love Chef Jeannie Pierola's restaurants.

For a client or business meal, I prefer the Columbia in Ybor right across from my office. My go-to order is the "1905" Salad with turkey, no Swiss and the Shrimp "Al Ajillo" appetizer all day long.

When spending a family day out, one of our favorite things is to ride our bikes along the Tampa Riverwalk. We stop for drinks at Ulele and my daughter loves visiting the Tampa Bay History Center.

**My favorite place for a night out** with friends is Bernini. It's always had that big-city feel to it.

One of my favorite shops is La France in Ybor. It has beautiful jewelry, hats and big flowers for my hair. Another favorite is Downtown Dogs in Hyde Park Village for my German shepherd, Jenny.

My Tampa hidden gems are Grand Cathedral Cigars and The Attic at Rock Brothers. Grand Cathedral is so unassuming and relaxed, and it has such a great selection. The Attic is a very intimate, laid-back setting for cocktails and live music.

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## Bites + Brews

Bites + Brews

Brunch

#### 2022 BRUNCH GUIDE

**BEST BRUNCH SPOTS IN TAMPA** 

Story By Leah Garcia Photography By Gabriel Burgos

Evocative of weekend celebrations, sipping champagne and indulging in the best of both savory and sweet, brunch is more than just a meal – it's an occasion. Tampanians visit their favorite restaurants and new ones, nosh on adventurous food combinations and linger for hours with family and friends. With brunch, there are no rules. The possibilities – and mimosas – are endless. Read on to discover some of Tampa's best brunch spots.

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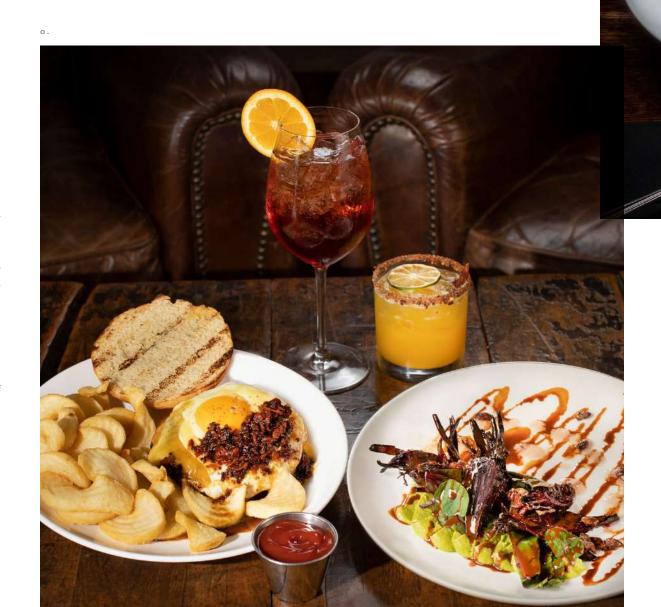
or alfresco on the patio.

KITCHEN & BAR

Escape to your favorite neighborhood brunch spot tucked away in the food-focused Epicurean Hotel. Delight in elevated versions of timeless morning classics from around the world in the heart of South Tampa. Dine inside amongst local art in a vibrant setting

"Our brunch menu is seasonal, fresh and simple," Executive Chef Adam Hyatt says. "We practice discipline with our technique and add a touch of something distinct to make it our own."

1207 S. Howard Ave., Tampa (813) 999-8726 elevagetampa.com





#### HAIKU

Haiku's brunch has an eclectic, relaxed atmosphere, offering guests indoor and outdoor seating. The menu features Japanese-inspired brunch food and brunch-themed craft cocktails.

Far from your typical eggs-and-bacon brunch, Haiku's Asian-fusion brunch menu is offered from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Sunday and is packed with options like ramen, sushi, yakitori and other mouthwatering selections.

Some of the chef's recommendations include Haiku's pork belly tamagoyaki, made with a Japanese omelet, pork belly, tomato soy broth, scallion and potatoes. The traditional Japanese omelet is served open over fried rice. Another popular specialty is the decadent Wagyu and eggs, served with roasted potatoes, eggs to order and soy demi.

"We offer specialty entrees, including Japanese style omelets, Wagyu and Kobe steak, sushi rolls and hot appetizers," General Manager Muslima Yusupova says. "We also host local artists on our patio monthly for our Haikus and Poetry gathering, where brunchers can listen to local writers, poets and musicians."

808 N. Franklin St., Tampa | (813) 644-5787 | haikutampa.com

BITES + BREWS



#### Bites + Brews

Brunch

С.

#### DATZ

With locations in South Tampa, Riverview and St. Petersburg, Datz is the Bay area's staple brunch destination, specializing in all things decadent and cravable.

The menu at Datz is anything but ordinary. The flagship for Datz Restaurant Group, Datz serves a wide range of traditional brunch dishes made with hearty, flavorful ingredients. Options include The Lumberjack, which has three eggs, sausage, ham, bacon, toast and a side of your choice, and Avocado Toast with fresh heirloom tomatoes.

A foodie destination, Datz is also home to fun creations like the Waffles N' Tweet, a combination of waffles and crispy chicken tenders topped with honeyed-pecan butter, bourbon maple syrup and candied pecans.

Datz makes it easy to make any dish vegetarian-friendly, with modification options like vegan "chicken," egg, cheese and chorizo. Handcrafted caffeinated beverages, eyecatching cocktails and mocktails are also abundant, and their new shareable Mimosa Pitchers have become an instantaneous fan-favorite.

A creation that guests can't get enough of is Datz's take on a Nashville Hot, which sandwiches honey-drizzled, spicy crispy chicken tenders between a sweet, house-made cinnamon sugar doughnut.

"People are coming out of the woodwork to try our new Nashville Chicken Doughnut," says John Marchetti, Marketing Director at Datz Restaurant Group. "We provide the staples people think of when they think of brunch, but add a flair to them that people may not be expecting. There's something for everyone on our menu."

Marchetti adds, "Datz is the go-to brunch destination in Tampa Bay. If you want exciting, tasty, Instagram-worthy food to share with family and friends, there isn't a place better."

Eager to please, the minds at Datz never stop creating. New and seasoned brunchers can look forward to upcoming items like Datz's Signature Cereal Pancakes. Whether you're in a Lucky Charms or Captain Crunch mood, Datz is crafting up seasonally inspired, cereal-themed pancake stacks, each available for a limited time only. With such an expansive and creative menu, it's no surprise that Datz is a brunch staple across Tampa Bay.

Locations in Tampa, St. Petersburg & Riverview datztampa.com







Bites + Brews
Brunch

#### d. ROME + FIG GLOBAL BISTRO

Globally inspired meals crafted with locally sourced ingredients in a scratch kitchen is what brunchers can expect to find at Rome & Fig Global Bistro in North Hyde Park.

Brunchers love Rome & Fig's avocado toast, caprese toast, french toast sticks and better-than-bottomless mimosas.

"We serve really good, handcrafted food in a great, energetic atmosphere. We're friendly, outgoing and want you to feel like part of our family," Owner Kristine Zostant says. "Owner and chef-led, every meal is curated using 20 years of industry knowledge."

Apart from a mouthwatering menu featuring the freshest ingredients, Rome & Fig's patio has become a popular destination for brunch gatherings, parties and bridal and baby showers.

317 N. Rome Ave., Tampa | (813) 253-3353 romeandfigbistro.com

#### e. CRU CELLARS

Known for a phenomenal wine program, Cru Cellars also excels in the culinary art of brunch. The menu is packed with fun items like the unique Bahn Mi Benedict made with Tasso Ham and the Français omelette made with Grand Cru gruyere, and served with maple-smoked gouda polenta and a croissant. On the sweet side, the oven-toasted cinnamon roll served with coffee chevre, crushed pralines and hazelnut dust is a customer favorite.

"Overall, our brunch is one of the best in Tampa," CEO Kyle King says. "Our dedication to quality food and beverage, coupled with our high energy atmosphere and amazing staff, make all three of our locations amazing places to enjoy brunch."

Locations in Armature Works, Palma Ceia and Westshore Marina | crucellars.com

#### f. KONA GRILL

A Tampa happy hour favorite is now offering more to love with the introduction of its weekend brunch. Kona Grill's diverse menu offerings span traditional, all-American breakfast to Hawaiian-inspired dishes like the Kona Loco, Kona Grill's take on the traditional Hawaiian loco moco made with seared spam and a beef patty placed atop a bed of jasmine rice, sautéed onion, shiitake mushrooms, furikake and a sunny-side-up egg.

In an upscale, contemporary atmosphere, brunchers can also enjoy Kona-mosas in seven flavors, including hibiscus, raspberry and blueberry.

4134 W. Boy Scout Blvd., #1, Tampa (813) 877-5938 | konagrill.com )
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"If you're looking for a twist on traditional brunch, then Steelbach is a must," says Kyle Matos, chief marketing officer of Three Oaks Hospitality. "The overall experience from the moment you walk in the door to the moment you leave is Southern hospitality at its best. There's really nothing quite like it in Tampa."

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1902 N. Ola Ave., Tampa (813) 693-5478 | steelbach.com

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#### **NOBLE CRUST**

There's something for everyone at Noble Crust, a multi-location Italian- and Southern-inspired eatery.

Creative dishes like strawberry cheesecake french toast are available, along with regionally inspired options like Sicilian tuna carpaccio.

"Our teams have a passion for providing the food and service we've become known for," Executive Director of Marketing Bradley Elia says. "When you pair this with good music and good vibes, you get our awardwinning weekend southern brunch."

In Noble Crust's polished, yet well-worn atmosphere, brunchers can enjoy Saturdays and Sundays until 2:30 p.m. They offer \$2 mimosas and \$4 sangria and bloody marys during their Saturday brunch.

Locations in Carrollwood, St. Petersburg & Wesley Chapel noble-crust.com



tampamagazines.com

Bites + Brews Brunch

#### SHELLY'S CAFE TAMPA

How does a couple with no culinary experience create a North Tampa breakfast mainstay? Ask Shelly Nguyen, owner of Shelly's Cafe.

"It was on my bucket list," Nguyen says. "My husband and I researched, ate at every breakfast place we knew and experimented in our kitchen, getting feedback from family and friends."

At Shelly's, that's what it's about – food that makes you feel like you're in your mom's kitchen. With a casual atmosphere where servers remember your name, the menu is approachable, affordable and features the classics you know and love.

14837 N. Florida Ave., Tampa (813) 373-6108 | facebook.com/ shellyscafetampa



**BARTERHOUSE YBOR** 

The vibe at Barterhouse Ybor is elevated, yet cozy, home to sustainably curated plates that utilize the best of Tampa's local farms.

"We offer a sophisticated Ybor West End brunch," owner Kenneth Emery says. "Just behind the exposed brick walls of historic Ybor, you can find us serving modern American cuisine while capturing the authentic feel of Tampa Bay."

A carefully crafted menu includes classic brunch items alongside unique and imaginative meals, such as eggs sardou, cold-smoked salmon tartine, the guest favorite smash burger and a variety of craft cocktails.

1811 N. 15th St., Ste. A, Tampa (813) 542-1710 | barterhouseybor.com





A brunchery where your plate is always a work of art, WonderWaffel's German culinary creations are as beautiful as they are delicious.

"We are a unique concept from Europe. All of our food and drinks are made to order," owner Marina Marrer shares. "We try to add a little bit of wonder to your brunch. Dishes are artistically decorated and we personalize our sweet WonderWaffels with your name on the plate."

The menu features savory and sweet WonderWaffels packed to the brim with fresh ingredients alongside fresh homemade juices, shakes and coffees. Im

14379 N. Dale Mabry Hwy. Tampa | (813) 533-1991 wonderwaffel.de



House, a Seminole Heights gem where every menu item begins with the letter C. The C House is celebrating four years of business this month. With an elegant, yet cozy atmosphere, it's easy to see why it's such a popular destination.

Danna Haydar says. "Many people get dressed up to join us for a great steak and some Napa Cab. Others come in casual gear for a beer on the patio. It makes my heart smile to see both vibes co-existing."

6005 N. Florida Ave., Tampa



"Consciously curated, classically cool" is the mantra at The C "We offer live music every day on our covered patio," Owner On the menu, chicken and waffles and crawfish cake benedict are fan favorites. (813) 488-4813 | thechouse.com



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STATELY ELEGANCE

by Kathryn Deen

Home Design



#### STATELY ELEGANCE

A St. Petersburg coastal home draws upon Northeastern inspiration to create a classic, yet fresh family treasure

Story By Kathryn Deen

INTERIOR DESIGNERS: MICHELLE WIEBE AND SHAUNA FREEMAN, OF STUDIO M BUILDER: MONOGRAM BUILDERS ARCHITECT: DON COOPER, OF COOPER JOHNSON SMITH PETERSON PHOTOGRAPHER: UNEEK LUXURY

Enter the grand brick home along Brightwaters Boulevard in St. Petersburg and you'll feel like you're in the Hamptons or Martha's Vineyard. That's because the team that brought the new build to life took inspiration from those Northeastern gems as they started from scratch to create a custom, one-of-a-kind treasure for a husband and wife and their two children. Construction started in 2017 on the two-story, 8,785-square-foot home facing Tampa Bay and the family took up residence in 2019. The interior design team was made up of Michelle Wiebe, principal designer and founder of Clearwaterbased Studio M, and Shauna Freeman, senior designer.

"They wanted it to feel like a coastal house, but wanted it classic, elegant and timeless," Wiebe says. "I think we achieved that while giving it a fresh, modern interpretation."

