



The phrase “*man up*” has become a call to take responsibility, to act bravely, to handle difficult situations. So where does that leave women?

We are witnessing seismic shifts in the workplace, from a tidal wave of *#MeToo* outings of business, political, media and entertainment figures to pressures from investors wanting to see more diversity – of gender, race and thought in corporate board rooms.

In 2018, *Crain's Chicago Business* will launch the Woman Up Project: a multi-platform initiative to amplify the female voice – and male perspectives – to help build better workplaces.

This first of its kind program will include quality editorial content from *Crain's Chicago Business* which will feature the following:

- A **survey and analysis** of women's perspectives in partnership with the Chicago Network.
- Applying a female-centric lens to **annual editorial features** including: “Best Places to Work,” “Tech 50” and a special edition of “Who's Who” in Chicago.
- A twice-monthly **Woman Up newsletter** that focuses on workplace issues and women on the rise and in power. Content will be curated by women for women, telling stories and engaging conversation for a readership of 50,000.
- A **conversation thread** promoting the entire initiative, **#WomanUpChicago**.

Outside of these editorial features, *Crain's* will engage a limited number of Partners to help shape additional content, podcasts and events.



**Partners will receive all of the benefits listed below:**

- **Digital Newsletter**

One banner ad position on once-monthly Woman Up newsletter. Opportunity to add Custom Content to 3 newsletters (dates based on availability) over the span of a year. Banner ad rotation will be equally shared between partners (4 max).

- **Chicagobusiness.com**

Sponsorship logo on a run-of-site digital banner ad campaign promoting this program throughout the year. Campaign will be created by Crain's – Partner logo will receive 1 million impressions on campaign over the year period.

- **Custom Content**

Custom stories in print editions, 3 col. X 14 inches (2 insertions, valued at \$32,500 for the space and content creation). Crain's Custom Media, our in-house creative agency, will work with each Partner to tell stories important to that Partner.

Topics may include:

- Your company's top mentors and their mentees
- Your company's talent attraction programs that promote diversity and inclusion
- Collaboration among generations in your workplace
- Your corporate values
- New rules for the workplace

## PARTNER OPPORTUNITY CONT'D

### **Investment: \$75,000**

32 specific touch points with the Crain audience over 12 months of Woman Up project.

(ROS promotion exposure in print/digital ads to promote features is extra)

### • **Events**

Partners will help shape the content and the speaker list for a quarterly events series, “Odd Man Out.” This happy-hour series will feature 2 women and 1 man discussing topics not typically heard (or allowed) in the boardroom. Each event will be hosted at a Partner’s office, Crain’s Café overlooking Millennium Park or an agreed upon venue. Event recap to follow with photos and Partner logos.

#### *Topics may include:*

- #MeToo – what’s next in the sexual harassment conversation and how it’s changing our workplaces
- Glass Ceiling Status – where do we stand?
- Coaching, Mentoring and Sponsorship
- Women Entrepreneurs
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Women in Government
- Health, Wellness and Meditation
- Reinventing Yourself at Any Age

### • **Social Media**

Each Partner will participate in a 30-second broadcast on Crain’s Facebook page each month.

### **Investment: \$150,000**

32 specific touch points with the Crain audience over 12 month of Woman Up project.

(ROS promotion exposure in print/digital ads to promote features is extra)

### **Presenting Sponsor receives all benefits accorded to Partners, with two additional premium benefits:**

- Exclusive Sponsor of a twice-monthly Woman Up podcast series, with Sponsor identification and statement at the beginning and end of each podcast. The 5-minute podcasts will include interviews with up-and-coming women, speakers at “Odd Man Out” and other voices worth hearing. The podcasts will focus on “in their own voice” content from a variety of people in and around Chicago.
  - Sponsor logo will be included in all print and digital promotion of the series in *Crain’s Chicago Business*.
- Exclusive Presenting role at the premier event to cap the year’s activities: The reception for “Who’s Who: Chicago’s Most Powerful Women” (Fall 2018).
  - Includes brief podium time – 3 minutes – by a top executive of the Presenting Sponsor.



## NATIONAL PREMIER SPONSOR (LIMITED TO 1)

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**Investment: \$500,000**

**One National Sponsor has the opportunity to create a multi-city platform** – engagement in Woman Up or similar activities in Detroit, Cleveland and New York – with elements from all of the Sponsor benefits listed above, including podium time at key events.

