

# 2019 Women of Distinction Honorees

YWCA of Alton was thrilled to induct ten honorees into our Academy at the 2019 event.



## Dana Adams

Dana Adams inspires young women by succeeding in a male dominated career, whether it be chemistry or forensics. As the Assistant Director of the District 11 Crime Lab of the Illinois State Police, she has taken time on many occasions to give tours to female students interested in pursuing a career in those fields.

Outside of work, Dana undertook another challenge: she is the entrepreneurial talent behind Restore Décor, a non-profit resale shop in Edwardsville, Illinois. Restore Décor operates solely for the purpose of raising money that is then donated to other non-profits in the surrounding communities. Each week she gathers volunteers to paint and repair donated furniture, puts together the display on Friday night, and is open all day Saturday to sell the furniture and accessories. Over a period of 40 Saturdays, Dana coordinated over 14,000 volunteer hours and raised \$64,000; in the past five years, Restore Décor has contributed over \$200,000 for organizations dedicated to inclusivity and equity.

In a world where it's easy to be divided, Restore Décor is a place where people can come together to make a positive impact on their community.



## Kimberly Baalman-Eberlin

Kim Baalman-Eberlin lives in a small community where there aren't many groups that are dedicated to serving the needs of women and girls. She has single-handedly filled that void for many young women and teen-aged girls in Grafton, Illinois.

As a young store manager, Kim often hired women in need who would benefit the most from the job opportunity and mentored them so they would find success in employment. Later in her career, she hired and supervised 28 managers for a nation-wide employer, 90% of whom were women. When she opened a day care center, she hired women who had never received a paycheck, opening them up to the world of self-sufficiency. Today, Kim owns and manages The Whole Scoop, an ice cream store in Grafton. She employs and mentors' teen-age girls for whom this is generally their first work experience. When the girls move on to their next job or post high school educational opportunities, Kim provides letters of recommendation and phone calls on their behalf.



## Plesetta Clayton

Plesetta Clayton volunteers, on average, 40-60 hours a month, in addition to being married, raising children and working full time at the American Lung Association.

In her work with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the Upsilon Phi Omega Chapter in Edwardsville, Illinois, Plesetta has found her true calling. As a 26-year member of the organization, Plesetta is actively engaged in social justice initiatives, service projects and activities to raise funds for scholarships for female high school students of color. Plesetta also combines her professional interests in health with her

goals of ending gender and racial inequality, by planning and participating in awareness walks to raise money for health causes that disproportionately affect African American women.

Plesetta values and fosters the importance of eliminating racism and empowering women and girls through her efforts at mentoring, coaching and community service work, and addressing disparities in access to health care.



## Yolanda Crochrell

Yolanda Crochrell understands and cares about girls and knew that in order to make a difference in their lives, she had to get involved and become part of the process to fight what she describes as “one of the most widely violated legal principles of our society, race and gender inequalities.” So, get involved she did.

Yolanda is the Executive Director of the Quad City Community Development Center in Madison, Illinois. There, she implemented the TWIGS program, providing free lunches to children during the summer months, and operates a summer camp for youth, which includes a hot breakfast and lunch.

Yolanda also serves as a mentor for Girls Keeping It 100, which helps girls ages 13-18, engages in activities with young ladies and their mothers at the Madison Alternative School, and works with young, pregnant women to continue their education and help them explore career training and job opportunities.

Her other volunteer efforts include serving as 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of the Venice-Madison NAACP, and membership in Peacekeepers, Sisterly Love Society, and the Madison County Leadership Council.



## Amy Golley

Amy Golley's dedication to the children in the Alton community is apparent. She spends her days at Alton High School as an administrator, and her afternoons and evenings mentoring children, primarily teen-age girls, at the safe place which she and her husband, Ben, opened next door to their business on Central Avenue in Alton.

Amy uses this after school time to work with girls to improve their self-image and sense of self-worth. She provides them with a journal and encourages them to write how they feel. She teaches them about short-term and long-term goals.