The layout consists of four bedrooms and six-and-a-half bathrooms. The sophisticated, traditional home exudes maturity in the main rooms, but several kid-centric spaces are strategically built in, including a media room and a bonus room. The bonus room is

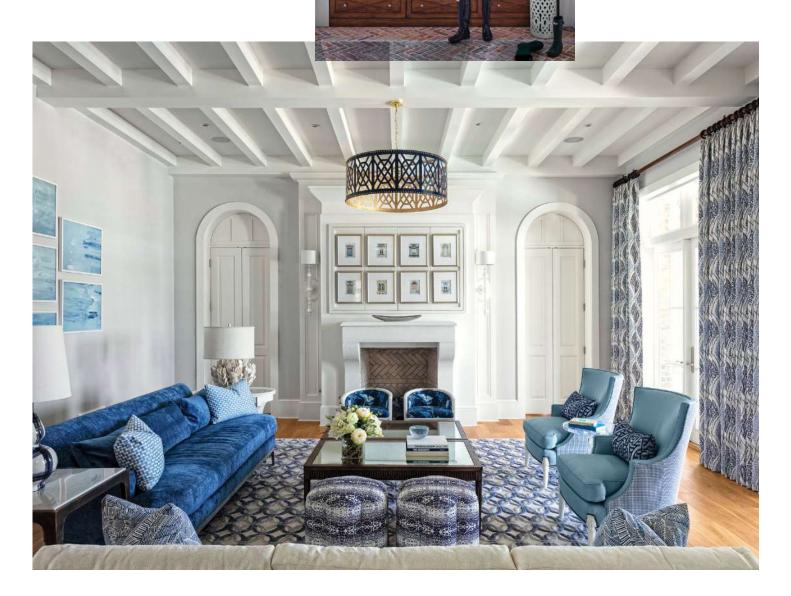


a. This Northeastern-inspired St. Petersburg home's backyard includes a large pool and hot tub, an outdoor kitchen and several lounge areas fronting the water. **b.** At two stories tall with a four-car garage, there's plenty of well-designed space to accommodate a family and their guests.

HOME + GARDEN TAMPA MAGAZINES tampamagazines.com

Home + Garden

Home Design



**c.** The mud room sports an antique brick floor in a herringbone pattern. **d.** The family room showcases the home's coastal color scheme of blues and whites. An art-decorated hidden door above the fireplace disguises the TV when not in use. French doors flank the back wall, offering the residence's best view of the water.

the ultimate slumber party pad and play area, complete with four trundle beds, video games, puzzles, art, board games and a wet bar. It's so spacious that the kids have even practiced gymnastics in there. Wisely positioned over the four-car garage, it's an area where they can have fun and be loud without disturbing the rest of the household.

The light, bright color scheme encorporates shades of Bay-inspired watery blue and white into most of the rooms. The millwork was an important part of the design concept, such as



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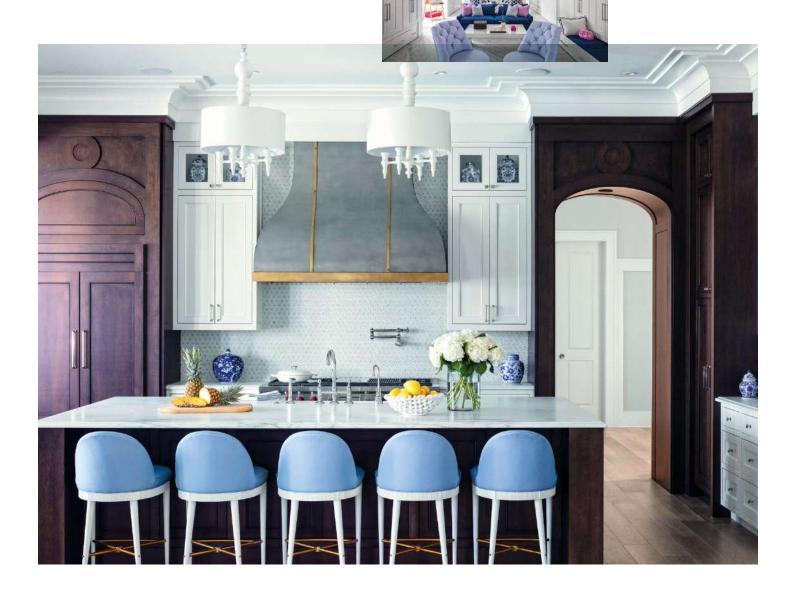
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Home Design



- e. A spacious bonus room set off above the garage gives the children their own place to play and host slumber parties.
- **f.** Custom cabinetry was a signature part of the design, as well as stacked crown molding, both implemented in the kitchen, among other rooms.

stacked crown molding, tongue-and-groove wood paneling and Wainscoting. Other signature elements include custom cabinetry, as well as custom vanities in every bathroom.

"This was a very hand-crafted design," Wiebe notes.

The timelessness continues with the classic stairwell, traditional plumbing fixtures, marble and natural stone counters, wide-plank white oak hardwood floors and natural stone floors.

"This home will never go out of style," Wiebe comments.

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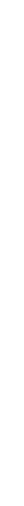
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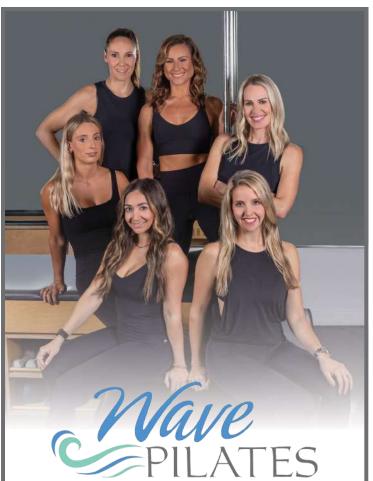




High-end materials cover every inch of this luxurious residence. Motorized window treatments cater to convenience. Studio M provided all of the furniture, even selecting fabrics and finishes, as well as the art, including a painting commissioned by popular New Orleans artist Johnston Burkhardt.

While every bedroom faces the water, the room with the best view is undoubtedly the family room flanked by French doors, as well as the kitchen breakfast nook. Out back, a large pool, hot tub, outdoor kitchen and fire pit lounge area take advantage of waterfront views.

"This client was so happy, so gracious and so excited," Wiebe recalls. "This house is one of our all-time favorites, from how sweet the family is to how wonderful it turned out. It checked off every item on their wishlist."



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Favorite Things

#### ECO CHIC

Bring fabulous flair to any room with these delightful, eye-catching pieces chosen by Tampabased interior designer Sarit Marcus. Marcus is the founder of Minted Space, an online boutique offering a curated selection of eco-chic home furnishings, decor and lighting.













#### Glitz And Glam

Reminiscent of old Hollywood glam but with today's eco-friendly mindset, this gorgeous **Galahad Blue Chandelier** is made of recycled glass and recast glass discs, making it an eco-chic home run. "I love everything about this light fixture, from the beautiful blue hue and empirical shape to the sustainable materials and strong presence it casts in a room," Marcus says.

curreyandcompany.com

#### Soft Curves

The balance of cozy sophistication in the Amelia Curved 2-Seater Sofa's design is achieved with a play on soft curves and boucle fabric, which contrast with the gold metal base. The polyester fabric and metal are both recyclable. "This versatile piece elevates any office, sitting room or lounge space," Marcus notes.

mintedspace.com

#### Au Naturel

Simplicity at its finest speaks volumes in a room. Made from sustainable, regenerative acacia wood, the **Plank Top Console Table** makes a statement with its subtle nod to the wabi-sabi aesthetic, naturalizing any space. "I am drawn to the organic shape, rich-yet-airy wood tones and minimalist design of this console," Marcus shares.

palecek.com

#### Golden Reflections

Mirrors, such as the Ibiza Mirror (Antique Gold), add dimension to a room and help smaller spaces feel more expansive.

Glass has a much lower embodied energy than many other materials and is 100% recyclable. "I love the organic, hand carved shape of this mirror, which is complimented by the classic antique gold finish," Marcus exclaims.

mintedspace.com

#### Tall Order

Made from natural jute rope woven on a wooden frame with a pewter finished footrest, the Melrose 30" Barstool is the epitome of eco-chic. Jute is a very sustainable fiber which requires very little water to grow, is biodegradable, regenerative and recyclable. "The popularity of casual dining at the kitchen island has shown that this trend is here to stay," Marcus states.

palecek.com

#### Personal Pod

With a circular shape and rotating system, this ideal leisure spot offers sun protection with the top cover, which is available in a polypropylene cord braid, as well as a Sunvison fabric. "Pergolas and round daybeds are skyrocketing in demand right now and this **Ulm Moon Daybed** offers the best of both worlds," Marcus points out.

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# Purely Tampa

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CING ON THE CAK By Leah Garcia KATE JACKSON:
AHEAD OF HER TIME

#### Purely Tampa

Made in Tampa

# ICING ON THE CAKE

How one baker turned her childhood passion into a satisfying career

Story By Leah Garcia Photography By Gabriel Burgos

Kristina Lavallee has baking in her blood. The owner of the Tampa-based bakery The Cake Girl was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico and raised in Vega Baja by her mother, Margarita Perez, a chef and caterer. Perez would teach her how to use her imagination and creativity to make beautiful desserts. When they weren't in the kitchen, Lavallee would beg her mother to take her to the grocery store to gawk at the baked goods.

Growing up, Lavallee's mother instilled in her a love of cooking and a commitment to use high-quality ingredients — practical knowledge that would serve her well throughout her career. Perez also taught her principles that would form the culture at The Cake Girl: do the right thing, give A+ customer service and treat everyone like family.

Moving to Orlando at 15, Lavallee's passion for baking intensified, and so did her drive. After completing high school, she studied at the University of Central Florida's Rosen College of Hospitality Management, where she obtained bachelor's degrees in hospitality management and restaurant and foodservice management. For Lavallee, it was her handson experience that further allowed her to hone her craft.

"At school I learned the science behind baking, recipes and techniques," Lavallee says. "But my true education took place outside of the classroom. In my first job, someone took a chance on me and I learned through practicing in the kitchen."

Since then, Lavallee has continued to merge her innate talent with her love of learning the latest trends and techniques, often from researching on Google and YouTube. After working in small local bakeries, custom highend bakeries and a wholesale bakery, Lavallee decided to pursue her dream of having her own business.

"It wasn't called The Cake Girl back then, but I was doing cakes for family and friends and I gained a bit of traction," she recalls. "I eventually met Kirby, my husband, and he came up with the name The Cake Girl."



a.

a. Nearly anything is possible for The Cake Girl, including this custom Louis Vuitton birthday cake made with intricate fondant details like a belt and gift tag with realistic stitching.









d.

#### **Purely Tampa**

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After getting married and moving to Tampa, Lavallee went all-in on The Cake Girl. She sold her baked goods at a farmers market, a dessert truck and a smaller store before landing in her current location in Carrollwood.

Today, The Cake Girl is a full-service, award-winning cake and cupcake shop specializing in mini cupcakes, custom cakes and wedding cakes made from scratch daily. The Cake Girl features a daily rotation of 10 flavors of mini cupcakes, which amounts to 62 flavors weekly. The shop also offers eight flavors of Florida-made premium ice cream, made with butterfat, making it creamy, indulgent and perfect to pair with fresh brownies or cookie dough.

#### If You Can Dream It, She Can Bake It

Lavallee's delicious, beautiful creations have propelled The Cake Girl to national popularity. Her cakes have been featured on Fox News, ABC, NBC, CBS and Telemundo. She has won WeddingWire's Couples Choice Award, Tampa Bay Business Journal's Business Woman of the Year and also has been nominated for its 40 Under 40 for two years in a row.

Additionally, The Cake Girl has amassed a sizable Instagram following of 92,000 accounts. Her creations range from hyper-realistic cake renditions of characters and objects to grandiose, larger-than-life creations made with incredible intricacy and attention to detail.

Lavallee says Instagram has helped her reach new Tampa clients for custom birthday and wedding cakes and has contributed to the success of her signature Crave'n Cups, of which 14,000 have shipped nationwide.

Chris Frederick, business owner and professional soccer player for the Florida Tropics SC, has been a longtime client, ordering custom cakes for his business, WiFi Money, as well as for his family.

"Working with Kristina sets the standard for some of the best desserts I've ever tasted," he says. "In particular, I loved the custom dinosaur cake she made for my son's birthday, as well as her staple Crave'n Cups cake jars."

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Lavallee never shies away from a tall order.

"I enjoy the challenging cakes the most - a 3D cake, a difficult shape like a plane, you name it," she reflects. "I love getting lost in that kind of work. We just made an 8-foot-tall cake; it was our biggest, most grand cake yet."

Behind the scenes, Lavallee's business partner and biggest supporter is her husband, Kirby, who works hard to help make

"A lot of people wonder how we haven't killed each other yet working together," she jokes. "But we love it. Kirby is so good at the marketing side of the business, with social media, customer relations and communications."

Although Kirby mostly works on the business side, he can also be found dabbling in the creative.

"Sometimes, when it's busy you can even find him decorating," she adds. "I work best when I'm hands-on, so it's a perfect partnership.

Kristina and Kirby have turned their perfect partnership into a thriving business. Their clientele includes several Buccaneers and Lightning players, large companies like Beasley Media Group, Outfront Media, Ashley Furniture, Baycare Health, Tampa International Airport and more.

"Working with my wife, Kristina, is truly a blessing," Kirby reflects. "We have been best friends for years and have learned to support each other and work together to crush our goals. There's no one else I'd rather navigate the business world with than my wife, and we push each other to be better every day."

Meredith Andrade, radio co-host on Wild 94.1 FM's Orlando and The Freak Show, is a client who's been there from the beginning.

"It's been amazing to see the growth and passion Kristina has for her beautiful craft," Andrade notes. "As my family grew, she's been with me every step of the way. She's made me baby shower cakes, birthday cupcakes for my daughters and so many others."