This customized opportunity also includes podcast sponsorships in all four markets.

We would work closely with the client to identify additional opportunities to increase and leverage the investment across the Crain's National network of e-newsletters in the top 25 markets in the U.S.



# THE WOMAN UP PROJECT

## OPINION

### What would you like to see happen in Chicago?

# 2018

THE WOMAN UP PROJECT

Crain's recently asked nine Chicago leaders to give us a big-picture view of how they'd improve the city's business environment this year.



#### Put government on a diet

I would like to see every official seeking re-election in 2018 actually begin to reduce the size of government and increase investment in education and workforce training.

It is well-known Illinois has more units of government than any other state in the union—nearly 7,000 at last count. They do not make us healthier, give us better schools or build safer roads. In fact, the man-hours and tax dollars dedicated to supporting the bureaucracy are holding Illinois and local areas back.

Taxpayers are savvy enough to know this is necessary, but should candidates for office fear electoral backlash, I offer another 2018 wish that complements this cutback. Illinois has incredible education and workforce training programs, but they have been underfunded and disaggregated for far too long. Let's use the resources freed up by reducing units of government to reinvest in higher education, bring modern labs and resources to K-12, and work with government, nonprofits and business to create a seamless system that allows everyone access to quality education, internships, apprenticeships, workforce training, retraining and job placement.

*Theresa Mintle is interim vice chancellor for public and government affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago.*



#### Nurture the human connection

In 2018, I hope to see in society a renewed emphasis on fostering meaningful human connections and a greater respect, conscientiousness and empathy for one another.

Technology is driving massive improvements in efficiency, productivity and communication. But, at the same time, we are seeing a reduction in true human connection and emotional interaction. Simply glance around any restaurant, playground, or street: Everyone is looking down.

At Ulta Beauty, our business is highly personal. Our beauty-loving guests crave the experience

of trying products in our stores and interacting with our store associates and stylists. My team and I spend a lot of time in our stores, and I can't tell you the number of stories we hear from our guests and associates about transformative experiences they've had at Ulta Beauty because of a powerful human connection. We've worked hard to build this culture by connecting with our associates to listen and act on their feedback.

In my time outside of work, there is no better way for me to stay grounded than spending time with my family and serving on the boards for the Ounce of Prevention Fund and Save the Children. I see firsthand the positive impact of nurturing human connections from an early age. My involvement with both of these admirable organizations reminds me of the need to bring to the business world a greater sense of humility, humanity and authenticity.

