

The Badass



As someone who has proved she's not to be messed with, it's only fitting that Speaker of the House **NANCY PELOSI** lead our class of 2020



Speaker Nancy Pelosi in her Ceremonial Office in the U.S. Capitol Building.

Makeup: Adrian Avila for Karma Beauty Lounge.

1 Nancy Pelosi

MADAM SPEAKER
ON WHAT IT TAKES
TO BE A BADASS.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JEREMY LIEBMAN

What makes a badass? Purpose. For me, purpose is helping the one in five children in poverty who goes to sleep hungry. Having five children of my own, I want them to know their opportunities and the love and care they receive. At least I hope they would see it that way. [laughs] I consider myself a lioness in that regard—you come near my cubs, you’re in trouble.

Being a mom, in a way, has prepared me for my time in politics because it is about time management, diplomacy, logistics, being a quartermaster and chauffeur. If only I had a driver who cooked! [laughs] When we brought our baby Alexandra home from the hospital, our oldest child was turning 6 that week. So, five kids in six years. When they are finally in school, you think, “Now I can take on the world.” People ask me all the time how I do it, and I think part of it is being Italian-American. I have so much energy. And the other part is chocolate—very, very dark chocolate.

Finding a balance is important too. I tell the members, “‘Recreate’ and ‘re-create’ are the same word.” When you recreate you re-create your energy; you renew yourself. Work hard, do your constituent work, keep the home fires burning, and relax, because you must be renewed for when you come back for the fight.

My best badass advice is to be you. Be confident in what you have to offer. It’s nice if you want to have role models, but be yourself. That has an integrity about it, an authenticity about it. That is what is necessary. Know your power, know what you can do. Take inventory. Count it all. Count being a mom, a housewife—all of those other experiences that you bring to bear. I was basically a shy person, believe it or not, so I didn’t really like the spotlight, but I loved the issues.

Also, nothing is more wholesome for the political process or anything else you can name—military, academia, business—than the increased participation of women. If I ruled the world, I

would say the priority is the education of women and girls. You can’t just say girls because many women still need it. It makes the biggest difference. The education of women for their family, for their society, for the economy, for themselves. It’s the most important thing so we can have more badasses.

Sometimes people say, “Oh, when I was a little girl, I wanted to be this or that.” When I was a little girl, I wanted to be a teenager. When I was a teenager, I wanted to rock around the clock—Elvis was my hero. [laughs] I didn’t have an interest in politics. My mom wanted me to be a nun. I said, “I don’t want to be a nun. I’d rather be the priest!” Being raised in a political family, we were taught that public service is a noble calling and you owed responsibility to other people. I thought you can do that without giving up your weekends and all the rest.

I thought maybe I would stay here [in office] for 10 years. Then my colleagues asked me to run for leadership. One advantage I had is that I had no ambition to do that, so I was deeply engrossed in my appropriations work and my intelligence work. That grounding served me well as a leader, because I know my stuff.

Looking ahead, I’m so proud of all our [Democratic] candidates for president, and I’m very excited about the prospect of having a new, fresh voice in the White House. I hope we can increase the numbers. Sixty percent of our caucus are people of color, women, or LGBTQ. One hundred and six women were elected to the Congress last year—that was the biggest number ever, and the first time we were over 100.

I want to make a difference on climate issues; I want to make a difference on children’s issues. The Affordable Care Act is really a culmination, for me, of so many of those things. That was my biggest accomplishment and probably still is. I don’t see impeaching a president as an accomplishment. I prayed that it would never be necessary. I never wanted to believe that a president of the United States would violate the Constitution, as this president has. That was something you want to think is not possible. But when it is, then you have no choice.

I think the reason I can stay calm in my role as Speaker is because I’m not ambitious. I’m not trying to get anything out of it—all I’m trying to do is deal with it. At a certain point your satisfaction is seeing other people succeed at whatever all of this is. Anyway, take the slings and arrows and then let the real heroes emerge. I certainly hope that makes me a badass. —AS TOLD TO SARAH CRISTOBAL

“Take the slings and arrows and then let the real heroes emerge. I certainly hope that makes me a badass.”