She adds, "Kristina goes out of her way to listen to every detail you want and just like magic her cakes turn into a masterful work of art. I've been blessed to meet her family members who are all such sweet, kind and very charitable individuals who go out of their way to help the Tampa Bay community."

With the continued success of her bakery, what has remained foundational to Kristina are the family values, passed down from her mother, that are at the heart of her work at The Cake Girl. Although running a business full time keeps both Kristina and Kirby busy, they savor rare time off with family and their

"The Cake Girl is my life, so I feel like I eat, breathe and sleep cake," Lavallee gushes. "I look back at how things started, and I still can't believe where we are today." I



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Purely Tampa

History

# KATE JACKSON: AHEAD OF HER TIME

Story By Rodney Kite-Powell

Tampa's Kate Jackson was a bold leader and entrepreneur who helped pave the way for future females. Born in 1857 to pioneering parents, her gender would keep her from attaining official leadership roles, unlike her brothers. But she wouldn't let it stop her from making a significant impact throughout her community.

Jackson's parents, John and Ellen Jackson, immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1840s from Ireland. John worked his way from New York to Tampa via New Orleans and St. Augustine, where he met and married Ellen Maher. They settled in Tampa, where John worked as a surveyor and operated a general store. He completed three surveys of Tampa, and his 1853 survey is still used as the legal reference for land in what is now Downtown Tampa.

The Jacksons were devout Catholics, which was somewhat uncommon in early Tampa. They funded the first Catholic parish, St. Louis Parish, in the 1880s (the precursor to Sacred Heart) and they sent Kate Jackson to Key West to one of the only Catholic girls schools in the state.

Jackson enjoyed her time so much at the Mary Immaculate Convent that she worked with the Sisters of the Holy Names to start a school in Tampa. Two French nuns from Key West arrived in 1881 in Tampa to establish what is now the Academy of the Holy Names.

Jackson's devotion to Tampa was almost as strong as it was to the Roman Catholic Church. While one of her brothers served as Tampa's mayor for two terms and another became a doctor and medical school professor in New York City, Kate's career was confined by the conventions of the time to what was called "women's work." The restrictions of the era did not preclude her from being a major shareholder in Citizens Bank (one of Tampa's three major banks at the time), along with her brothers.

In addition to her efforts to bring the academy to Tampa, she also founded the Tampa Civic Association and pushed Tampa's male politicians to accept funding for a public library from the Carnegie Foundation. She also spoke passionately about the need to clean up the city (including enforcing the municipality's no spitting ordinance), and perhaps most importantly, about creating and maintaining public parks and recreation areas for children. It is in this last area that Jackson's legacy is most obvious today. The Kate Jackson Recreation Center in Hyde Park is not only named in her honor, but it is on what was once her property. The center even has the same address as her home: 821 S. Rome Ave.

The path to becoming a city park and community center was not a straight one. Upon Jackson's death, the property was turned over to the Catholic Church,



which a month later converted the home to a kindergarten for Sacred Heart Academy. During World War II, the National Catholic Community Service used the home as a USO residence club for the wives and families of servicemen who were training in Tampa. As many as 30 women could be accommodated, dormitory style, in the spacious home. During Thanksgiving in 1944, the USO club hosted 60 servicemen and their families there.

The City of Tampa acquired the home in 1944, but use by the USO did not end until after the close of World War II. In March 1946, city workers began the task of remaking the home into a community center. By 1947, though, Jackson's name was no longer associated with the property and instead it became known as the Anderson Community Center.

The Jackson home, built in 1911, was falling into disrepair by the late 1960s and by 1972 it was being called dilapidated, a fire trap and a monstrosity. The once-grand home could not survive many years of deferred maintenance and neglect at the hands of a cash-strapped city. The house finally met its end in 1973.

The demolition of Jackson's home actually served as a new beginning for her being recognized for her contributions toward recreation and community spirit. The property was renamed in her honor in 1975 and a new community center soon opened onsite.

The new center was used daily and as the Hyde Park neighborhood experienced a renaissance, the need for a bigger and better Kate Jackson Community Center

Photography by Gabriel Burgos (a.), Courtesy of the Tampa Bay History Center Collection, Gift of Lula Joughin Dovi (b.)





Purely Tampa

grew as well. By the late 1990s, the city began to make improvements to the park, including the installation of the now-iconic lions fountain at Rome and Morrison avenues. New wroughtiron fencing and sidewalks were installed and three years later, ground was broken on a new, 8,000-square-foot community center. The new center was dedicated on May 19, 2003 by outgoing Tampa Mayor Dick Greco.

While the community center is Jackson's most visible lasting legacy, her immediate legacy upon her death may better sum up how she lived her life. Her final will outlined the distribution of her substantial wealth. Though several organizations within the Catholic Church (totaling \$33,000) were the largest beneficiaries, a variety of other organizations and individuals received bequests as well. Presuming that her male relatives were already well-positioned to be successful, Jackson recognized several nieces and grand-nieces in her will (though she did give money to a favored nephew, John A. Jackson, Jr.), according to biographer Doris Weatherford.

Perhaps more interesting, she also gave \$5,000 to Christmas Rahming and \$2,000 to Felix Bain. Rahming and Bain were African-American employees of Jackson's, described in her will as "my faithful servants for many years." Rahming, who was 70, and Bain, 47, lived in individual homes on her property.

Given the racial attitudes of the time, which are reflected in her description of Rahming and Bain, Jackson's gifts of what in today's dollars would amount to around \$40,000 for Bain and nearly \$100,000 for Rahming were extraordinarily rare, showing the true character of Jackson – a woman ahead of her time. ™

Rodney Kite-Powell is a Tampa-born author, the official historian of Hillsborough County and the director of the Touchton Map Library at the Tampa Bay History Center, where he has worked since 1995.

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# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA IS PRODUCING POWERFUL WOMEN LEADERS

Story By Kathryn Deen Photography By Gabriel Burgos

For our second annual Women's edition of TAMPA Magazines, we are celebrating powerhouse women produced by the University of South Florida (USF) – the fastest-rising university in America, according to U.S. News and World Report's 2022 Best Colleges ranking. While USF is relatively young, founded in 1956, the list of successful female leaders it has produced is lengthy, and many have given back to their alma mater and the community in substantial ways.

Colleges may have started out as old boys clubs nearly two centuries ago, but many became coed in the 1900s and grew to have more females than males in attendance today. USF opened without gender restrictions, embracing diversity from the get-go, and has had female students outnumber males for many years.

"Everyone who started here felt comfortable here and had an equal opportunity to succeed," says Bill McCausland, USF Alumni Association executive director. "When you create this type of culture, it sets the stage for high-achieving individuals and is conducive to success regardless of who you are or where you're from."

USF has launched several initiatives to ensure that its female students soar, such as the Women and Leadership Initiative in the business college, the Women in STEM committee, and the Stampede for Women Supporting USF Women's Athletics. In addition, USF has a Women in Engineering Chapter and an Oceanography Camp for Girls. In 2005, Women in Leadership and Philanthropy (WLP) was created as the first of its kind in the region. In 2016, WLP partnered with Valley Bank to enhance student leadership programming by forming the Women Who Ignite Student Engagement (WISE) Advisory Council. Clearly, this is a school that cares about helping women realize their full potential.



#### She's Got The Power

Melissa Seixas credits her education and relationships at USF for helping her rise to state president of Duke Energy Corporation, serving 1.9 million electric customers in Florida. Seixas earned her master's in American history from USF in 1996 while working part-time at Duke Energy's legacy company, Florida Power Corporation.

"The hands-on experience of working in distribution engineering as a draftsperson, married with the overall engagement in a liberal arts program, gave me the foundation and skills I continue to use today to interpret, communicate, analyze, strategize and plan," Seixas says.

Energy may be male dominated, but Seixas has always felt supported in her 35 years climbing the ranks at Duke Energy. Her predecessor, the CEO and half of her direct reports are females, and she encourages women to consider promotions.

"When I look at my circle of friends, mentors and people I look up to, several of them I met at USF and they have remained as important relationships in my life," Seixas says. "How the connections have carried through the decades illustrates how special the environment was."

She stays extremely involved with her alma mater, serving on USF's Board of Trustees, plus as the chair of the St. Petersburg Campus Advisory Board. In 2019, she received the USFSP Regional Chancellor Award for Civic Leadership.

"USF is making incredible strides," Seixas says.

"Our job is to make sure the rest of the world knows how valuable USF is."

Seixas also finds impactful ways to give back. As Duke's government community relations manager, she has worked with USF on charitable giving. Her community engagement includes previously serving on the boards of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium and Pinellas County Urban League, and as the St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership's first female chair.



#### Top Of The Class

You can't tell this story without celebrating Rhea Law, who made history this spring as the university's first alum president. Of eight total presidents, Law became USF's third female. She is defying odds, as only about one-third of U.S. college and university presidents are women, according to the American Council on Education.

"I'm very proud and humbled to have the confidence of the board of trustees and governors to take on the leadership of this university," she says. "If there ever was an example that you can accomplish anything if you put your mind to it and have the support around you to make it happen, it's me – and it is incumbent upon me and this university that we pass that along to others."

Law chose USF because it offered its employees six hours of free classes per semester. For nearly a decade, she worked as a research project administrator in the Office of Sponsored Research during the day and took courses at night. She graduated from USF in 1977 with a bachelor's degree and cashed in her vested retirement with the university to pay for law school elsewhere.

"I came into the university with a lot of hopes and dreams, but maybe not the confidence to carry them out," Law says. "The faculty and staff that I interacted with every day were encouraging. It was an atmosphere of support and they made me believe that I could accomplish anything I put my mind to."

She went on to become president and CEO of Florida law firm Fowler White Boggs while continuing to serve on USF's Research Foundation Board. She was tapped for two USF presidential search committees, and was selected to USF's inaugural Board of Trustees, eventually becoming the first and only female chair. This year, Law was surprised to be asked to step into the role of interim president and then president.

"This institution has meant so much to me," she says.

"Being close to an institution like this is so exhilarating, fulfilling and important, specifically a research university of such high stature in the country. When they called my name to help, it was never on my radar, but I couldn't say no."

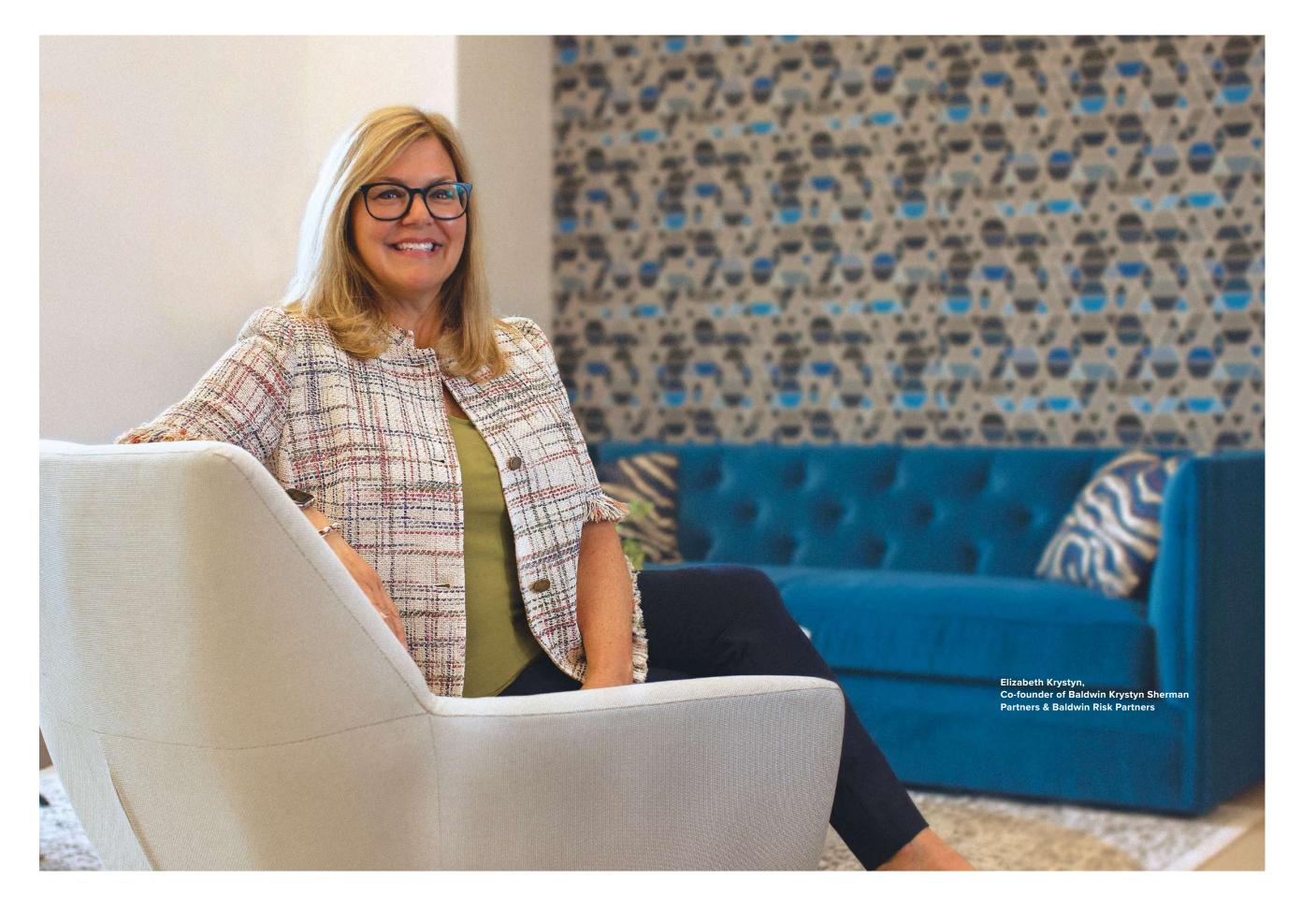
She has big plans to move the university forward, and having been involved so intimately with USF for over five decades has surely prepared her to thrive at the helm.