*Mary Dillon is CEO of Ulta Beauty.*



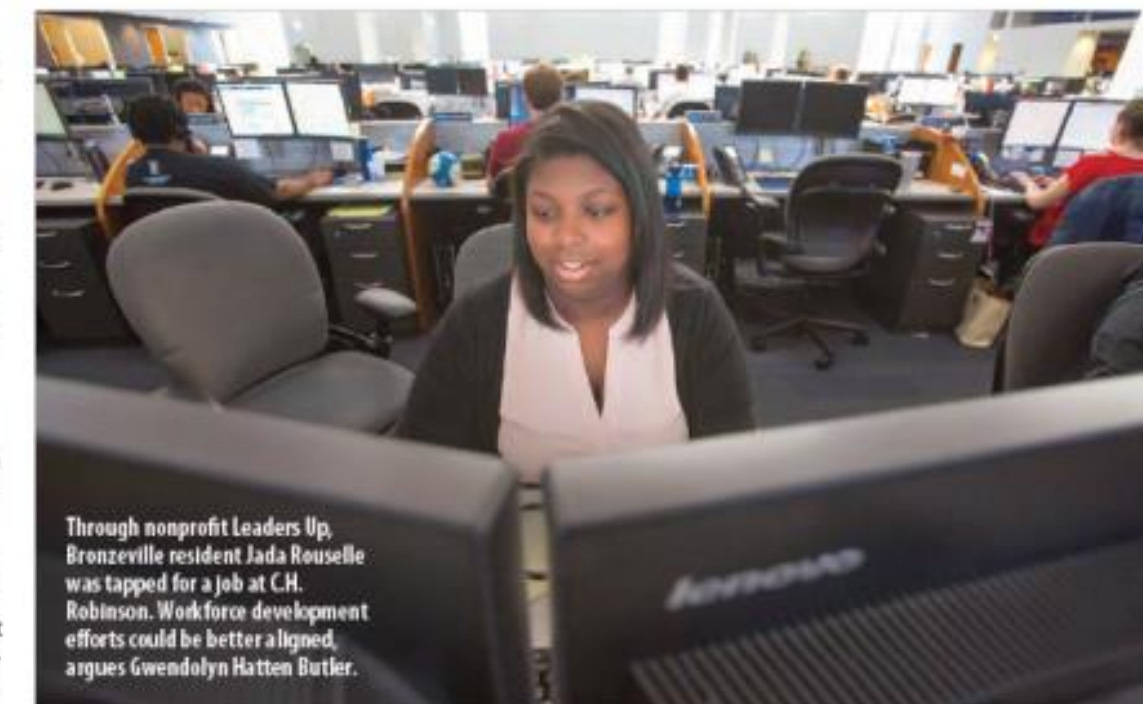
#### Disrupt a traditional attitude

For 2018, my wish is for businesses to capitalize on the diversity that exists within Chicago.

In media, we have seen partnerships strengthen our business rather than weaken it. Together with our broadcast partners ABC7 Chicago and WTTW, we have expanded our reach and content offerings for our unique audiences, while still operating within our budgets. From a traditional perspective, some might have thought that these collaborations could threaten to debilitate our business. But we found these relationships were complementary, not adversarial: Our research shows that over 50 percent of the Univision Chicago audience doesn't watch any other English-language broadcast.

The quicker we replace competition, ego or fear with the ideas of collaboration and partnership, we can unite in a shared vision to strengthen our city, each other and, in turn, ourselves.

*Teri Arvesu is vice president of content at Univision Chicago Local Media.*



Through nonprofit Leaders Up, Bronzeville resident Jada Rouselle was tapped for a job at C.H. Robinson. Workforce development efforts could be better aligned, argues Gwendolyn Hatten Butler.



#### Pull talented women forward

I'd like 2018 to be the year of female founder success. There are competing statistics on the percentage of venture dollars that flowed to women-led companies in Chicago last year. Some sources claim as much as 20 percent, including companies with at least one female founder, and some cite much lower numbers, at 3 percent for women-only founding teams. Whatever statistic or data set you examine, the number is too low. (I am proud to say that, of my personal angel portfolio, 67 percent of my investments are women-led.)

But this isn't a fundraising parity issue; it's not just that great female founders are less likely than their male counterparts to secure funding. It's that—and more. More women need to believe that they can start a company. More women need to be mentored on selling their vision, on demonstrating viability of their business model, on recruiting top-tier talent. Every single part of this maturing ecosystem requires that wherever you are in your career life cycle, you reach back and pull a few more talented, deserving women forward. In-

vestors, fund women. Advisers, be candid and ambitious in your counsel to women. Corporate partners, seek out women-led solutions. Educators, recruit and nurture female talent, especially in product and engineering. We owe it to each other and our tech-enabled economy to set an example of a healthy, gender-neutral tech ecosystem. We can't do that without participation from all sides.

*Coco Meers is a technology entrepreneur, investor and adviser, and general manager of BeautyNow by Groupm.*



#### Stitch together efforts

I would like to see a focused effort by the Chicago business community on working with public school students to improve their preparedness for the jobs of the future. Our youth need access to people, resources and real-world work experiences to ensure they develop the qualitative and analytical skills that will allow them to fully participate in the workforce. There are a number of effective organizations that are doing great work in this area, but my sense is these organizations often compete for support from essentially the same group of individual, philanthropic and

corporate donors, sponsors and volunteers. Just imagine the positive impact if every Chicago business, regardless of size, aligned itself with one of these organizations or a local school and provided hands-on, boots-on-the-ground human capital, technical and financial resources, and assistance.

*Gwendolyn Hatten Butler is vice chairwoman of Capri Investment Group.*



#### Demonstrate that businesses care

I would like to see all of us do much more to ensure that our elders no longer go hungry or be forced to choose between medication and meals. Even in this time of great prosperity, 1 in 7 people in Cook County aren't able to reliably access adequate nourishing food, and senior adults are a particularly vulnerable community. Ventas, one of the largest owners of senior housing in the U.S., provides homes where seniors can live with dignity and enjoy healthful, regular meals. In addition, we are a proud strategic partner of the Greater Chicago Food Depository Older Adult program, which supports more than 6,500 seniors each month.