2

DAKOTA JOHNSON Since making her phone number public in 2018 and inviting survivors to share their stories of harassment and abuse, the actress has turned the voice mails she has received into a podcast called *The Left Ear* (“the ear closest to your heart”). The second season will premiere this year while Johnson continues to grow her production company, TeaTime Pictures. “Speaking freely about your trauma, knowing that there is not someone who is going to judge, diagnose, pacify, or criticize you is profoundly healing,” she says. “Being able to listen in this way, to be a safe place for someone else, is everything.”



DAKOTA JOHNSON

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ALLYSON FELIX Just 10 months after giving birth by emergency C-section, the sprinter broke Usain Bolt’s record for most gold medals at the World Championships. Her 12th victory was doubly sweet after she stood up to Nike when the brand refused to guarantee maternity protections in her sponsorship contract. Her actions have led major sponsors, including Nike, to revise their policies to better support athlete moms.



ALLYSON FELIX

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DIANA NYAD “What more can I do than get up every day, grab a tiger by the tail, swing it over my head, and go to bed saying, ‘Woo, I just couldn’t have put any more into that day than I did?’” says the legendary swimmer who, in 2013, at age 64, became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without a protective shark cage. In 2017 she joined the chorus of women sharing #MeToo stories as a means for advocating change across the board. Now Nyad’s energy is as infectious as ever, as she gets ready for her EverWalk initiative this summer, in which she plans to get 1 million people to walk from Miami to D.C. and pledge their commitment to keeping the oceans clean by reducing single-use plastics at home.



DIANA NYAD

6

CICELY TYSON After 60-plus years in the spotlight, snagging three Emmys, a Tony, and an honorary Oscar, the 95-year-old super-stylish actress proves that retirement just isn’t in the cards. She can be seen in Ava DuVernay’s upcoming *Cherish the Day*.



CICELY TYSON

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KELLY SAWYER PATRICOFF & NORAH WEINSTEIN “We treat Baby2Baby as a business. It’s not a charity, it’s not a volunteer project; it’s an entrepreneurial business,” says Weinstein. With Sawyer Patricof, the determined moms have built up their organization to serve more than 200,000 children in the L.A. area alone. Their annual agenda includes a star-filled fundraiser that yields millions of dollars in aid and has helped deliver more than 70 million products to kids in need. They’ve also urged politicians to waive the taxes on diapers in nine states. Making essential products more accessible for families is their overarching goal. “The sky’s the limit,” says Sawyer Patricof. “There are so many children who need help.”



KELLY SAWYER PATRICOFF & NORAH WEINSTEIN

7

SUSAN GOLDBERG *National Geographic* magazine’s first female editor in chief is no stranger to taking the lead as a boss in multiple newsrooms, including Bloomberg News, where she was the outlet’s first woman bureau chief in Washington, D.C. In her latest role she is dedicated to adding more female contributors to the magazine’s masthead, in part to honor the centennial anniversary of the women’s suffrage movement in America. “Being a great journalist is a badass act in and of itself,” she says. “And there is nothing more important than making sure we have a diverse staff to tell stories in their truest light.”



SUSAN GOLDBERG

8–9 Savannah Guthrie & Hoda Kotb

THE FIRST FEMALE CO-ANCHORS IN TODAY'S 68-YEAR HISTORY ALWAYS HAVE EACH OTHER'S BACKS.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHRISTOPHER STURMAN

How does it feel to be trailblazers at NBC?

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: We both came up in local news, where there was always a male and a female anchor. But now it's about who's right for the job. No one questions whether a female anchor would be able to do a tough interview or cover the news. There's no one path to success anymore. And we're just so happy to work together and lean on each other.

HODA KOTB: The other day someone came up to me and said, "My daughter gets to see you both on TV, and she thinks this is just the way it has always been." Obviously, we're on equal footing with men—we go toe-to-toe all the time!

What qualities do you admire most in each other?

HK: Savannah is smarter than anybody else in the room, but she's vulnerable too. She feels the same insecurities that everybody feels, and she's open about it all. It shows that you can be a badass and have a soft center. You don't have to walk around as hard as a rock.

SG: I admire Hoda's generosity. She walks into every single day with her arms wide open, looking for somebody to hug.