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#### Leadership 'l'nsured

Elizabeth Krystyn is another Bull who has made a name for herself. Krystyn earned her bachelor's in finance at USF in 1987. She chose USF for its strong reputation and value as a Florida resident.

"It was a large school, but living on campus, it felt like a small community," says Krystyn, who still keeps up with her USF friends. "It really prepared me well for life in the workplace and made me interested in insurance as a career."

Krystyn started her career with DavisBaldwin Insurance and Risk Management and then rose to senior vice president of Wachovia (now Wells Fargo) Insurance Services. In 2006, she cofounded Baldwin Krystyn Sherman (BKS) Partners, employing over 2,500 people today; followed by co-founding Baldwin Risk Partners in 2012, which went public in 2019.

USF recognized BKS Partners multiple times as a Fast 56 award recipient, among the fastest Bull-led businesses in the world. In fact, her team won numerous local and national awards. About five years ago, Krystyn joined USF's Women In Leadership and Philanthropy (WLP) and is sponsoring an endowed scholarship.

"Through WLP, I can make meaningful connections with young women in need and give back," she says. "My pride in being a Bull has grown exponentially."

Her generosity continues as a trustee for Tampa Preparatory School and Academy Prep Center of Tampa, a member of The Junior League of Tampa and LifePath Hospice Women of Philanthropy, and a leader in her Presbyterian church.



#### For Health's Sake

At 32, Marlene Joannie Bewa has already racked up a jaw-dropping list of accomplishments as a physician, researcher, consultant and global advocate for women's reproductive health. Bewa has been appointed as a United Nations Young Leader, invited by Canada's prime minister as a panelist and featured on Melinda Gates's list of influential women.

As a Fulbright Scholarship recipient, she earned her medical degree in Benin, West Africa, and her master's in public health from USF in 2018. She is completing her Ph.D. in public health at USF, impressed with its diversity and medical reputation. USF recognized her with its 2020 Outstanding Young Alumni Award, as well as its highest student honor, a Golden Bull Award.

"USF played a key role in propelling my career," Bewa says. "It reinforced that I belonged through all the opportunities I was offered, and it brought an addition to my skills, expertise and network."

The Benin native founded the Young Beninese Leaders Association in 2010 to focus on health, youth leadership and gender equality. In 2020, the World Health Organization invited her to its reproductive health expert advisory group. At USF, she led the Public Health Student Association and helped lead the aforementioned WISE group.

"I want to continue to do more public health and women's reproductive health research and policy work, but also to use my expertise to help organizations and institutions succeed, specifically using my leadership experiences to help them build a diverse pipeline of leaders," she shares.

Alumni Association President McCausland is in awe of Seixas, Law, Krystyn and Bewa.

"All of them are not just accomplished in their careers, but also in their communities," he says. "They have given back so much to the Tampa Bay region, USF and the state of Florida. I think that's what makes us so proud is that we are graduating people having an impact on society and the world who are extremely accomplished in different sectors and stages of their careers. I'm proud to be a Bull because of what they've done and how they represent USF."

Not only do these incredible women make USF proud; they make the entire Tampa community shine even brighter, as will many more to come. ■

G

Garrett Greco and his fiancée, Cody, are teaming up to bring the highest level of professional service to your real estate needs.

Greco, a third-generation Florida realtor, was raised in the world of real estate. He spent his childhood accompanying his mother on open houses and showings, eventually working alongside her at a woman-led luxury brokerage.

After becoming the youngest broker associate at his company, Greco founded Greco Real Estate.

Greco's depth of knowledge and professional service was shaped by the powerful women veteran agents he has learned from within the industry.

Garrett and Cody are devoted to doing what it takes for their clients to succeed.



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#### Page 72 Bright And Dewy Faces: Makeup And Skincare Tips Across The



Page 78 Summer Fashion Looks

Since its advent, makeup has been used by women as a powerful form of self-expression Females of all ages enhance their natural beauty and confidence and create glamorous looks. In the same way that most people adjust skincare routines as they age, most women's makeup choices evolve. With this in mind, we partnered with some of Tampa Bay's top makeup artists to give you three beautiful makeup looks and tips. The artists employ makeup to highlight their models' natural elegance and to show us that beauty is possible at every age, and every age

is beautiful. Later in this section, you'll find four summer fasion looks to have you ready for the

pool, beach, plane and night out, sourced from local boutiques throughout Tampa.

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Rigo Mendoza, MD is a board certified plastic surgeon that specializes in plastic surgery of the face, breast and body. Dr. Mendoza is able to offer many of his procedures under local anesthetic with oral sedation because he believes it enables the patients to have an easier recovery without the effects of general anesthesia.

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#### Big Book of Beauty

Makeup and Skincare

### **BRIGHT AND DEWY FACES**

## MAKEUP AND SKINCARE TIPS ACROSS THE AGES

Story By Leah Garcia Photography By Kristen Morris

20s To 30s

Makeup artist Crystal Joseph-Cobb wanted to create a classic, 90's-inspired look with a modern flair. To set up the look, she used Mac's Studio Fix foundation and Tarte's Shape Tape concealer. A subtle cut crease was created on the eyelids with a neutral eyeshadow palette. The application of Lilly Lashes adds a dramatic flair to the eyes. On her model's cheeks, she used Skinglass's Cream Blush which complimented classic nude brown lips created with a Mac lipliner and NYX's Soft Matte Lip Creme.

"The cut crease is a great makeup trend that gives the illusion of bigger eyes," Joseph-Cobb says. "This makeup look paired with a soft, playful hairstyle screams 'model off duty.'"

Her model, Lisa Tharakan, appreciated Joseph-Cobb creating a look that worked for her face shape. Tharakan is a Tampa Bay therapist transitioning into nursing with a creative side in writing and photography.

"I loved how bold and fun Crystal's look was," she says. "She made my skin appear poreless and flawless and the eye makeup made my eyes pop even more." When it comes to makeup and skincare, the artist notes the importance of taking care of your skin in your 20s and 30s.

"In our 20s, our skin is likely at its healthiest state. It is supple, has high elasticity, quick cell turnover and loads of collagen," she says. "Stay consistent and nail down a skincare routine that involves a facial cleanser, exfoliant, moisturizer and SPF."

Joseph-Cobb recommends that women in their 30s continue this routine while thinking preventatively. She suggests adding retinoids/ retinol and investing in creams that aid in collagen production, lock in hydration and combat hyperpigmentation and discoloration.

When it comes to makeup, she says that a woman's 20s and 30s are a great time to step out of the box.

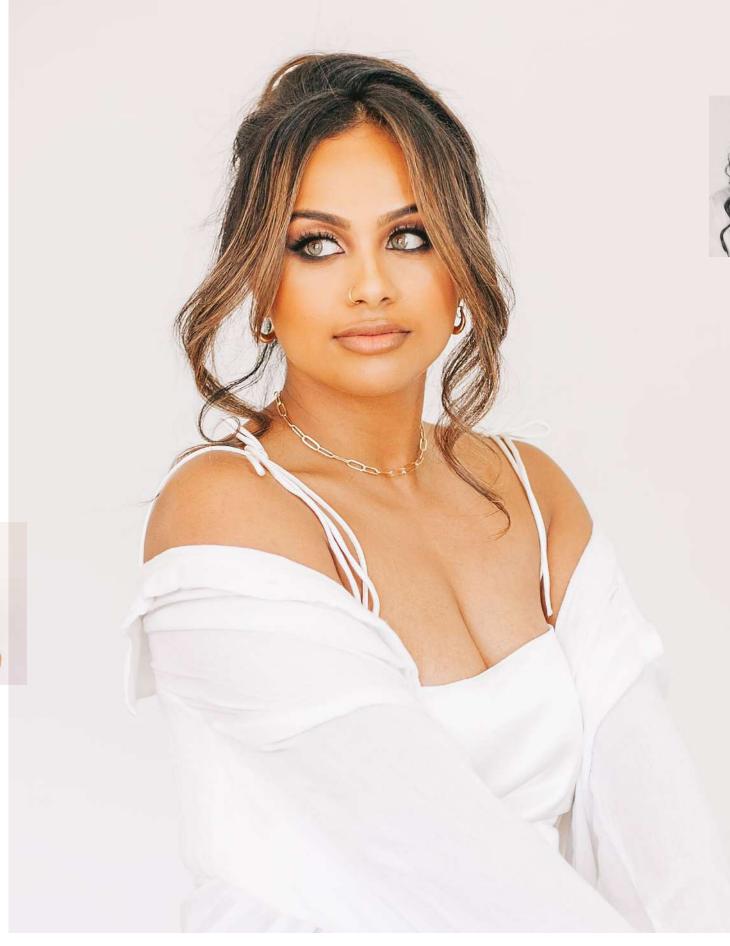
"Fashion and beauty trends are always cycling and repeating themselves, so don't be shy when dabbling in unconventional looks," she says. "Also, we have busy, on-the-go lives during these years, so multi-use makeup sticks are always a good idea. Who wouldn't want to be 'one and done' with their eyes, cheeks and lips?"

Joseph-Cobb sees each face as a unique canvas and views makeup as a creative outlet for expression and artistry.

"Eighty percent of my job is convincing women of how beautiful they already are," she adds. "I love building women up and instilling confidence in them. Makeup allows me to do just that."



About The
Photographer
Tampa-based Kristen
Morris started I'm Kristen
Photography in 2007 to bring
the color and personality of
stories to life with an eye for
detail. TAMPA Magazines
enlisted her talent for this
Women's edition.



Crystal Joseph-Cobb
is the owner of Beauty
Marked, a business
providing luxe hair and
makeup services for
individuals and groups.
She believes that everyone
has a "beauty mark" that
makes them unique in an
extraordinary way.



#### Big Book of Beauty

Makeup and Skincare



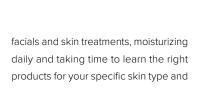
Makeup artist Jackie Riley wanted to highlight her model's natural features, bringing brightness to her face and accentuating her underlying beauty. Riley started with Charlotte Tilbury's Hollywood Flawless Face Filter foundation across her face for a light wash of color and all-over glow. Tarte's Shape Tape concealer was used sparingly where needed.

To create a subtle glow on her cheeks, she used Jaclyn Cosmetics's Mood Light Luminous highlighting powder and Mac's Glow Play. Riley also applied Kiss's cluster individual lashes to open up and lift the eyes. This stylish look was finished with a light coat of beauty cult classic L'Oréal Lash Paradise mascara. On her lips, Pat McGrath's lip liner and Charlotte Tillbury's tinted lip gloss created a full, pouty glow.

Riley's model, Kellie Collins, said the best part about the look was Riley's ability to address age, skin texture and tone with her makeup choices. Collins is a hairstylist and the owner of Salon BellaDonna in South Tampa.

"I instantly looked plump and hydrated because Jackie focuses on the problem area without drawing attention to it. She taught me that hydration is key," Collins says. "She used her unique talent to highlight my greatest assets. Even at 45 years old, I felt like a star when I left the chair."

For women in this age group, Riley notes the importance of getting regular



As for makeup, Riley's advice is to stay with products that have a satin finish and delicate glow. She recommends staying away from full coverage or matte products, as they highlight wrinkles and creases in the skin. For concealer, she says less is more – only use the product in areas with excess redness or discoloration.

"Another thing that works really well for this age group is primers," she says. "This ensures that your foundation won't settle into pores or fine lines and your eye makeup won't sit in creases and wrinkles near the corners of the eyes."

She adds, "I strive to be the best I can be when it comes to my work and give my clients a look that is jawdropping and has them leaving the chair feeling like their best selves. I was able to make a name for myself in this industry because I'm consistent and work hard to make every client leave feeling beautiful."



Jackie Riley is a makeup artist and beauty boss. She believes that the best makeup artists in the world use makeup to magnify the beauty that already exists.

#### Big Book of Beauty

Makeup and Skincare



Eugeniya "Jane"
Sverbilova is a self-taught, Tampa-based makeup artist specializing in commercial, bridal and special occasion makeup. She is constantly improving her skills by joining master classes and traveling to different cities and states for work.

#### 60s And Up

Sverbilova's focus for her model was a natural, lifting look using high-quality, lightweight makeup products. Starting with La Mer tonic and moisturizer, she utilized an Estée Lauder Futurist foundation and a Clarins moisturizing light concealer as the base for her model. Pressed powder by La Mer was applied to her skin for an even complexion. She filled in and gave a more defined shape to the model's brows with a brow pencil by Vivienne Sabo. Creamy bronzer and blush from Glossier Cosmetics were applied to her model's cheeks for a rosy color. On her eyes, she used neutral pigments from a Viseart Nude palette and finished the look with Tom Ford's Rosey Pink lipstick.

Makeup Artist Eugeniya "Jane"

Her model, Allison Wilkins, liked how the natural look fits with her active lifestyle. Wilkins is the owner of Allisongs for Tots in Hyde Park Village.

"I loved the application by Sverbilova. Her products were all high-quality and made my skin look and feel so dewy and fresh," she says. "The look gave me a simple, understated elegance and it was something I'd feel comfortable wearing every day."

For women in this age group, Sverbilova highlights that skincare before makeup application is very

"I would use lifting serums with happy eyes hyaluronic acid to moisturize the skin, this job."

along with a day or night cream," she suggests. "The most important thing is to protect the skin with SPF throughout the day."