*Debra A. Cafaro is chairman and CEO of Ventas.*





Our dining page gets a makeover: Reviews plus restaurant news you can use. **PAGE 23**

How architecture sleuths solved the mystery of this Wilmette house. **PAGE 8**

# CRAIN'S

CHICAGO BUSINESS

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## WOMAN UP

This issue marks the beginning of a yearlong effort to tell the stories of women in Chicago business, to elevate their voices and be a catalyst for change. We're calling it the Woman Up Project, a play on the catchphrase command to be tough and be brave. In addition to this special report, Crain's is devoting the opinion pages in this issue to essays from businesswomen on what they want to see this year. Look for more features, essays, live events and online forums throughout 2018.



## BROKEN GLASS

How women are really faring in Chicago tech

PAGE 14

The women of Baird Capital's venture fund. From left, Mamei Qu, Joanna Aron and Nicole Walker.

## She's spent \$16 million (so far) on a Lake Geneva mansion

Tina Trahan, wife of Starz CEO Chris Albrecht, has been buying up condos at the 40,000-square-foot Stone Manor to turn it back into a single-family home

BY DENNIS ROOKE

When Tina Trahan was gazing up in Elmhurst, she visited Lake Geneva, Wis., a couple of times. But she never imagined that someday she'd own one of the grandest mansions on the resort town's lake, Stone Manor. Trahan, now a Santa Monica, Calif., resident married to Chris Albrecht, CEO of the Starz cable network, has been quietly buying up the condos in the gigantic Italian Renaissance-style manse, spending more than \$13.5



Tina Trahan and Chris Albrecht

million in the past year. And even at that price she doesn't own the whole building yet.

Trahan, who still owns a home in Elmhurst, was newly married in 2016 when she and Albrecht were visiting relatives in the suburb, and she read that the first floor at Stone Manor was for sale. They drove up and liked what they saw. She bought the first-floor condo in November 2016 for just under \$6 million and has since bought the others save for one. She has her eye on that seventh unit, looking to make the

See **STONE MANOR** on Page 17



Stone Manor, Lake Geneva, Wis.

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### GREG HINZ

Never a dull moment in local politics. Here are the five biggest stories to watch this year. **Page 2**



### ANDY SHAW

Like Lucy with Charlie Brown, City Hall always seems to yank reform efforts. Maybe this time...? **Page 2**



### JOE CAHILL

Who's way up and who's way down: The local stocks to keep on your radar. **Page 4**



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# BENDING THE ARC

How far have women really progressed in Chicago's tech sector?

BY JOHN PLETZ

Amanda Lannert belongs to an exclusive club. Along with Kristi Ross of online investment company Investry, Lynne and Daphne Poulos of bio-agriculture company Chromatin, she is among a trio of female CEOs of Chicago tech companies who have raised \$20 million or more in an investment round. Six years ago, it was a party of one. Lannert, CEO of Jellyvision, which makes employee-benefits software, isn't satisfied with the gains. "It's a great club to be in, but there should be more of us," she says.

The two distinguished women of color and startups are not unique for their lack of diversity and can be counted on, sadly, to provide example after example of gender discrimination and sexual harassment. Now, as the nation conducts a long-overdue discussion of workplace inequality, it's valuable to examine how things have progressed—or not—in Chicago tech.

In a startup community that has only recently started to gain traction, women-led ventures have an even more nascent. Data is hard to come by, but researchers at Crunchbase estimate that 14 percent of investments in Chicago-based startups go to those with a female founder. New York had the best showing at 17 percent, followed by Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, Crunchbase says.

But there are signs that women have gained over the past five years and reasons to think Lannert, Ross and Poulos soon will have more

company. More women-led ventures appear to be getting launched and funded. More women are investing in startups. More women are being brought in as CEOs to run startups founded by men. Startup incubators and mentorship programs and high school STEM programs are creating a talent pipeline for the future.