Amy is also a member of the Alton Section of the National Council of Negro Women, and volunteers at the Boys and Girls Club of Alton and the Elijah P. Lovejoy Memorial Organization.

Amy provides a role model, showing young women of color that it isn't where you start, it's where you end. Amy started out as a teacher's assistant, attended school part time to get her education degree, taught school and then became an administrator. She says that every day she works with young ladies to fight against the stereo-types society has placed upon them. She values the mission of the YWCA because she is a black woman who works everyday with young black girls who need to know they are empowered to be themselves. We are proud to recognize Amy as a 2019 Woman of Distinction.



## E. Virginia Ilch

Virginia Ilch has been a caregiver her entire adult life. Her work as an RN at Alton Memorial Hospital since the 1960's gave her an inside view of the onset of the AIDS/HIV epidemic and insight into social justice issues, leading her to an educational role with the Red Cross providing the public with accurate information about HIV and AIDS.

Caring for her husband, who died from cancer in 1974, and her daughter, who was diagnosed with both leukemia and breast cancer, taught her the value of sharing experiences with other women caregivers. As a result, since 1978, Virginia has facilitated numerous support groups for women helping them cope with stressful times in their lives. Adopting a bi-racial son opened her eyes to the disparate treatment afforded persons of color. That led her to her work for racial justice through the YWCA of Alton and the social justice advocacy of United Congregations of Metro East.



## Page Selby

Page Selby is inspired by women making a difference whether in leadership, the community, the church or the world. As a young woman just out of college, Page joined the Junior League of Greater Alton and set about promoting volunteerism and working to develop potential in women in the Alton-Godfrey community. She worked to advocate for child protection and family preservation and sought to educate elected officials on issues arising out of domestic violence against women.

Page's work on the allocation panel of the United Way gave her the opportunity to witness the work that organizations such as Oasis Women's Shelter do to support women. She took it upon herself to educate others about Oasis and encouraged them to financially support the shelter.

Page is involved in efforts to stop bullying, seeking partnerships with local hospitals to educate children in area public and parochial schools about the effects of bullying. She is also a volunteer facilitator for diversity and inclusion workshops in the area.



## Candice Wallace

Candice Wallace is a teacher in the Alton school district. In her work she sees first-hand the discrepancies between the number of office referrals received by African American students compared to students of other races. She also found that students of color here, as well as at the county and state levels, are performing drastically below their Caucasian peers in both math and reading. Instead of just bemoaning these situations, Candice is working with a colleague to create a professional development/training curriculum to help educate the educators across the county about the specific needs of African American students.

Candice encourages her students to dream big about their futures by inviting professionals and community leaders to come to her classroom to read to her students and answer questions posed by students about his or her job and experiences. During and after the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri following the not guilty verdict in the Michael Brown case, Candice provided students the opportunity to articulate their thoughts. When many expressed anger and resentment toward the police, she invited police officers in to encourage dialogue with students.



## Megan Williams

Megan Williams is constantly educating and holding space for discussions around issues of equity, especially those issues affecting women and people of color. She also puts her convictions into action in her professional life as well.

Megan was the first female City Attorney for the City of Alton. In that position she rewrote the ordinance establishing a Community Relations Commission and was the driving force in developing a community policing strategic plan.

As City Attorney, Megan also created an environment where people felt safe showing up for court. She also eliminated the policy which of issuing warrants to individuals failing to pay fines, working instead with the Court to find alternatives to incarceration which allowed people to find or keep a job, working out a payment plan.

As a member of the YWCA Board of Directors and its Racial Justice Committee, Megan planned a speaker series addressing white privilege and racial disparities. She is trained to educate people on their own biases and the impact of those biases. Her current position as Assistant Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League Heartland allows her to continue to engage in social justice initiatives. Megan, we are proud to honor you as a 2019 Woman of Distinction.