Your roles require you to be incredibly nimble—one minute you're singing with Dolly Parton, and the next you're reporting on the impeachment hearings. How do you keep up the pace?

HK: I remember that day with Dolly. Savannah was playing the guitar, singing "Jolene," and then put the guitar down and started the news.

SG: That's actually one of my favorite parts about the show—there's a little bit of everything. Hoda could be doing a revelatory interview and then two hours later she has a

“It's about who's right for the job. No one questions whether a female anchor would be able to do a tough interview or cover the news.”

lampshade on her head or is weighing herself on national TV.

How do you do it on days when you're not in a good mood?

SG: We don't always wake up smiling. Well, Hoda does, but most people don't. I joke about her being Ms. Happy Pants.

HK: We're not navel-gazers either. Our job isn't about us; it's about what we're talking about. And everybody shows up to work when they're having a crummy day or if their kid is sick. They just do their job, and so do we.

What is it like to start each day in the glam room together?

HK: They can't shut us up! Our producers try to have the morning meeting with us, but when they walk in, we're always talking, already knee-deep in our own shit.

SG: We laugh a lot—sometimes we laugh until we cry. And then sometimes we just cry, especially if we're talking about something real in our personal lives or something serious that's going on in the news. A lot of times the makeup artist will have to do our makeup twice.

What's the most badass thing you've ever done?

HK: I've done two badass things in my life—Haley and Hope. I'm in my 50s. Becoming a mom was a moment that I thought had passed for me, but I got to reach back in time and grab it.

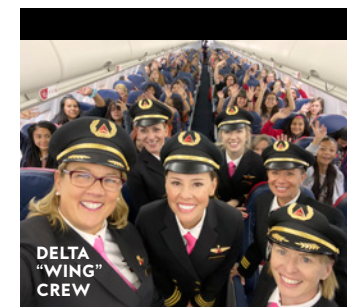
SG: In my career the most badass thing I've done was leave TV to go to law school. It was a big deal to detour completely off a path and just hope it works out. And then I quit my job again to go back to TV with no job offers and a ton of student debt. It was, well, crazy. But it worked out, so we can call it badass!

How are you teaching your daughters to be badass women?

SG: I'm trying to teach Vale to be confident but kind.

HK: We want strong kids, but we also want them to have vulnerability. I don't want my daughters to always go busting through doors to get what they want. I see the power in them, though. They're determined. I mean, get out of their way, man.

—JENNIFER FERRISE



10 DELTA "WING" CREW For International Girls in Aviation Day the airline flew 120 girls from Salt Lake City to Houston to tour NASA and learn about careers in aviation and aerospace. The annual event was orchestrated entirely by women, from the pilots and ramp agents to the air-traffic controllers. "The girls clapped as we barreled down the runway," says 737 First Officer Erin Heinlein, who flew co-pilot. "Hearing their joy brought me back to the excitement and wonder I felt on my first flights."

11 GABRIELA SCHWARTZ The head of global urban marketing for Capitol Records nurtured the careers of stars like Justin Bieber, Rihanna, and Jennifer Lopez, effectively shaping the future of music and pop culture. "I feel badass when I'm surrounded by women with the same purpose," she says. "Hot yoga and martinis help too."

Savannah Guthrie and Hoda Kotb in the Today makeup room.

Hair: Laura Bonanni Castorino (for Kotb) and Kelly O'Neill (for Guthrie). **Makeup:** Mary Kahler.

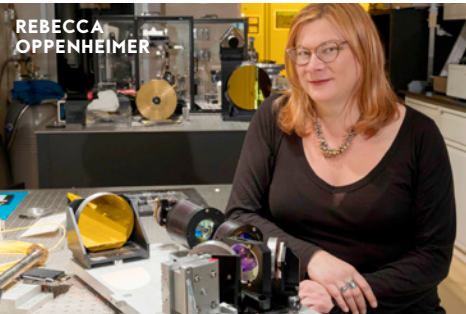
12 KRISTINE DAVIS As one of the masterminds behind NASA's new Exploration Extravehicular Mobility Unit spacesuit (xEMU), the engineer is making history by designing the helmet, sun visor, and waist assembly that will be worn by the first woman to walk on the moon, in 2024. Her advice for the next generation? "Find something you are passionate about and pursue a career in it," Davis says. "If not you, who? Go change the world."