For makeup, there are a few important rules that Sverbilova likes to stick to. She uses light moisturizing textures of foundation and concealer, and creamy, contouring products instead of powder to create a moisturized glow. For a lifting effect, she recommends blush, along with the application of individual lashes to brighten and open the eyes.

Sverbilova suggests staying away from black eyeliner, but using a brow pencil to lightly shape brows. She also recommends against highlighters for women in this age group. Instead, she suggests a matte powder with a deep pressure application to conceal wrinkles.

Sverbilova keeps up to date with the latest trends in the makeup industry and doesn't mind splurging on the best cosmetics to create her looks.

"I love meeting new people, traveling and being part of a professional, creative community," she says. "Seeing women's happy eyes is such a rewarding part of this job."







Turn heads while lounging poolside with these laid-back, yet chic pieces that are sure to make you feel luxurious during your time in the sunshine.

1. Out of Office Tote \$41 (Lex & Co., shoplexandco.com) 2. Krewe Collins Stella Sunglasses \$255 (Penelope T, penelopetboutique. com) 3. Bikini Wash \$28 (The Cabana South, thecabanasouth.com) 4. Lack of Color Hat \$128 (The Cabana South) 5. Dannijo Hawi Necklace \$245 (Penelope T) 6. Chunky Chain Bracelet \$30 (Don Me Now, donmenow.com) 7. Sunni Spencer Room & Linen Spray \$21 (Sunni Spencer, sunnispencer.com) 8. In The Nude Slides \$34 (Don Me Now) 9. Beach Purse \$125 (The Cabana South) 10. Adriana Pappas 14k Gold Plated Shell Bracelet \$69 (Sunni Spencer) 11. Araminta James Terry Beach Clutch \$79 (Penelope T)

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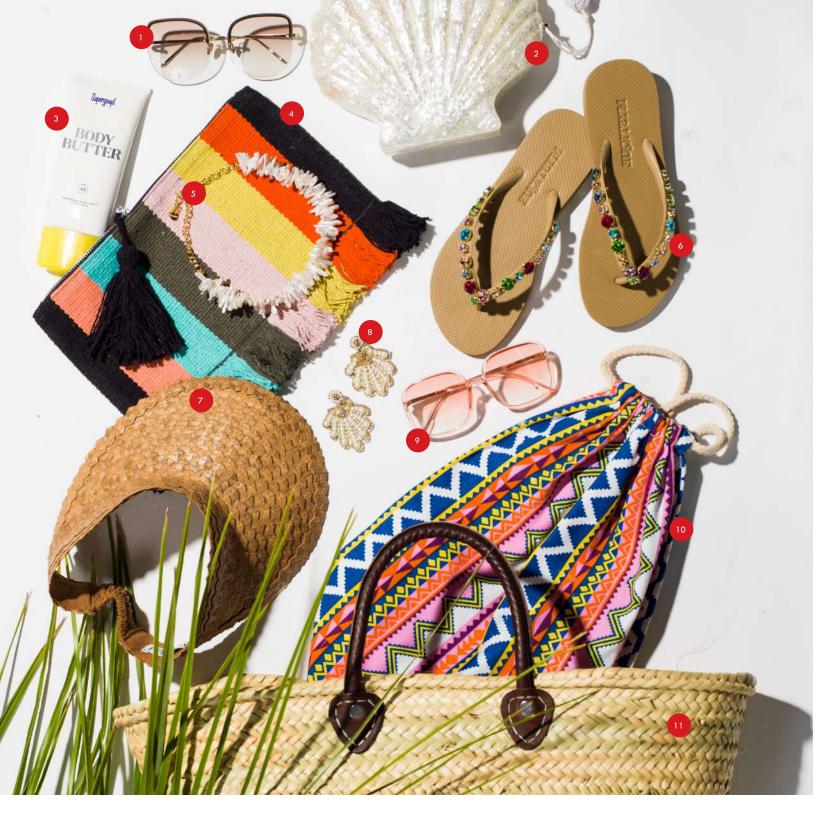
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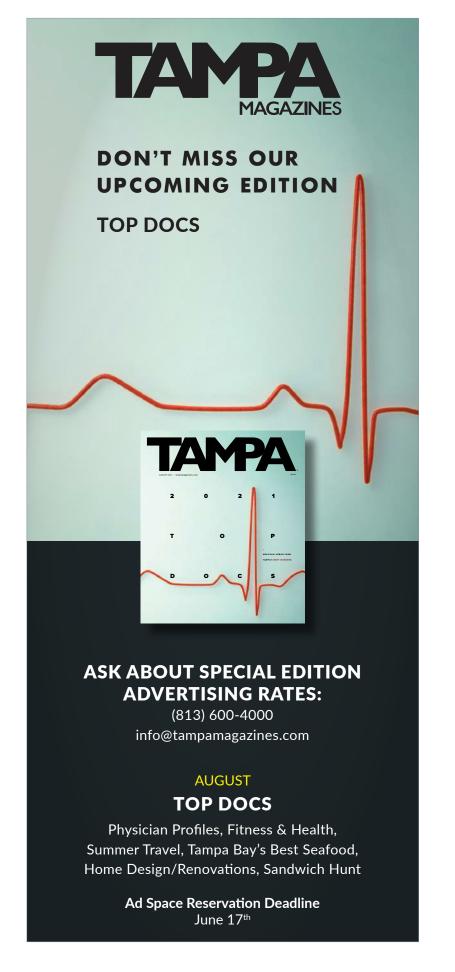
Headed to find your zen among the white powdery sand and lulling ocean waves?

Before you go shell collecting, consider collecting these fashionable must-haves for your days in paradise.

- 1. Linda Farrow Loni Cat Eye Sunglasses \$865 (Sunni Spencer, sunnispencer.com) 2. Emm Kuo Le Sirenuse Minaudière \$825 (Sunni Spencer)
- 3. Supergoop Body Butter \$38 (The Cabana South, thecabanasouth.com) 4. Closed Woven Stripe Pouch \$70 (Penelope T, penelopetboutique. com) 5. Cult Gaia Aliza Choker \$228 (Sunni Spencer) 6. Mystique Tampa Flip Flops \$118 (Sunni Spencer) 7. LUSANA Baha Visor \$35 (Sunni Spencer) 8. Oyster Catcher Earrings \$35 (Don Me Now, donmenow.com) 9. Whatever Sunnies \$30 (Don Me Now) 10. Rio Backpack \$26 (Don Me

Now) 11. Poolside X Sunni Spencer Exclusive "Aprés Sea" Tote Bag \$175 (Sunni Spencer)





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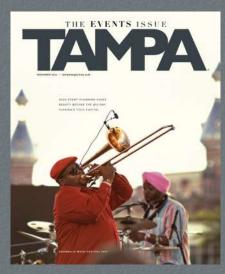


#### HOT DATE

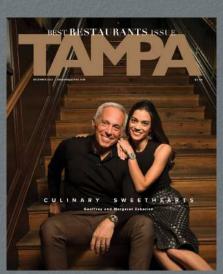
Whether you're heading for a night out on the town with your sweetheart or your girl squad, add extra sparkle to your look with these shimmery, glamorous accessories.

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# 2022 WOMEN TO WATCH

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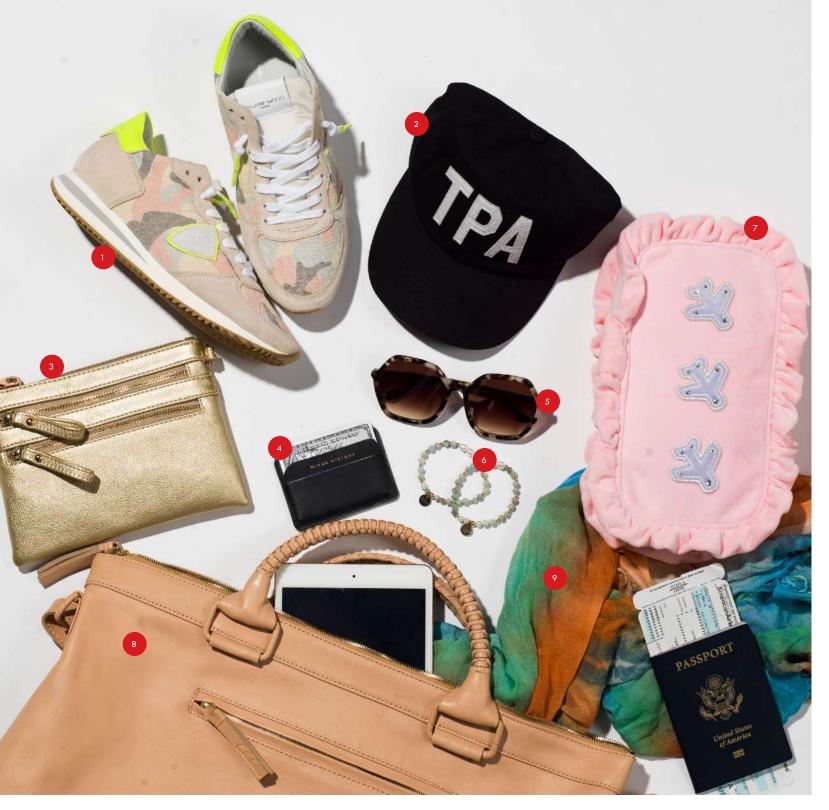
Rising together, powerful women are setting the future of Tampa Bay into motion

The Bay area is home to so many extraordinary women – entrepreneurs, business leaders creators, waymakers and trailblazers. Some were born here, others came and neveleft, but all have helped to shape our community into the amazing place that it is today

These phenomenal women are celebrated in the pages to follow. They have made name for themselves and made significant impacts across various industries, from technology law and medical aesthetics to home design, non-profit leadership and dentistry.

From working in traditionally male-dominated industries to balancing being leaders wit being partners, mothers, educators and volunteers — these women are as accomplishe as they are interesting. Not only are they instrumental to the success of their ow organizations and businesses, but they set a precedent of possibilities for the nex generation of women in business and leadership to build upon.

Read on to learn the stories of the ladies making moves and moving Tampa Bay forward



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Faces of South Tampa is home to five of the nation's top facial aesthetics injectors. With 75 years of combined aesthetic experience, the expertise and collaboration among this team of nurse practitioners is what has made Faces so unique and the go-to med spa in the Tampa Bay Area for more than a decade. Consistently recognized as Tampa Bay's Top Med Spa and Allergan's Top 10, Faces is one of the country's top-rated, largest, and most trusted medical aesthetics facilities.

## JENNIFER PULEO, APRN, MPH Owner, Nurse Practitioner & National Injectable Trainer

When professionals want to learn correct injection techniques for BOTOX® Cosmetic and dermal fillers, they come to Jen, a renowned national authority in facial aesthetics. Jennifer first partnered with Allergan in 2008 as one of the original national educators and is consistently selected as an elite faculty trainer. With over 20 years' experience as an expert injector, Jennifer's passion is to provide unparalleled results for her patients as well as educate other professionals in the field.

#### KATE WILLIAMS, APRN-C

#### Nurse Practitioner & National Injectable Trainer

Kate joined Faces in 2013, and with over 20 years of experience, Kate is widely recognized as an expert in the aesthetic industry. She is a distinguished national injectable trainer for Allergan and one of the first nurse practitioners to specialize in aesthetic medicine in Tampa.

### CAITLIN GORMAN, APRN-C

#### Nurse Practitioner

Caitlin joined Faces in 2014 after obtaining her master's in nursing from USF. With 9 years of aesthetic experience, Caitlin is passionate about patient education while providing great results. She continually advances her techniques at innovative conferences and trainings across the country.

#### LINDSEY TAYLOR, APRN-C

#### **Nurse Practitioner**

Lindsey joined Faces in 2019 after relocating back to Florida from South Carolina where she managed and was lead injector at a large aesthetic practice. With over 13 years of hands-on medical aesthetic experience, Lindsey is well-known for her innovative work in facial rejuvenation techniques complemented by her soft touch.

## NICOLE NATIONS HOGUE, APRN-C

#### **Nurse Practitioner**

Nicole joined Faces in 2020 and has over 12 years of experience, primarily in cosmetic dermatology, where she also held a faculty appointment training future dermatologists in aesthetics. Nicole is best known for her compassionate care, conservative approach, and use of cutting-edge laser technology to provide great outcomes.



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(Pictured from L to R) Caitlin Gorman, APRN-C; Kate Williams, APRN-C; Jennifer Puleo, APRN, MPH; Nicole Nations Hogue, APRN-C; Lindsey Taylor, APRN-C



### LORETTA NGUYEN ZANETTI, APRN & KRISTEN CAPO, APRN

CO-OWNERS OF ERASABLE MEDSPA

When Loretta Nguyen Zanetti began the journey to Erasable Med Spa in 2014, she had no idea how fast the business would grow. A military officer with over 18 years of service, she currently holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. It was this military background that brought Zanetti to the world of medical aesthetics, and she started the business to help military folks who needed tattoos removed to further their military career.

From there, Erasable grew into a full-service medspa. Co-owners Zanetti and Kristen Capo, along with their physician partners, Andrew Walter and Nadia Pile, offer their patients laser tattoo removal, laser hair removal, vaginal rejuvenation, body contouring, injectables, fillers and facials.

"We have the honor of being able to help our patients look their best and in turn improve their self-worth and confidence," Capo says. "It's a big role we have and we don't take it lightly."

Zanetti adds, "If a woman leaves feeling better than she came in and aces a job interview as a result, well that's life-changing stuff and we're proud to be a part of it."

Both owners are dedicated wives and mothers and recognize the importance of empathy and care for each and every patient they serve.

"Something like tattoo removal is an integral part of a person's journey. It can be a pivotal moment in their lives," Zanetti says.