## Sarah Woodman

A native of Alton and a graduate of Alton High School, Sarah Farley Woodman has spent most of her life in this community. It isn't surprising, then, that she believes in making this community a better place.

In her professional life in the banking industry, she encouraged young women with whom she worked to further their education and mentored them as they worked their way up the career ladder.

Sarah has raised money as a member of the Philanthropic Education Association to fund scholarships for women returning to college after many years away from school. She also volunteers at the Caravan Shop, supporting Oasis Women's Shelter.

However, most of her volunteer efforts over the years have been in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Alton, where she has served as a board member and routinely works with the children and their families to encourage them in school and life choices.

# Women of Distinction Academy

[View our 2019 Women of Distinction honorees here.](#)

\*Denotes deceased member

## 2019

Dana Adams, Kimberly Baalman-Eberlin, Plesetta Clayton, Yolanda Crochell, Amy Golley, E. Virginia Ilch, Page Selby, Candice Wallace, Megan Williams, Sarah Woodman

## 2018

Alicia Alexander, Mary Buckley, Patricia Devening, Stephanie Elliott, Shirley Emons, Sara McGibany, Cora Miller, Lisa A. Nielsen, Sarah D. Smith, Angel Weber

## 2017

Georgia Bratton, Mary Cordes, Theresa Franklin, Jenifer Lewis, Linda McCormick, Ruth Meyer, Dorothy Nagy, Martha Schultz, Tammy Smith, Mary Pat Venardos

## 2016

Karen Cooper, Kris Fulkerson, Val Harris, Tawnya Hooper, Minnie Johnson, Elaine Kane, Dr. Stephanie Monroe, Elizabeth Parker, Sharon Pratt, Sandy Smith, Rev. Diana Connors Williams

## 2015

Louise Baker, Colleen Green, Heather Hope, Cheryl Maguire, Valerie McDougler, Tiana Montgomery, Eva Perkins, Kathryn Sharpe, Sue Weber, Bethany Wooden-Chapel

## 2014

Joanne Adams, Helen Crause, Sandy Crawford, Julie Fraser, Allison Harper, Emily Hejna, Vivian Monckton, Tina Murphy, Jodene Niehaus Scheller, Marquatto Rattler

## 2013

Donna Bemis, Carolyn Dooley, Laura Hill, MD, Susan Delano, Betsy Puent, Kathleen Riney, Debra Ross, LaDonna Whitner, Karen June Wilson, Denise Woolf

## 2012

Mary Albert-Fritz, Karen Baker Brncic, Toni Corona, Debbie Edelman, Barbara Gillian, \*Fern Halliday, Mattie Jean Miller, Diane Schuette, Amy Sholar, Karen Wilson

## 2011

Trudi Allen, Patti Fischer, Cami Giertz, Norma Glazebrook, Shimmy Gray-Miller, \*Judy Hoffman,  
\*Hazel Killion, Judith Roth, Jennifer Tierney, S. Lavernn Wilson

## 2010

Amy Bourland, Helen Cresswell, Cynthia Ellis, \*Betty Farley, Bonnie Fox, Earlean Patterson, Cindy  
Roth, Nancy Ryrie, Angela Valdes

## 2009

Veronica Felton Armouti, Jody Basola, Mary Ann Cain, Brenda Eardley, Susan Gowin-Woelfel,  
\*Jan Hines, Stephanie Housman, Donna Meyer, Susan Parton-Stanard, Laura Shansey

## 2008

Sharon Arnold, Janet Biermann, Gail Drillinger, Barbara Hinson, Margaret Hopkins, Patricia King,  
Virginia Long, Patricia Morrissey, Hon. Kyle Napp, Audrey Ridenhower, Nancy Whitlow, Eva Faye  
Zeisset

## 2007

Lori Artis, Gwen Baalman, Sandy Beckman, Sue Brown, Noncy Dooling, Ginger Diamond,  
Hon. Elizabeth Levine Levy, Kathryn Nahorski, Marsha Schuman, Martha Warford