14 JUDY CHICAGO Over the course of her 50-plus-year career, the famed feminist artist eschewed preconceived notions of gender by studying pyrotechnics and attending auto-body school as a means to create her work. Though she is often associated with her seminal installation *The Dinner Party*—and the controversial reviews it received—Chicago is finally getting her due with her first retrospective, at the de Young Museum in San Francisco this spring.



15 DEBBIE STERLING The Stanford graduate's disruptive toy and media company, GoldieBlox, introduces young girls to the literal tools they need to succeed in science. "STEM is often portrayed as a white male in a lab coat who is a born genius. Call it the Einstein effect," she says. "If you're a young girl who is creative and social, you might think, 'That's not for me.' The truth is science, engineering, and technology are incredibly creative. And the stuff you build changes people's lives."



16 REBECCA OPPENHEIMER The curator, professor, and chair of astrophysics at the American Museum of Natural History, who has worked with researchers at NASA and her alma mater, Caltech, designs instruments to better study planets (and perhaps one day life) outside our solar system. Since coming out as trans in 2014, she has also challenged people to push past labels. "Astrophysics is nuts, and the universe we live in is absurd, funny, and beautiful," she says. "To empathize with any other human, labels are mediocre at best. We are too complex for simple tags."

13

MELINA MATSOUKAS

The Bronx-born director, whose work includes music videos for Rihanna and Beyoncé (e.g., the Grammy-winning "Formation") and TV shows like *Insecure*, debuted her first feature film, *Queen & Slim*, to much fanfare last year. Written by Lena Waithe, the movie is a love story that also tackles the topic of police brutality and how tragedy can strike at any moment. Matsoukas's refreshingly real approach makes her a force to be reckoned with.



17 DOMINIQUE CRENN "I'm trying to be a good human who kicks some ass," says the French chef, whose San Francisco restaurant Atelier Crenn is the first run by a woman in the U.S. to earn three Michelin stars. Known for her commitment to innovation, sustainability, and equality in the kitchen, Crenn announced her battle with breast cancer in May but has hardly skipped a beat. Most recently she pledged to create meatless menus in an effort to be even more eco-conscious. "I want to tell young women, 'Hey, you are a badass too. If I can do it, you can definitely do it,'" she says.



18 JENNIFER JUSTICE The entertainment lawyer has worked on major deals for artists like Outkast, Beyoncé, and Jay-Z (she represented the hip-hop mogul for 17 years and helped launch his company, Roc Nation). To combat the gender pay gap at male-dominated record labels, she made it her mission to represent more women and negotiate fair compensation. "I was making money for men by day and trying to overthrow the patriarchy by night," says Justice, who now runs her own female-focused advisory and legal firm, aptly named The Justice Dept.

19 KATIE PORTER

"I'm not in Congress to do what is politically easy. I am here to do what is right," says the single mom and consumer-finance expert who represents California's 45th District. Known for her canny questioning of bank CEOs and public officials before the House Financial Services Committee, she says her proudest achievement in office was helping change a bipartisan bill that would have made it hard for Americans to file their taxes for free. "When you have courage to push back against leaders of both parties, we can make real change to help people."



20–22 BRIE MIRANDA BRYANT, DREAM HAMPTON, TAMRA SIMMONS "Many people were healed from this project. It shed light in a dark place and will, hopefully, help fewer people become victims," says Simmons, one of the three female executive producers behind the award-winning documentary series *Surviving R. Kelly* and its sequel, *The Reckoning*. Their work led to the indictment of the R&B star after more than two decades of alleged sexual abuse and predatory behavior. "This triggered a global conversation that allowed for more open, robust talks around sexual violence," Bryant says. "The women featured in our documentary didn't all have the same profile, but they had nearly identical stories about the manipulation that preceded the actual abuse," Hampton adds. "We'd like people to understand the signs."



23 Scarlett Curtis

THE CELEBRATED EDITOR OF THE BEST-SELLER *FEMINISTS DON'T WEAR PINK AND OTHER LIES* FINDS BRAVERY IN BEING HONEST ABOUT HER MENTAL-HEALTH STRUGGLES.