"We're supporting people in moving onto another phase of their lives. As a result, we form these intimate relationships with clients that endear us to them."

For the co-owners, it's pride in their work and their relationships with clientele that set them apart in the industry. Also, the pair attribute their success to their fantastic business relationship.

"Loretta is really the peanut butter to my jelly," Capo says. "I'm proud to be part of such a healthy business relationship of two women empowering and supporting each other."

The success of their business partnership, along with the support of their talented staff, has led to the immense growth of Erasable, and they are now on the cusp of a brand new 5,200-square-foot facility.

"We bought the land, we have the plans and we're proud to be expanding and growing," Zanetti says. "We started with zero clients in the beginning and we are so proud of how far we have come."



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#### **BRITTANY HUMMEL**

#### HEAD OF SERVICE DELIVERY FOR WIPRO

Brittany Hummel is the head of service delivery for Wipro, a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company. A woman in leadership and technology, she works with cognitive computing, hyper-automation, robotics, cloud, analytics and emerging technologies to help Wipro's clients adapt to the digital world and make them successful.

At this globally recognized company, she is a key player in identifying solutions and providing solutions-based actions to well-known technology industry giants, while also providing complete technology transformations.

At the heart of her work is servant leadership. Hummel believes in creating opportunities to empower other future leaders. She notes that many women may have trepidations about jumping into such an industry and providing solutions. It's important for her to pave the way empower them to do just that.

"I have been a huge proponent and champion in providing growth and development to our next generation of senior leaders, especially females in my organization," she says. "Creating the talent pool, empowering them, pushing them to WIPRO.COM take risks and implement their solutions and giving them a place at the table has been my drive in this industry."

With a background in teaching, she transitioned into the corporate world with the help of a mentor.

"I quickly climbed the ranks and it's because I went after it and I fought for it," she notes. "Someone gave me the opportunity, I seized it and I'd like to create similar opportunities for others."

In a male-dominated industry, Hummel's work ethic and people-first approach have propelled her up the corporate ladder.

"I had a client tell me that I'm the Elle Woods of service delivery. I'm what you call a social butterfly and I put people first," Hummel says. "Business can be about numbers and dollar signs, but at the end of the day people want authenticity and to be looked at as human and that's what I bring."

At Wipro, she was awarded the Rockstar Rookie Award within her first six months in the role and was subsequently given the prestigious Vision Award for her dedication to growth and development.

"I can land large contracts and provide major solutions, but seeing other leaders achieve their goals and dreams is what brings me the greatest gratification," she adds.

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## **DEANA GENDERS BUCKLEY**

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As the gallery director for Tampa's premiere fine arts gallery and custom framing resource, Deana Buckley brings 20 years of sales and business development experience and a lifelong love of the arts to Michael Murphy Gallery. When Buckley decided that she wanted to pivot to a career she was passionate about, she reached out to gallery owner and master framer Michael Murphy.

"I'm a South Tampa native. Michael Murphy is a local icon whose gallery has been a part of the neighborhood landscape for as long as I can remember. I have learned so much working with Michael, who is a true creative talent."

Growing up with a mom who was always creating, Buckley developed a more focused interest in art after acquiring a painting by child prodigy Alexandra Nechita.

"That painting set the stage in our home for discussions about the importance of expressing yourself and always using your voice," she explains. "That is what art does, it starts conversations. It helps us communicate in new ways."

Buckley says the most rewarding part of her role is educating others about the artwork showcased in the gallery.

"There is so much that goes into what is hanging on these walls," she explains. "It's about being able to share the extraordinary people and processes that make art happen. I am proud to support these talented artists."

Michael Murphy Gallery represents 16 artists, regional to international. The gallery also hosts special exhibits of artists like Peter Max and Salvador Dali to bring world-class art experiences to the Tampa community.

Shannon Callan believes that self care isn't selfish. Her path to founding Sol Aesthetics began during her own personal journey of self-love. As a full-time working mother of three and board-certified family nurse practitioner, Shannon wanted to remove the stigma associated with women carving out "me time" to take care of themselves. She wanted to show people that doing things to enhance their appearance or slow the aging process didn't have to be associated with ideas of being fake, plastic or unnatural.

With 16 years of experience in emergency and aesthetic medicine, Shannon opened Sol Aesthetics to allow others to have a safe space that dissolves the social stigma associated with the industry.

"I'm a proceduralist. I love working with my hands and I love the artistry of the aesthetic industry," Callan says. "I offer very personalized treatments and I thrive on results. My clients know they have to trust the process!"

Sol specializes in Morpheus8, IPL, neuromodulators, dermal fillers, microneedling, PDO threads and skin care. Newly opened, Callan's business has experienced rapid growth due to client testimonials, word-of-mouth referrals and social media traction.

Shannon says that as a business owner, she works more now than she ever did but is loving the journey. When she's not in the office, she spends time with her fiancé and his son, her three daughters, and their two puppies.

"It's empowering to show my daughters and other women that it is possible to own and run a business. I am so blessed that mine allows me to do what I love and care for my community in an exciting new way."



## SHANNON CALLAN, MSN, APRN, NP-C

OWNER, SOL AESTHETICS, LLC



#### SOL AESTHETICS

4320 W. EL PRADO BLVD., STE. 22 TAMPA | (813) 526-0007 SOLAESTHETICSFL.COM



## STRAHAN, D.M.D.

OWNER OF SOUTH TAMPA KIDS DENTAL KREWE



SOUTH TAMPA KIDS DENTAL KREWE

3514 BAY TO BAY BLVD., STE. 2 TAMPA | (813) 835-5437 Board-certified pediatric dentist Dr. Lauren Companioni Strahan has positively shaped the way thousands of children feel about going to the dentist. Children love to visit her at her practice, South Tampa Dental Krewe, and feel safe and comfortable with her and her caring, gentle staff.

"Working with kids every day is pretty amazing," she says. "Pediatric dentistry shapes a child's view of the dentist. I always try to pick something special to talk about for each kiddo. It helps us to build a relationship, and then they look forward to coming back."

Companioni and her team go above and beyond to make sure every child has a great experience. They take a holistic approach to dental health and emphasize preventative care. However, if your child does get a cavity, you can rest assured that Companioni's gentle touch will help them stay calm and comfortable while getting it filled. She also provides laser treatments to release tongue ties, digital X-rays, nitrous oxide and IV sedation.

A native of South Tampa, Companioni attended St. Mary's Episcopal Day School and Plant High School, and received a gymnastics scholarship to Louisiana State University. When she's not fighting cavities, she enjoys fishing, watching football, any outdoor activity and spending time with her husband, TJ, and two daughters. She is also a member of the Junior League of Tampa.

Companioni is a Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (a Board Certified Pediatric Dentist) and a member of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the Florida Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the Tampa Bay Pediatric Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the West Coast Dental Association and the Florida Dental Association.

Rashae Doyle's journey to BevelUp began when she worked as a surgical and clinical physician associate in the specialty of dermatology. It was there that she discovered her passion for aesthetics.

Rashae learned the art of injectables after the U.S. launch of Botox in 2002, and in the two decades to follow, she would hone her craft as an injector to become one of the top experts in the industry. Highly trained and credentialed, she is an elite national Allergan and Galderma trainer for over 15 years and a key opinion leader and ambassador for Alastin skincare.

This expertise is what she brings to BevelUp, the medspa where Doyle and her team of highly trained clinical artists focus solely on facial aesthetic treatments.

"My passions lie not only in helping people feel good about themselves through medical aesthetics, but also in taking a chance to go after my dreams and holding the door open for other women in the field to follow and discover their passion for aesthetic medicine," she says. "I'm paving the way for others to do the same, to take a bet on themselves, and do the thing that scares them the most. That's where the biggest reward lies."

And for Doyle, the scary thing has paid off. At BevelUp she is evolving the way people approach facial aesthetics, making it more convenient for people to make skincare treatments a part of their routine with the BevelMe membership model.

"One of the biggest barriers in this industry is cost," she explains. "Our memberships provide guests more value for their treatments and the ability to be consistent so they can achieve the best results."

Far from a traditional med spa, BevelUp is a modern, convenient, and elevated experience.

"I'm most excited to create a community where women can encourage and empower each other to look and feel their best," Doyle says



## RASHAE DOYLE, MPAS, PA-C

OWNER AND FOUNDER OF BEVELUP



**BEVELUP** 

3720 MIDTOWN DRIVE TAMPA | (813) 807-7200 BEVELUP.COM



## **CRYSTAL DUKES**

REALTOR AT PREMIER SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY



## PREMIER SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

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CRYSTAL.DUKES@PREMIERSIR.COM

A fourth-generation Tampa Bay native and accomplished luxury REALTOR®, Crystal Dukes knows that today's buyers and sellers want to work with a knowledgeable agent who deeply understands the local market.

This is exactly what Dukes delivers. She has developed a wealth of market expertise throughout her nine years as a REALTOR®, That acumen, alongside the powerful backing of the Sotheby's brand and the collaboration she has with agents in their network across 79 countries, allows her to deliver the best results to customers.

"We're currently dealing with minimal inventory and high demand, so a great agent has to scour the market," she says. "That's what I just did with my \$2.3 million listing in South Tampa. It never hit the MLS and I was able to sell it through private placement."

This tireless work ethic is what allows her to succeed in Tampa Bay's ambitious, highend luxury real estate market.

"People have a new appreciation for how important homes are," she adds. "This appreciation is always at the forefront of my work. I love uniting extraordinary people with extraordinary properties."

Prior to selling real estate, Dukes worked as a trial consultant where she honed her negotiating skills.

"Marketing a home, like marketing a verdict, requires a thorough understanding of the unique, and ever-changing factors that come into play."

Buyers and sellers benefit from her legal mindset.

"My unique skill set has proven beneficial throughout the years. The market continues to deliver unpredictable circumstances, along with record-high demands and limited supplies," Dukes says. "People trust me to sell or find their perfect home so they can start anew, and their loyalty is the biggest reward of my career."

Kristen Hanenian, APRN, AGNP-C, LE, is the owner of Elite Medical Aesthetics, Tampa's premier medical spa for comprehensive skin care, that includes lasers and injectables.

A highly credentialed medical provider, Kristen provides her patients with extensive experience, superior qualifications and a customized approach to aesthetics. She provides a variety of non-surgical procedures in a luxurious environment frequented by several celebrities.

Her practice is devoted to the art of aesthetics and regenerative medicine. At Elite, she focuses on non-surgical interventions to address the common effects of aging and help her patients achieve a natural and refreshed appearance.

Kristen's philosophy centers around the importance of making patients feel like they are a part of a family, not a number. She prioritizes patient safety, trust, honesty and the understanding that medical aesthetics is the practice of medicine first and foremost.

"I nurture the relationships with my patients. When a patient has a connection to you, there's care, accountability, accessibility and ultimately greater compliance," she says. "In an industry that's hyperfocused on Instagram filters and unrealistic expectations, a lot of people are missing the mark. Patient education is so important to me."

She adds, "The top of the anti-aging hierarchy is always skin health and helping clients achieve healthy, youthful glowing skin. The rest is all icing on the cake."

Kristen travels extensively for advanced training and is always working to perfect her craft. She is a three-time honors graduate from USF and maintains membership with the Tampa Bay Advanced Practice Nurse Council, Florida Nurse Practitioner Network, Dermatology Nurses Association and the National Academy of Dermatology Nurse Practitioners. Kristen is also a former police officer with many years of service and dedication to the City of Tampa.



## KRISTEN HANENIAN, APRN, AGNP-C, LE

OWNER OF ELITE MEDICAL AESTHETICS



#### **ELITE MEDICAL AESTHETICS**

4905 W. LAUREL ST., STE. 202 TAMPA | (813) 291-4911 ELITEMEDICALTAMPA.COM



## **MICHELE KROHN**

PRESIDENT OF FULL CIRCLE PR



#### **FULL CIRCLE PR**

8370 W. HILLSBOROUGH AVE., STE. 208 | TAMPA | (813) 887-3277 FULLCIRCLE-PR.COM A light bulb moment led Michele Krohn to launch her business. She was marketing for BayCare Health when Krohn identified an opportunity to grow specialty physicians' practices. With her vision, she started Full Circle PR in 2007. Offering a wide range of services, the company prides itself in customization.

"We learn the needs and goals of each practice and write a unique marketing plan, forging true partnerships," Krohn says.

Full Circle has assisted nearly 300 medical practices and centers across 17 states, from solo practitioners to medical conglomerates and hospitals, establishing proven results. The company helped one practice achieve a 137% return on investment in one year; brought another practice 53 more heart surgeries in nine months; and grew a different practice from nine doctors to 25 in eight years.

Recently, Krohn recognized another healthcare need. Michele partnered with the developers of Quick Patient, a smartphone app that allows patients to save personal and family medical histories for quick appointment check-in and information transfers via scanning QR codes. The app works universally with cloud-based EMR systems.

"Quick Patient streamlines the check-in process reducing information transcription errors and later data correction. It can also reduce patient wait time," Krohn shares.

Full Circle's accomplishments have gained attention. The company was named Tampa's Best Public Relations Agency in 2021. Krohn's husband, attorney Michael Krohn, became vice president in 2013. Full Circle gives back by donating time and resources to nonprofit Clothes to Kids Inc.

"I believe it's important to discover what you love to do and find the courage to pursue your dreams. To me, that's the key to having joyous work-life balance," Krohn says.

Laura Maita's passions led to her entrepreneurial endeavors, launching Emerald Events & Catering in 2018 and ROQ Boxing in 2022.

Laura has been in hospitality for 18 years, working up to restaurant general manager. Raised in an Italian family with her father and uncle in the restaurant business, food and events have been important parts of her life. Laura also has a natural eye for design. She combined those talents to start Emerald Events & Catering, whose sales tripled monthly since October.