## 2006

Marge Barba, n Melissa Erker, Jan Goodwin, Tammy Iskarous, D'dandrienne Jones, MD.  
Martha Kane, Verla Moyer, Sue Mueller, Roseanne Stice, \*Margo Swift

## 2005

Emily Battin, Kristie Baumgartner, Janet Delassus, Min. Joyce Elliott, Sue Hardin, Pam Heepke,  
Tina Kristoff, Barbara Lynn, Sharlene Meyer, \*Linda Price, Debra Schwenk, Charlotte Stetson,  
Diane White

## 2004

Monica Bristow, Gloria Dooley, Bernadette Duvernoy, D. Jeannine Kelly,  
Barbara Morrissey McGrew, \*Rebecca Sims, Barbara Snyders, Bev Timmins, Pamela Whisler

## 2003

Pamela Abbott, Susan Bostwick, Cindy Gavilsky, Sheila Goins, Sara Kinder, Carolyn Parks,  
\*Antigone Simpson, Katherine Smith, Carla Totten, Beverly Young

## 2002

\*Josephine Marley Beckwith, \*Dallas Burke, Adele Carpenter, Cathy Contarino, Julie Delaney, Elveria Miller, Martha Morse, Janis Robinson, Jane Roehl, Marcia Wickenhauser

## 2001

Nancy Becoat, Tanya Brown, Christine Chaikowsky, Marcy Jacobs, Karen McAtee, Devona Yates

## 2000

Lee Bailey Cox, Mae Ella Chatman, B. Marie Gibbons, \*M. Charlene Gill, Jane Ready Hill, Jane E. Hornberger, Lisa Kay, Amelia Paschedag, Sonjia Peacock, \*Bobbie Vandalia

## 1999

Lillian Brantley, Linda Brooks, Suzanne Brown, Margaret Freer, \*Sharon Johnson, Charlotte Johnson, Suzanne Lagomarcio, Hazel Loucks, Lula Simms, Jill Wieland

## 1998

Tara Condon-Tullier, Gail Donnelly Bader, Jo Greenwood, Sandra Hudson, Dorothy Hutchinson-Gross, \*Sue Panetti-Lee, \*Ruth Pippins, Debra Pitts, Shirley Portwood, Joan Spiegel

## 1997

\*Gay Bryant, Anne Davis, Hon. Ellar Duff, Diana Enloe, \*Mary Lee Johnson, Charlene McAllister, Van McConahey, Sarah Jane O'Neill, Valerie Peters, Barbara Polen

## 1996

Linda Chapman, Hon. Barbara Crowder, Betty McClintock, Myrna Mandorca, Linda Nevlin, Donna Petro, Stephanie Robbins, Peggy Ryder, \*Tishie E. Smith, Kathy Steinman

## 1995

\*Sen Evelyn Bowles, Donnie Calvin, Loretta Dawdy, \*Letha Fields, Erma Foster Maloney, Nancy Franklin Crane, \*Eva McDonald, Mary Jo Swengrosh, Dawn Wakeford, Janet Lynn Zerr

## 1994

Ann Badasch, Michele Berkel, Sandra Lauschke, \*Grace Monroe, Kay Muggenberg, Stephanie Munson, Betty Richardson, Kathie Rosentreter Wuellne

## 1993

Martha Cadle-Paquin, \*Charlene Cannon, \*Mary Lou Cousley, Judith Green, Mary Deane Huntley, Candace Mark, Bessie Harris, \*Sally Petito, MD



## 1992

\*Dorothy Duffey, Laurna Godwin, \*JoAnn Harmon-Arnold, Sherry Price, Bernadine Purcell,  
\*Joyce Robinson, Joan Sheppard, Margarette Trushel

## 1991

Patricia Flippo Kratschmer, \*Frances Jackson, Dorothy Kelley, Nancy Livingston, Kathleen  
Rogers, \*Phyllis Schlafly, Ruth Slenezynska