Like most people, I have a busy job. My diary is filled with meetings, podcast recordings, activist gatherings, and panel discussions. Usually these things fill my heart with joy. They make me excited to be a human and determined to make change in the world. And then my depression hits.

When I feel depressed, I'm not able to get out of bed. It affects my ability to be a person and is very easy to cover up. I have sent dozens of emails calling off meetings because of fictional bouts of "food poisoning" or "the flu." I would rather graphically describe bodily functions than admit it's my mind that's sick, not my body.

In the past I let my mental health make my life very small. I avoided making plans or commitments out of fear that my mind would eventually sabotage any chance I had of fulfilling my dreams. Five years ago, when I was 19, depression nearly caused me to take my life. But these days, after fully immersing myself in the feminist movement and being open about my mental illness, my life feels very big. What changed wasn't my brain chemistry—it was my ability to open up and be honest.

While I'm never going to be free from depression, I don't have to let it rule over me. Now, when I make plans, I try my best to keep them. I relish my commitments. And when depression falls on me (which it still does), I'm honest about what I'm going through.

In December I was given the Changemaker Award for young activists by the feminist organization Equality Now. It was surreal, as I have admired and supported Equality Now for years. This achievement would never have been possible had I kept hiding away with my depression. Opening up about my struggles has given me the confidence I'd been craving for years. I finally feel able to participate in the world around me. And though it's not glamorous or sexy and it certainly hasn't been easy, taking back my life is the most badass thing I could ever do.

Curtis's new book, *It's Not OK to Feel Blue and Other Lies*, is out now.

24

Sue Gordon

THE LATEST MISSION FOR THE FORMER DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE? TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY **PETER HAPAK**

Last August, after 30-plus years of carrying out covert operations on behalf of the CIA, Sue Gordon was foisted into the spotlight. Despite her cordial relationship with President Trump, her bipartisan support, and the fact that it was a federal statute to promote her, the president made it clear that he was going to bypass her for the top position of director of National Intelligence, vacated by Dan Coats. So, Gordon reluctantly tendered her resignation, which became headline news. “On the one hand, it was awful because it was my life’s work and I’m good at it, and there’s no reason in the world that the president shouldn’t trust me,” Gordon says now of the dismissal. “I don’t know who was served by this. And I don’t understand the real basis. It hurt.”

But the thing about Gordon is that her optimism and sense of duty should be bottled and sold in stores. A few supporting facts: On the day the president appointed her as

principal deputy director in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in 2017, she found out she had cancer. Her first day of radiation coincided with her first day on the job. During the two years she held the post, she woke up at 3 A.M., was at the office by 5, and worked until 8 P.M. Under her command she oversaw 17 agencies, tens of thousands of people, and was responsible for how tens of billions of dollars were spent. Knowing that she would be, *ahem*, busy, her husband (to whom she’s been happily married since college) even got a puppy to keep him company at home. It’s worth noting that Gordon’s post is still vacant, yet her faith in her former colleagues runs deep. “The most important thing was not whether Sue Gordon got to keep the position, but whether the president’s going to get good intelligence—and I have a lot of confidence in the community,” she says. “You do what’s right.”

An expert in intelligence and global risk, Gordon says her next act includes moving into the private sector and working with tech companies to help them understand the responsibility they carry. “This whole digital connectedness has just kind of blown things wide open in terms of who can cross what boundaries, who’s responsible for what, where the information is held,” she says, citing data-collecting sites like Equifax, Google, and Facebook as examples. In addition, she’s got four books she wants to write and plans to spend “a fair amount of time helping to develop leaders” at various universities like Duke, her alma mater.

Her best advice? “One, there is always a solution, but that doesn’t mean it’s free. Two, don’t limit yourself. You don’t know what you can do until you try. And the last is, for God’s sake, learn how to decide. So many people spend their lives not deciding. They wait for the world to turn. You know what has to be done. A decision creates something new, and that’s what entails progress.” —**SARAH CRISTOBAL**

25 ESTHER DUFLO

The Paris-born MIT professor, who won a Nobel Prize in economics for her “experimental approach to alleviating global poverty,” is the youngest person and second woman to receive the honor. In her Nobel Banquet speech she said, “I cannot help but hope that this prize, with its emphasis on the essential question of how to improve the lives of others, and with one woman among the laureates, will encourage many others to come join us.”