Repeat clients and referrals fill Laura's calendar. Her specialty is private, in-home events and weddings. Laura teamed up with Cody Tiner (chef & partner at District Tavern South) to provide restaurant-quality food.

As for her other business, two years ago, Laura started boxing for exercise and decided to turn it into a new investment.

"The desire to open ROQ Boxing came from the desire to put money into something else that I enjoy," she says. "I think it's extremely important to choose a career you're passionate about because you really have to work around the clock if you want to be successful."

She partnered with co-owner and head coach Demetrius Roquemore, an amateur boxer who holds multiple regional and state championship titles. Demetrius has been coaching adults and children for eight years within Tampa's most popular boxing gyms. ROQ Boxing will offer instructional boxing, small group fitness, personal training and private events when it opens this summer in Town and Country.

When Laura's not running her businesses, she's attending her two sons' sporting events.



### LAURA MAITA

OWNER OF EMERALD EVENTS & CATERING & ROQ BOXING





EMERALD EVENTS & CATERING
(813) 892-0039
EMERALDEVENTSTPA.COM
ROQ BOXING
ROQBOXING.COM



## **VALERIE MCALLISTER**

CEO OF PREMIERE CENTER FOR COSMETIC SURGERY



## PREMIERE CENTER FOR COSMETIC SURGERY

2419 W. KENNEDY BLVD., STE. 10 TAMPA | (813) 981-1975 PREMIERECENTER.COM Valerie McAllister is a trailblazer in anesthesia and plastic surgery. Certified as a registered nurse anesthetist in 1983, she discovered office plastic surgery soon after in Miami. In 1987, the ambitious visionary started her own agency, Southern Anesthesia Services Inc., then the largest office anesthesia service.

"I really tapped into a niche that needed to be filled," McAllister recalls.

For over 20 years, the entrepreneur deployed anesthesia providers to South Florida hospitals, outpatient centers and plastic surgery offices.

"From that, I saw the good and bad in all these plastic surgery offices," McAllister shares. "I got the idea, why not have the best board-certified plastic surgeons but with the business run by business professionals at affordable prices?"

To bring that vision to life, she started Premiere Center for Cosmetic Surgery in 1994 in Coconut Grove, all while raising three children and taking mission trips to Central and South America.

"I'm a woman in a man's field, a nurse hiring doctors," she says.

Leading the way once again, she launched a full-force, multi-channel advertising campaign complete with a jingle.

"That was really before advertising was accepted in the plastic surgery world, so we were pioneers," McAllister says.

Premiere grew quickly, opening offices in Weston and Tampa in 2000. McAllister has since closed the South Florida locations to focus on Tampa. In addition to its operating room, they significantly expanded to offer cosmetic injectables, medical-grade skincare treatments and the latest nonsurgical devices. Thirty-eight years into her career, McAllister continues administering anesthesia and running Premiere.

"Sticking with my vision and seeing it flourish is very satisfying," she says. "There have been a lot of copycats of my success, but being their inspiration has been the biggest compliment." An aggressive litigator and fierce advocate for clients who have been wronged or injured, Karina Perez Ilić has diverse experience in the field of civil litigation, including motor vehicle collisions, catastrophic workplace accidents, wrongful death and more.

A Florida native, she got her start as an insurance defense lawyer in a statewide firm.

"I made partner young, but as luck would have it, I ended up having a case against Vanguard Attorneys and a life-changing opportunity presented itself," she says. "For the past four-and-a-half years, I've been running Vanguard and helping people."

At Vanguard, Perez Ilić is devoted to giving clients superior service to ensure they receive the best possible outcome. She says being on the plaintiff's side has been more personally rewarding.

"It takes naturally competitive people to get into litigation and trial law. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't competitive and driven," she says. "My clients have one chance at justice, so I think about if I was in their shoes, who I would want to be there for me. It motivates me to give my best."

Working at Vanguard Attorneys allows Karina Perez Ilić to devote a substantial amount of time to each client.

"Although we could be bigger, we recognize the importance of every case and want to give each one the attention it deserves," she explains. "It's important in my industry, as insurance companies know which lawyers do and don't try cases. We're smaller by design and we do it for our clients."

Perez Ilić has been recognized by Best of the Bar™ and as one of Super Lawyers' rising stars.



## KARINA PEREZ ILIĆ

MANAGING ATTORNEY OF VANGUARD ATTORNEYS



#### VANGUARD ATTORNEYS

1220 E. 5TH AVE. | TAMPA (813) 680-2007 VANGUARDATTORNEYS.COM



CODY CALVO



LAURIE CHAMPAGNE-BUMBERG

OWNER OF CHAMPAGNE AESTHETICS

Cody Calvo is passionate about bringing people's luxury dream homes to life. The University of South Florida graduate got her real estate license in 2005 and established her niche in custom homes – buying lots and overseeing the construction, design and build.

Calvo has worked with Milana Custom Homes for several years. With her strong work ethic, Milana quickly has become one of the biggest custom builders in South Tampa. Not only is Calvo their realtor, but she is also in-house designing, architectural planning and working hand-in-hand with clients designing their dream homes.

"I am driven to see how we can push barriers and stay above the curve in new home design," Calvo shares. "I love being part of Tampa's growth and transformation."

For years, Calvo has received the highest individual annual award from Century 21 LIST with Beggins. She has a supportive husband, Danny, and a daughter, Carter. She enjoys volunteering at Carter's school and spending time on the water.

Laurie Champagne-Bumberg has always been interested in physiology and histology, so a career in aesthetics was an obvious choice.

"I love helping people feel good in their own skin," she says. "I've always admired beautiful skin and after 30, was when I really started to notice changes in my own skin. It's how I developed an interest in preventative and corrective skincare, and why I chose ZO SkinHealth® and skinbetter science® clinical grade skincare to offer to my patients."

As a certified HydraFacial® Master, she is one of just four in Florida. Laurie is constantly learning, stays up to date with the most current treatments and enjoys passing that knowledge on to her patients.

"I am so proud that my patients trust me with their skin. Healthy, beautiful skin is a marathon, not a sprint and it's a process," she says. "Every single patient has my cell phone number so they can call or text me anytime with questions or concerns they have because their skin is my signature."



#### CODY CALVO

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#### **CHAMPAGNE AESTHETICS**

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INSTAGRAM.COM/THE\_TAMPA\_AESTHETICIAN



## DONNA DEVANEY STOCKHAM, ESQ.

PRESIDENT OF STOCKHAM LAW GROUP, P.A

At Stockham Law Group, Donna DeVaney Stockham specializes in property damage insurance claims, representing homeowners, business owners, condominium associations and more. Stockham got into law wanting to be an FBI agent, but realized that she enjoyed and excelled at trial work. After serving as a defense lawyer for nine years, she was attracted to the niche of property insurance litigation.

"I represent clients who have denied or underpaid property insurance claims. If an insured thinks their insurance company has not treated them fairly, I review their claim and see if there is something to pursue," she says. "Some clients have mold in their house that makes their kids sick or a damaged roof that leaks when it rains. Knowing I'm helping people is what keeps me going."

This year marks nine years since the launch of Stockham Law Group, which has grown to five offices in three states, eight lawyers and numerous employees. In her downtime, Stockham spends time with her husband, three daughters, three dogs, her cat and enjoys water activities.



## JESSICA ECKLEY & JENNIFER RENSPIE

PARTNERS AT CRACKERJACK MEDIA

CEO Jessica Eckley is a veteran in the sports and entertainment industry. Before launching Crackerjack Media in 2014, both she and COO Jennifer Renspie managed marketing efforts for professional sports teams and one of the nation's top-ranked venues. At Crackerjack, they leverage their collective 40 years of expertise to provide public relations and marketing services to clients, including Live Nation, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Tampa Bay Super Bowl LV, WWE and Tampa's signature Gasparilla events.

"Some days you're a marketer, some a PR pro and other days you're just hustling with an operations task to make sure an event goes smoothly," Renspie explains. "We bring that relentless, in-the-trenches approach to our client work."

A fourth-generation Tampa native, Eckley prides herself on the opportunities Crackerjack has had to highlight what makes Tampa such a wonderful place to both live and visit.

"From the moment someone comes to your city until the last seconds tick away at an event, you are cultivating experiences and creating memories," Eckley says.



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#### STOCKHAM LAW GROUP, P.A.

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STOCKHAMLAWGROUP.COM



#### CRACKERJACK MEDIA

P.O. BOX 45162 | TAMPA (813) 344-1770 CRACKERJACKMEDIA.COM



### MARGIE KAERCHER

LEAD DESIGNER OF HEARTH
AND HONEY HOMES

As the founder of Hearth and Honey Homes, Margie Kaercher knows that an eye for design isn't something you learn – it comes naturally. A talented designer with a creative eye and depth of industry knowledge, she has a natural gift for creating beautiful, functional spaces where her clients feel relaxed and inspired.

Featured in Forbes and Apartment Therapy, Kaercher's road to interior design was different than most. With an education in strategic communications and psychology, as well as experience working as an account manager in the staffing industry, she now credits these very experiences for preparing her with the tools needed to be successful today.

"To be a designer, you have to know how to run a business, market a brand, relate to clients and understand the human mind and how people think," she explains. "I'm grateful for all my experiences and wouldn't be where I am without them."

She adds, "The best part is seeing my clients' reactions after the transformation comes to life. It's magic every time."



#### **HEARTH AND HONEY HOMES**

(913) 522-7866
IG: @HEARTHANDHONEYHOMES
HEARTHANDHONEYHOMES.COM



### KARI LAROCCO

OWNER & PRIVATE WEALTH ADVISOR
OF LAROCCO & ASSOCIATES

Kari LaRocco, CFP, CRPC, APMA, has been excelling in finance for 20 years. After working for Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC as an employee, she started her own franchise in 2014, LaRocco & Associates, a Private Wealth Advisory Practice of Ameriprise.

"Being a woman in a field surrounded by men has been very eye-opening and rewarding," LaRocco says. "I find so much gratitude working with women specifically to help them achieve financial freedom and balance. I take a holistic approach focused on intentional living."

Her passion and dedication have bred many accomplishments. For 15 years, she has made Ameriprise's Circle of Success, among the top 3% of Ameriprise's advisors. This year, her team also won Ameriprise's Client Experience and Ultimate Digital Experience awards. In addition, she made Forbes' 2022 Best-in-State Women Wealth Advisors and 2020 Top Women Wealth Advisors.

LaRocco enjoys fitness, traveling and giving back to the community. She and her husband, Eric Hall, have two Maltese, Cipollini and Eros. She is studying for an additional designation as a Behavioral Finance Advisor.



#### LAROCCO & ASSOCIATES

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## **CARLY MCCLURE**

OWNER, FACES BY CARLY



## CHERI MORALES, MSN, APRN-BC

FOUNDER OF VISO JUVÉ

The expertise Carly McClure brings to her craft is born of a lifelong passion for makeup and beauty, a wealth of education in the field, and over a decade of experience in cosmetics and makeup artistry.

Recognized as one of South Tampa's best microblading artists for 2022, McClure is skilled in the art of helping women use makeup and permanent makeup to enhance their natural beauty and feel empowered.

"I love what I do and I meet amazing women every day," McClure says. "As a mother of two young girls, it's been rewarding to teach them you can find your passion, do work that you love and that empowers others, and also that success isn't based on gender, but drive."

Perfecting her art through continuing education and years of practice and experience, McClure offers microblading, PMU eyeliner, lip blush and other treatments through her business, Faces by Carly.

"I'm most proud that through my work, I can help women wake up and feel beautiful and confident in their skin."

With nearly 30 years of experience in dermatology and aesthetics, Tampa native Cheri Morales, APRN - BC, opened Viso Juvé, in 2021. She is well-known for Sculptra and overall skin health, with patients even traveling from afar for her services.

"My clients know that when they leave here, they are going to feel better and look refreshed and natural, not done," Morales says.

Morales is a National Injectable Trainer/Master Injector who keeps up with the latest techniques. She has been a National GAIN Trainer for Galderma Pharmaceuticals for over 10 years, and in 2017, she started the aesthetic training company Aesthetic Educators. Morales is certified and extensively trained in neurotoxins, dermal fillers, lasers, sclerotherapy and PDO threads.

Passionate about helping others, Morales will be launching her charity this year to help people with facial disfigurements. There are plans to expand Viso Juvé this year. She and high school sweetheart Mario have three children, Alex, Aidan and Ava.

## FACES BY CARLY INC

#### FACES BY CARLY

9460 W. LINEBAUGH AVE.
TAMPA | (813) 713-5082
FACESBYCARLY.COM



#### VISO JUVÉ

3115 W. BAY TO BAY BLVD., STE. C
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VISOJUVE.COM



SOPHIA SANCHEZ SANCHEZ&CO REAL ESTATE

BROKER/OWNER

Sophia Sanchez of SANCHEZ&CO Tampa Real Estate is deeply committed to helping her clients build the lives they desire. With 18 years of experience helping buyers and sellers in Tampa, she has stood by each client to help them make solid decisions no matter the market's direction.

A third-generation Tampa native with roots dating back to the 1940s, she is committed to building a thriving local brand while managing a dynamic lifestyle and making time to mentor others in the field.

"I offer a wealth of personal and professional experience. Full immersion in the industry keeps SANCHEZ&CO on the leading edge," Sanchez says. "My team and I are committed to working with the right clients to meet their long-term needs while making a positive impact on Tampa's growth."

Her firm, SANCHEZ&CO, has shown over 23,000 homes, and Sophia Sanchez has sponsored over 70 events in the Tampa Bay community.