"It's definitely getting better," says Tracy Herlihy, managing director at Chicago venture fund Math Ventures Partners and a mentor to Lannert and other women in tech. "There are a lot of people who are trying to work on the problem from a couple of different angles." Still, he adds, "it's going to take some time."

### MONEY

Status in tech starts with money. "If you change who writes checks, you change who gets checks," says Lannert, who has become an angel investor. In the past few years, five women-led venture funds have launched: Writrion Ventures, Modern Ventures, Indiviglo, Investor and Impact Engine.

Jessica Drosie Vagan, managing partner of Impact Engine, says 43 percent of her fund's investments are in companies that have female CEOs. "We don't necessarily have a preference," she says of the \$10 million fund, whose co-founder is also a woman, Tasha Soto. "But we have had women founders say to us they want to talk to us. I believe it's in part because we are women."

It's an accident that "there was a woman involved in almost every one of my investments," says Eileen Murphy Buckley, CEO of ThinkCo, an education technology company that has raised almost \$15 million since it started five years ago. "I think it definitely had an impact on the investment decision."

There are more female partners and investment professionals at established funds, too. Baxter Ventures, DHV Venture Capital, Hyde Park Ventures Partners, Illinois Ventures, Jump Capital, Pritzker Group Venture Capital and Math all have hired women in prominent roles recently.

At Baird Capital, half the six-person team overseeing its \$350 million venture fund are women. Three were more four years ago, when Nicole Walker joined from Abbott Ventures, Vice President Mamei Qu and Joanna Aron, who previously worked elsewhere at Baird, rejoined the firm in investment roles after graduating from Ivy League MBA programs. The composition shift gave out of a conversation about diversity with an institutional investor in the fund who's a woman, says partner Michael Liang.

Hiring more women has led to more interest from others. "People think it's self-selection, where not enough women make it go into ven-

ture capital," Qu says. "A lot of women want to do this."

But men need to think of women as equals, says Taha Mashuch, CEO of Evod, a developer of software to manage spending on corporate meetings and events that has raised \$23.8 million since 2008. "It's not enough to just have VCs listing women as partners," she says. "She has to have the influence at the firm to support your company in the future. If they don't have close, forget it."

### FOUNDERS

Although data is scarce, there are signs, albeit largely anecdotal, that the number of women-led companies is on the rise. Michael Gray, a partner at Neal Gerber Eisenberg who does venture and private-equity transactions, estimates that client firms founded or led by women have more than doubled in the past five years and now account for about 20 percent of his business.

Mentorship programs, from WESTEM to Chicago Innovation, as well as business plan competitions offer signs that the pipeline is growing. Five of eight teams in last year's venture challenge at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management included female founders, up from three of 11 teams a year earlier. At the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, four of 10 New Venture Challenge finalists last year had female founders.

At tech incubator 1871, 31 percent of startups have a woman on the founding team, from 28 percent in 2014. WESTEM, its 12-week accelerator for female entrepreneurs, in the past two years has mentored 76 companies that raised more than \$5 million from investors and employ 262 people.

Women Tech Founders, a networking group, has grown to more than 6,500 members in three years.

### THE CORNER OFFICE

More women are being hired as CEOs, as well. Andrea Harris, who previously co-founded a software firm, recently succeeded a male founder at HighGround, a software startup with 75 employees. Mary Pignati was named CEO of Retruft, a weight-loss technology company. And Lannert took over from a man, Jellyvision founder Harry Gottlieb, though that was in 2011.

Constance Freedman, who launched Moderate Ventures, a \$30 million fund focused on real estate, recently was asked to assemble a panel discussion for an industry conference. "I was able to pull together five female CEOs from my portfolio pretty quickly," she says. "A year or two ago, I wouldn't have been able to do that."

Women make up half of High-

"The narrative gets rewritten when female entrepreneurs make people rich."

Amanda Lannert  
CEO of Jellyvision



It's no accident that "there was a woman involved in almost every one of my investments."

Eileen Murphy Buckley  
CEO of ThinkCo



"In the '90s, the early part of my career, sexism was blatant. Now it's micro-aggression that's hard to pinpoint."

Andrea Harris  
CEO of HighGround



### A WORK IN PROGRESS

A growing number of female founders have put a spotlight on the most egregious misbehavior. Desiree Vargas Wrigley, who founded Chicago-based startups Give Forward and Pearachute, wrote recently in an opinion piece for Crain's of having "been groped under tables while pitching, openly and inappropriately touched in front of other founders, invited late at night and hastily ignored in boardrooms next to my then co-founder, a male."