26 JAWAHIR ROBLE “I don’t want to encourage just Muslim girls and black girls. I want to encourage all females,” says the Somali refugee and first black Muslim woman in the U.K. to officiate soccer matches wearing a hijab. The referee is studying to become a coach now and hopes to lead England’s women’s national team to victory one day. “I know a lot of girls are looking up to me. I feel like I’m representing them all.”



27 BILLIE EILISH For her debut album, the Gen Z pop icon secured six Grammy nominations and became the youngest star to earn a nod in each of the “big four” categories (song, record, album, and best new artist) all at once. She is also the first artist born in the 2000s to hit No. 1 on the Billboard charts. The devout vegan is determined to carry on her phenomenal success while sticking to her guns. “I’m really strong-willed, and I know exactly what I want,” she says. “I’m going to f—ing do it.”

BADASS WOMEN



“

Badass women understand what their responsibility is, and they execute it without an agenda.”

—SUE GORDON

Sue Gordon in New York.
Lafayette 148 New York blazer. **Eileen Fisher** top.
Pants and ring, her own.
Styling: Caroline Ahrens. **Hair and makeup:** Megan Kelly.

28 ZARIFA GHAFARI As one of Afghanistan's first female mayors, and, at age 26, the youngest, Ghafari is starting the conversation surrounding women's rights in her town of 35,000, Maidan Shar, and across the Middle East. "My goal is to make people believe women's power," she has said on Twitter.



ZARIFA GHAFARI

34 KELLY CLARKSON Since winning the first season of *American Idol* in 2002, the singer has been pushing boundaries, winning awards, breaking records, and molding her career all on her own terms. "I have had to fight so hard just to be myself," she says. "I'm comfortable in my skin. I don't want to dress, sing, or think like someone else." With her talk show renewed for Season 2 and a Las Vegas residency on the horizon, the unstoppable star shows no sign of slowing down. "Confidence is everything," she notes. "Say yes to things that challenge you and push you further as an artist."



KELLY CLARKSON

35 KOTCHAKORN VORAAKHOM The founder and CEO of Porous City Network and Landprocess turned 11 acres in Bangkok, Thailand's "sinking city," into the first public park there in 30 years, designing it to retain up to 1 million gallons of water. She also looks forward to opening Asia's largest urban-farming green roof. "A park shouldn't be just for beautification," she says. "It should address future climate uncertainties while allowing new landscape-architecture solutions to emerge."



KOTCHAKORN VORAAKHOM

36 CLAIRE BABINEAUX-FONTENOT "My goal is a hunger-free America, and I have never been better positioned to make that goal a reality," says the CEO of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. The finance expert left her corporate career when a breast-cancer diagnosis gave her pause, allowing her to go back to her roots and build on what she was taught growing up in Louisiana with—wait for it—107 siblings (biological, adopted, and foster). "Among the many lessons I learned growing up in our large family, three stand out: resiliency, the power of diversity, and the fierce potential of female leadership," she says.



CLAIRE BABINEAUX-FONTENOT



VIJAYA GADDE

37 VIJAYA GADDE As Twitter's global lead of legal, policy, and trust and safety, Gadde has helped spearhead the social-media company's ban on political ads. "We wanted to address the risk that digital ads bring when it comes to driving political outcomes," she says. "We believe that political reach should be earned and not bought." Gadde is also a co-founder of #Angels, an investment collective that backs start-ups and helps ensure that women receive equal compensation at successful companies.

38 GREGG RENFREW In 2011 she launched Beautycounter, a brand committed to keeping 1,500 toxic ingredients out of its products. This December she went to Capitol Hill to serve as an expert witness at a House hearing on cosmetics reform calling for stricter regulations of potentially harmful chemicals in personal-care products. "I've gotten up in front of thousands of women who have joined us to change an industry that has been antiquated and stagnant for over 81 years," she says. "Those are my most badass moments."