"It's all about relationships – going deeper, not wider – that makes a world of difference in this business," Sanchez adds.



#### SANCHEZ&CO TAMPA REAL ESTATE

711 S. HOWARD AVE., STE. 200 | TAMPA
(813) 433-0444 | SANCHEZANDCOMPANY.COM



NINA VITAL, PA-C
MASTER AESTHETIC INJECTOR

A master-level injector, Nina Vital forges relationships with clients based on trust, honesty and mastery in aesthetic medicine.

Vital graduated from Springfield College with a master's degree in physician assistant studies, where she was awarded the distinguished graduate student award. She began her professional career at the University of Pennsylvania, initially assisting in plastic, reconstructive and microvascular surgery.

She now focuses on injectables, working alongside established plastic surgeons at Tampa Surgical Arts.

"I specialize in natural rejuvenation. I fell in love with showing patients what you can do with a small amount of product, helping women reclaim their youth and self-confidence," she explains "People will know you look better, but they won't know why. I don't do that overdone, cookie-cutter look."

In high demand, Vital travels to Massachusetts once a month to see her Northampton patients.

"I pride myself in providing nearly painless procedures in a no-pressure atmosphere," she says. "I'm a healthcare provider first and foremost. I always do what's best for my patients."



#### TAMPA SURGICAL ARTS

17751 GUNN HWY.

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TAMPASURGICALARTS.COM

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ANTOININA WATKINS

OB/GYN AT SOUTH TAMPA

GYNECOLOGY



DEVAN WEISSER
REALTOR

Antoinina Watkins, M.D., never had an "aha moment" when choosing her career. In fact, she can't remember a time in her life when she didn't want to be a physician.

A Tampa native, she's been practicing medicine in Tampa Bay for nearly two decades. She is a Florida-licensed and Board Certified OB/GYN and fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

"Getting to help people and establish trusting patient relationships is why I do this," she says. "I do it so I can use my knowledge and skills to make an impact."

An avid volunteer, traveler, reader and outdoors enthusiast, Watkins has a heart for her community. She views healthcare as a team approach, and not just the team of physicians taking care of the patient, but the patient's family, friends and support circle, too.

"It's what I'm striving for, a community approach to health and wellbeing," she adds. "I want people to know when they come to me, they're not a number; they're genuinely and personally cared for."

Devan Weisser has built a successful career as a realtor of 11 years, producing over \$100,000,000 in sales. She started door-knocking and quickly became a regular recipient of prestigious awards from Century 21. She also represented the company in a live ESPN commercial.

Weisser excels in new construction projects in South Tampa, aiding in the selection process while managing marketing and sales. She works alongside some of Tampa Bay's leading builders and developers, all while having the opportunity to represent individual buyers and sellers, most of which are longtime, repeat clients.

"I pour myself personally into every partnership, recognizing that buying a home is an emotional process," she says. "This is not just a job; it's a passion."

That passion started early for Weisser, who designed and built her first Barbie house as a child and read Better Homes & Gardens as a teen. Weisser loves setting a positive example for her kids, Blake, Chase and Collin; and she values her husband Jack's support.



#### SOUTH TAMPA GYNECOLOGY

2919 W. SWANN AVE., STE. 303
TAMPA | (813) 569-0740
SOUTHTAMPAGYNECOLOGY.COM



CENTURY 21 LIST WITH BEGGINS
1501 S. DALE MABRY HWY., STE. A1
TAMPA | (321) 591-9308



**TUNISIA ABRAHAM** 

LUXURY REALTOR

After graduating college, Tunisia Abraham's husband, Donnie, was drafted by the Buccaneers and Tampa became home. Also an athlete, Tunisia Abraham coached track, worked with professional athletes on their foundations, owned a gift boutique and is a professional sports photographer.

As a highly-accredited, respected realtor, Abraham is a Certified Relocation Expert, Military Relocation Professional and Accredited Buyer Professional. She recently completed her Graduate, REALTOR® Institute designation and is working toward her Broker's Associate license. She enjoys introducing new residents to Tampa.

"When you relocate as an athlete or executive, you don't always have someone who empathizes with what you are going through," she says. "I've experienced this, so I spend time talking to my clients to ensure they're making the best decisions."



**DEBRA ACKERBLOOM** 

OWNER OF DEBRA
ACKERBLOOM INTERIORS

Debra Ackerbloom has transformed people's spaces for over 20 years. The owner of Debra Ackerbloom Interiors brings a unique perspective with degrees in psychology and interior design.

"Interior design really affects how people feel in their space and impacts their quality of life," she says. "I like to tell people I create lifestyle interiors."

Ackerbloom specializes in luxury interiors with a niche in new construction. Her training is well rounded in all styles of design, creating unique spaces that reflect each client's personality.

Her company, which is expanding into a new office, was recently voted Best of the Bay and Best of the City. Ackerbloom was named a Pro HGTV Designer and is ranked among the Top 10 Designers in Florida.

The Tampa resident enjoys travel, the arts and family time.



**DIANE CRESPO** 

CERTIFIED EXPERT ORGANIZER®
WITH ME IN ORDER™

When Diane Crespo got her masters in mental health counseling, she didn't realize that it would lead her to a career in organizing.

"When life gets overwhelming, I'm able to help get things in order and accomplish projects without judgment," she says. "With my education, I have a lot of patience and understanding for my clients."

Crespo says what she enjoys most about being a Certified Expert Organizer® with Me in Order™ is that she's able to get to know people, hear their stories and bring them the peace that comes through having an organized space.

"The messier the better," she says. "No project is too big for me."

A tap dancer in her spare time, Crespo also enjoys offering her organization expertise to local nonprofit organizations.



HILARY DALTON

OWNER OF DALTON DENTAL

Hilary Dalton lives with passion, positivity and

high energy. She brings those traits to her dental

practice in her hometown, Tampa, to create a fun,

Dalton, also known as Barbie Boss, has

practiced dentistry since 2001 and started her

own company in 2011. Her pretty, pink office is a no-

judgment zone where patients can be themselves.

flex is changing countless lives by empowering

people with unstoppable confidence through

She has shared her success and expertise in

local and national media, as well as given back

to a long list of charities. Setting an example with

her confidence and adventure, Dalton is also

training for her Fitness pro bikini competition.

"I love helping people," she says. "My ultimate

relaxing patient experience

their customized smile.

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TEE FIELDS

BLOGGER FOR ALL THINGS TEE



JENNIFER L. KUHN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF

EE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MARY LEE'S HOUSE

Tee Fields wants women to know that they can have it all. You can work a 9 to 5 and have a business. You can invest and travel. Fields offers inspiring business and lifestyle advice on her

"I want everyone to win," Fields says. "My goal is to empower women to live life on purpose."

blog, All Things Tee.

Fields practices what she preaches, having multiple streams of income, traveling and creating the life she wants. She has been a technology consultant for 16 years, working with large corporations. She also launched Fields Management Group, flipping houses and investing in real estate; and an organic skincare shop Ethel and Brenda Co.

"It's really exciting that people are reading my blog and benefiting from what I'm sharing," she says. Jennifer Kuhn brings years of experience in child and adult welfare to her role at Mary Lee's House Child Protection and Advocacy Center.

"I have worked in child welfare all my life," Kuhn says. "After 20 years of responding to children in crisis, I felt a deep calling to be part of the solution through preventative measures to break the cycle of abuse."

A runner, local festival-goer and Seminoles fan, Kuhn's role allows her to equip parents with tools and resources to build better, brighter futures.

"Children and parents are so grateful for the support they receive at Mary Lee's House," she adds. "I see more tears of appreciation than sadness in our building. Considering what these families have gone through, that's an amazing testament to the work being done here."



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ALLY LAMB
CEO OF SOCIAL REVELRY & DIRECTOR
OF EVENTS FOR MEAT MARKET

Ally Lamb pours her creativity and passion into Social Revelry, an event planning company she launched in 2014. She opened a party supply store in 2020 with the same name to complement her business. Next month, Social Revelry will launch an online store to serve clients all over the country.

As director of events for Meat Market, Ally oversees all of the signature events for the upscale Hyde Park restaurant, working with high-profile clients.

"My dad always told me hard work and merit run the day and I have lived by that," Ally says.

Ally is passionate about giving back and has worked closely with the Humane Society of Tampa Bay, Children's Cancer Center and Starting Right Now.



BROOKE PALMER KUHL

PRESIDENT OF R.S.B.P. EVENTS + PR

Brooke Palmer Kuhl turned her event planning side hustle into her main gig in 2007, launching R.S.B.P. Events + PR. She has flourished in the 15 years since.

Kuhl has served a variety of clients, from nonprofits to professional athletes to restaurants, including Bern's Steak House, and is thankful to work with some of the best in the business regionally and nationally.

She loves incorporating elements of surprise into events, like hanging a piano from the ceiling or having the Rays' Kevin Kiermaier make an appearance.

"I just try to keep one upping myself," she says.

"I love finding a way to make something happen that the client didn't think was possible."

Kuhl earned several awards for her events, public relations and philanthropy, especially during the pandemic.



KRISTI SERENO
FOUNDER OF HAVEN TITLE, LLC

"Title is like any other service industry – there are lots of people offering the same thing," says Haven Title Founder Kristi Sereno. "How you go about delivering that service is what sets you apart."

Haven Title is the result of Sereno working her way up from answering phones to closing deals for local real estate attorneys. She learned every aspect of the game and decided to bet on herself. Eighteen years later, she still treats every deal the same

"Whether my client sells houses for a living or is a first-time home buyer – it matters to them, so it matters to me," she adds.

Sereno knows her work will provide for her two little girls one day.

"My success is their success, so let's just say I'm pretty driven!" she says.



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THE INTERVIEW:
CRYSTAL MORRIS,
PRESIDENT AND CEC
OF GATOR CASES
by Leah Garcia



### CRYSTAL MORRIS

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF GATOR CASES



I loved to wake up early and go for an early morning ski or wakeboard. I came to Florida to attend Stetson University. I loved it here and never left. I attended the University of South Florida for my Master of Business Administration and have lived in the Tampa area for 23 years. Nowadays, you can catch me occasionally in the shipping channel in Tampa on my wakeboard, reliving those days.

My first job was teaching tennis. I grew up playing competitively and always loved kids. I brought these two loves together by working at a summer youth tennis program, but wow was that hot working in the Florida summer sun. That's when I learned that I might be better suited for a desk job during the summer.

Gator Cases was born around my kitchen table in 2000 with my father, Jerry Freed. We knew we wanted to start a case company and needed a name. We liked the idea of having a tough name and logo to represent the durability of our product and Gator just seemed like the perfect fit, being in Florida.

The most challenging time for me was when I lost my father. He was not only my business partner, but my best friend. That time has given me a lot of drive through to build the best company, beyond what he

would have ever dreamed it could have been when we started. Gator has grown so much, and we have enjoyed great success. We are in so many markets, have a huge fan base and a very wide diversity of products. I know it would make him so proud to see what we've accomplished, and I feel like he is with us every day.

My business philosophy is, "Do the right thing." Many years ago, I saw a little plaque in the office of a CEO I greatly admire, Chuck Surack. It struck home with me. Although it is short in words, it says a lot about the importance of character, ethics and caring for others. These are important words to live by and champion. I make sure everyone at Gator (and my kids) knows that doing the right thing is the place to start when facing a problem or decision. If you start there, the answer will be easy to get to.

The professional achievement I'm most proud of is growing a business from zero to over 150 people, creating a fun work environment and enjoying it every step of the way. In my personal life, I'm also extremely proud of my two boys and what wonderful young men they are.

My advice for women business leaders is to build a network of relationships — women who support you and men who are committed to having diversity at the table and ensuring women have a voice. Also, make sure you are supporting the next generation of women leaders, offering mentorship and opportunities.

The best advice I ever got was to take care of your people. It really doesn't matter what you are selling. A company is only as good as the people that make it up. As a leader, truly caring about your team, getting to know them individually and being trusted are critical to growing a company and creating great value.

As for my favorite local musicians, I must go with my boyfriend, Bernie Williams, and his warm Latin jazz vibe. I might be biased. I also love when the "Gator Band" fires up at the office. We have many talented musicians and singers on the team, and we have a performance space in the office. It's always fun when they play together and it's wonderful to see and hear the camaraderie

**People would be surprised to know** that I can operate almost anything with an engine and love to go fast. Boats, planes, motorcycles, race cars – you name it.

When I'm not working, I love to be on the water. We have a boat downtown and I enjoy running up the river for food and drinks, followed by catching the sunset.

My perfect day would be waking up and taking my goldendoodle, Scout, for a walk down the riverwalk, followed by brunch, an afternoon boat ride and watching the sunset. It would be a big bonus if I'm lucky enough to spot a few dolphins on the ride.

Interview: Photography:
Leah Garcia Gabriel Burgos

Gator Cases was founded by Crystal Morris and her late father, Jerry Freed, in 2000 in Tampa. It has acquired several companies and expanded its line to over a thousand cases and bags for instruments and audio, IT and visual equipment. Today, it is the fifth-largest woman-owned business in Tampa Bay.

#### THE GALLERY

Curated by Margaret Miller

Director of the University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum | Graphicstudio | Public Art



#### 'RESEARCH PARK PROJECT: HH' BY ROCHELLE FEINSTEIN

Hand painting and screenprint on canvas, 80 x 71-1/2 inches

New York City-based artist Rochelle Feinstein collaborated with the acclaimed workshop USF Graphicstudio in summer 2014 to create *Research Park Project*. This series of hand-painted prints includes figures of speech and slogans from various sources that decode dense layers of academic language and wryly allude to Graphicstudio's location in USF's Research Park. Each unique print is presented unframed and hangs freely. **graphicstudio.usf.edu** 

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