Other female founders say they're still asked by male investors whether they plan to have children or how they'll manage work-life balance. "In the '90s, the early part of my career, sexism was blatant," says Harris. "Now it's micro-aggression that's hard to pinpoint, like leaving a woman off of an email or not sharing information. It's hard to figure out how best to mitigate it."

Participation doesn't equal parity, Buckley says she and her peers in the education-tech industry can point to instances in which similar companies founded by men got up to three times the funding, despite having lower revenue or other tangible results.

Jennifer Fried, CEO of Explor-

er Surgical, a medical software company she co-founded while enrolled in Booth, says she "never once thought about being a woman" while in business school. "That speaks for itself. Outside the Booth bubble, it's getting better, but not at the pace that it needs to."

What will speed things up? Success stories. Several women point to the recent IPO of Stitch Fix, which is led by Katrina Lake (who's also on Gerbhart's board). Since going public in November, the San Francisco-based apparel site has achieved a market cap of almost \$2.4 billion. "The big marker is going to be exits," Lannert says. "The narrative gets rewritten when female entrepreneurs make people rich."

Genevieve Hines founded Sincerity, one of Chicago's earliest women-led tech companies, in 2005 and ran it for eight years. More recently, she has backed 10 women-led startups as an angel investor. "It's the best thing you can possibly do to support women."

## WOMAN UP



WOMAN UP PROJECT

Breaking through the barriers against women is in everyone's interest.

EDITORIAL PAGE 10

The money man behind Grace tells his side on the restaurant's closure. PAGE 8

# CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS

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Whether you're looking to broaden your skill set or change careers entirely, here are 10 in-demand jobs in Chicago this year. Plus: Who's hiring and how much you can expect to earn. Page 12

## 10 HOT JOBS AND WHERE YOU CAN FIND THEM IN CHICAGO



## Something really funky went down at failed Bridgeport thrift

Abrupt closure shrouded by mystery loans, a \$60.5 million loss and CEO's suicide

BY STEVE DANIELS

Washington Federal Bank for Savings was a seemingly sleepy local thrift, in business over 100 years. It hadn't absorbed a loss on a single loan for more than five years. Profits each year ranged from \$1.6 million in 2012 to \$2.3 million in 2016.

Seemed too good to be true? It was.

Without warning, regulators on Dec. 15 closed the Bridgeport savings and loan, run by the same family for three generations, saddling the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. with a mind-boggling \$60.5 million loss, after stripping out \$21.5 million in equity on the bank's balance sheet. As a percentage of assets, it was the second-worst local bank failure

since the Great Recession.

Making matters more suspicious, CEO John Gembura, the grandson of the founder, committed suicide Dec. 3 at age 56, just a few days before regulators began hastily taking bids from a few other local lenders for the deposits and some of Washington Federal's loans.

A spokesman for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency,

which closed Washington, has offered no comment other than what the federal regulator said in a statement: "The bank's assets were less than its obligations to its creditors and others."

Clearly, the financial results Washington Federal reported each quarter to its regulator bore no resemblance to its reality. Even in today's relatively benign economic environment, no other bank that makes a significant number of loans would have

shown zero loan losses of any kind in more than five years. That alone should have set off alarm bells for regulators.

On paper, Washington Federal was mainly a mortgage lender. Of the \$157 million in total loans on its balance sheet, \$119 million, or 77 percent, were home loans.

The OCC's statement effectively raises the question of how many of those loans were to real businesses.

See WASHINGTON FEDERAL on Page 28

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### INSIDE

Got a struggling outdoor recreation retailer? Lemons may come calling. Page 3



### JOE CAHILL

Mullenburg's lofty goal for Boeing can only mean one thing: acquisitions aplenty. Page 4



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# OPINION

EDITORIAL

## Woman Up, Chicago. It's time.

The phrase "man up" has come to be synonymous with toughening up, a bro-speak injunction to girl one's loins, as it were, for a difficult task ahead. Here's the thing: We believe women are plenty tough, too, and that's the spirit behind the framing of a yearlong endeavor launched this month here at Crain's Chicago Business: The Woman Up Project, a title which affirms that the business community needs to promote more women to the highest levels of leadership—especially now, in the age of #MeToo and #TimesUp.