LIVIA FIRTH

39 LIVIA FIRTH "The future is about active citizenship, collaboration, new business models, and putting people and the planet above profit," says Firth. As the co-founder and creative director of Eco-Age and the founder of the Green Carpet Challenge, she has been raising the issue of sustainability in fashion for over a decade by highlighting eco-conscious brands on and off the red carpet.



30 FIONA KOLBINGER The German surgeon-in-training is the first woman to win the Transcontinental, an endurance cycling race covering over 4,000 kilometers across Europe. In what was her first-ever bike race, she finished in 10 days, 2 hours, and 48 minutes, beating her closest competitor (a man) by more than 10 hours. "Do not let others' prejudice limit your ambitions," she says. "Be confident about your passions and talents."

FIONA KOLBINGER



SUSAN FOWLER

33 SUSAN FOWLER

In a blog entry in 2017 the software engineer exposed the toxic environment she endured at Uber. Her viral post has ignited an industry-wide examination of the treatment of women in Silicon Valley. With her memoir, *The Whistleblower*, expected to hit shelves next month, she wants to encourage readers to take charge of their own futures. "I hope I inspire people to speak up for what's right, to find greater autonomy in their lives, and to be the heroes of their own stories," she says.



AMANDA NGUYEN

31 MICHELLE PESCE The DJ, who has been spinning for 20-plus years at events like the Golden Globes and Coachella, co-founded Woman., a collective formed to "shift the needle on inclusivity, safety, freedom, consent, and mental health in nightlife spaces." This includes establishing physical sanctuary spaces and training security guards in violence prevention. "I work in an environment that often tolerates bad behavior and blurred lines," she says. "But my passion for what is right is greater than my fear of speaking up."



MICHELLE PESCE

32 AMANDA NGUYEN The sexual-assault survivor and CEO of Rise is literally rewriting the law to increase protections for more than 72 million survivors across the country. In just four years her nonprofit has helped pass 27 laws. And, she says, "we're not stopping—we're continuing this badass work into 2020 with more states adopting their own Sexual Assault Survivors' Bill of Rights."

29 MEENA HARRIS

The Phenomenal Woman Action Campaign founder and CEO turned a simple T-shirt collection into a viral empire that supports women's rights-focused nonprofit partners like Families Belong Together and the Black Futures Lab. Her motto? "Screw the haters and keep it moving," she says. "Don't give up. Don't cut corners. Pursue things with passion and commitment."



MEENA HARRIS



REP. DEB BUTLER

40 DEB BUTLER The North Carolina House representative's chants of "I will not yield" became an online rallying cry after she discovered that Republicans in her state had met in secret to override the governor's budget veto while their Democratic counterparts were attending a 9/11 remembrance ceremony. "The New York Times has called North Carolina a place of scorched-earth politics, and I think that might be an understatement," says Butler, who's not giving up the fight. "I'm in it for the right reasons. I want to fix our institutions and make them stable so they can function better than they do now."

41

SHARON STONE

The actress has made a career out of realizing her power and owning her sexuality ever since her famous leg-cross scene in *Basic Instinct* catapulted her to stardom in 1992. A near-fatal stroke in 2001 almost derailed her career, but Stone is not easily deterred. In addition to starring in the new Ryan Murphy series, *Ratched*, she's dedicating herself to worthy causes. "It's important to take this thing called fame and use it for things that have value. For me, that has been working on social change," she says. "I have enjoyed working to build refugee camps and schools and taking my initiatives to the United Nations."



SHARON STONE

43 KATE ORFF "I'm inspired by women who actively look, listen, and engage in the world and connect the dots," says the landscape architect and founder of Scape, whose ecological designs adapt to climate change and encourage people to protect nature. Her studio's Living Breakwaters project to safeguard the coast of Staten Island, for instance, "is not just a physical structure that reduces the risk [of storm surges] in the Raritan Bay," she says. "It rebuilds structural habitat for shellfish and fin fish and brings educators to the shoreline for citizen science, oyster restoration, and hands-on learning."



MIRAMAR AL NAYYAR

44 KACEY MUSGRAVES

Coming off the release of her fourth album, a world tour, and four subsequent Grammy Awards (including album of the year), the country singer-songwriter continues to change the face of her genre, challenging the traditionally conservative ethos with a sparkling modern take that is all her own.



KACEY MUSGRAVES

45 EVA GALPERIN The cybersecurity expert created and heads a privacy and security research group within the Electronic Frontier Foundation that protects vulnerable populations like journalists, activists, women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ communities. Her goal is to eliminate "stalkerware," software domestic abusers often use to track their partners. "I'm working on the most badass thing I've ever done," she says. "I'm working on destroying an industry."



EVA GALPERIN



LINDSAY SHOOKUS & KRISTIN MERRICK

47-48 Lindsay Shookus & Kristin Merrick

TWO DECADES AFTER THEY MET IN COLLEGE, THE EMMY-WINNING SNL PRODUCER AND THE FINANCIAL ADVISER ARE SPOTLIGHTING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS AT THEIR ANNUAL "WOMEN WORK FUCKING HARD" EVENT.

LINDSAY SHOOKUS: When we became friends, I had no idea the job I have now [TV producer] even existed. But you, on the other hand, always knew you'd go into finance.

KRISTIN MERRICK: I wanted to make money! But trading on Wall Street was a soul-crushing job. It wasn't cool to see women shit all over each other when we should be opening doors for each other instead. So, after 15 years I quit the banking system and became an adviser. There's this notion that it's impolite or gauche to talk about money. I want to promote financial literacy and make money less weird for women to discuss.

LS: We know how important it is to connect women to other women who will help them succeed. A few years ago I met a struggling single mom who had started her own skin-care concierge business. I wanted to introduce her to people, so you and I hosted our first annual "Women Work Fucking Hard" networking party to spotlight her.

KM: You and I are connectors by nature. We want women to kick off their shoes, have some wine, and uplift each other. I didn't have many female mentors in my former career, but now I try to be one myself. And pretty much anyone who's ever lived in [your hometown] Buffalo, N.Y., has come to 30 Rock for an informational interview, right?

LS: Hey, I try to pay it forward. I was hired as an assistant at *SNL* in 2002. Now I fight for my staff to get more money and recognition. In September I promoted my entire office.

KM: Retention is a huge problem for women in finance. If I exhibited any emotion in the dealing room, I was told I was being an "emotional woman." Meanwhile, the guy next to me was just "being a man" when he smashed his phone into pieces. The double standard became harder to manage when I became a mom, because there was just no flexibility.

LS: I became a producer and learned I was pregnant within a five-day span. I wanted both things badly, just not at the same time. I cried and hid my pregnancy for an absurdly long time as I proved myself in the job. Five and a half weeks after my daughter was born, I went back to work. A lot has improved since then—and NBC now offers longer maternity leave—but we need more females in power positions to really change things.

KM: That's right. Every badass woman I know empowers other women and also keeps her shit together. You've always been your own biggest competitor, but you've plowed through some very stressful times recently that I don't know if I could've survived.

LS: A badass is someone who strives to keep getting better and self-reflects, and I believe I am who I'm supposed to be today because of those challenges. I've tried to become a more emotionally intelligent person through therapy and meditation, but I can't control the fact that some of the things written about me aren't true. I love my story; a lot of people don't. But I don't give a fuck, and that in itself is such progress. —SAMANTHA SIMON

49 ERICA ARMAH-BRA

BULU TANDO Known as DJ Switch Ghana, the 12-year-old superstar has already grabbed the spotlight at gigs like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Goalkeepers event and snagged the title of Ghana's best DJ of 2019. The go-getter even has her own foundation, which focuses on gender equality and helps provide learning tools for disadvantaged kids. Her ultimate goal? To become a "Dr. DJ" gynecologist. "I feel powerful when I am able to give back to society and change a person's life."

50 ANN DRUYAN

The Emmy and Peabody award-winning writer, producer, and director has been hell-bent on safeguarding scientific facts and protecting the planet for decades. Now, the former creative director of the Voyager Golden Records (phonographs sent into outer space as a representation of life on Earth) is carrying on her and her late husband Carl Sagan's iconic work interpreting discoveries through National Geographic's *Cosmos* TV series. "Being a badass means standing up for science at a time when it doesn't seem to matter what's true," she says. "I'm very proud of the work I've done in defense of science and reason."



ANN DRUYAN