Naming this project was a branding challenge: How to express our commitment to tell the stories of women in business, to amplify their voices, to be a catalyst for change, while signaling to our male readers that they've got a stake in all this, too? We think "Woman Up" captures it, and in the course of the next 12 months, we hope our plan to present trend stories, personality profiles, op-ed columns, live events and social media happenings will help women in Chicago business, civic and cultural circles step into the spotlight,



share their truths, connect with one another and persuade their brethren that we all do well when women do well. There's plenty of data to support the

notion that diversity yields benefits at the board level on down: Companies with women in leadership roles outpace the competition. And, in the

wake of sexual harassment scandals that have rattled Madison Avenue, Hollywood, Silicon Valley and even the White House, it's worth noting companies with few women in leadership roles are more prone to such complaints—complaints that can carry million-dollar price tags.

Sexual harassment and discrimination against women beget bigger costs than legal settlements, however. As has been demonstrated again and again so vividly since the Harvey Weinstein scandal broke, working women still face enormous barriers to promotion despite decades of progress in the workplace. And when half the population is frozen out of opportunity, it means society as a whole and the companies that employ us are starved of half of the best ideas, half of the energy, half of the creativity and innovation and know-how that could be harnessed to help our economy grow.

In other words, it's in everyone's interest to break through those barriers, for men and women alike. So, "Woman Up," Chicago. It's time.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Transit key to jobs boom

I smiled at the photo of an el train embedded in "What's behind Chicago's downtown jobs boom?" (Jan. 2). While talent is key, so is mass transit. Nearly two-thirds of downtown Chicago's workforce commutes by public transportation. In fact, the RTA system provides more than 2 million rides each weekday (that's one-sixth of the Illinois population).

Millennials make up more than a third of our workforce, and they gravitate toward mass transit like no other generation before them. I love to point to Indianapolis, where lawmakers recently heard in testimony, "Selling a city without transit to millennials is like selling a phone without a camera."

Speaking of Indiana, they're investing \$1.1 billion in the South Shore Line, which moves many employees into Chicago's central business district. Worse, Illinois has not passed an infrastructure spending bill in nearly a decade. We're also facing nearly \$100 million in shortfalls primarily due to economic factors and state budget cuts. How can we support the influx of businesses moving downtown without consistent and proper investments in our public transportation system?

Mass transit is the "economic equalizer" that levels the playing field for job seekers because our transit system gives applicants from all over the region a chance at a good job—or, even better, their dream job. It's a

sweet deal for employers, too, as they have unbridled access to the most qualified employees within the six-county region.

Our connectivity to neighborhoods and surrounding suburbs is unmatched across the country, and employers are taking notice by moving their companies closer to transit. And it's not just happening downtown. When Caterpillar decided to move its global headquarters to suburban Deerfield, the CEO said that the location is convenient to the city of Chicago "via commuter train."

As more companies move closer to transit, we should be doing more to invest in our public transportation system, not less.

KIRK DILLARD  
Chair, Regional Transportation Authority

#### Keeping the friendly skies friendly

By misrepresenting free market principles, the opinion piece "United Airlines is on the wrong side in this fight" (Jan. 3) misleads readers about blatant interference by two foreign governments in the U.S. airline industry and the risk of these violations of our trade agreements.

For decades, Open Skies policy has promoted economic growth in America and has supported jobs for aviation workers, including the thousands of airline pilots I represent. While these trade agreements are designed to remove government interference from the marketplace, two coun-

tries—the United Arab Emirates and Qatar—are violating them by giving billions of dollars in subsidies to their state-owned airlines. As a result, U.S. airlines that follow the rules compete at an enormous disadvantage, putting U.S. workers' jobs at risk. Fair trade requires a level playing field, and U.S. aviation workers can compete and win against any company in the world when we are all playing by the same rules.

Few better examples exist of the "excessive bureaucratic involvement" that Mr. Brady says he opposes than a foreign government's predatory intent to drive U.S. airlines out of markets so that its own state-controlled businesses can benefit. Supporting Open Skies policy means supporting its enforcement.

Fortunately, President Trump understands this and is planning talks with the UAE and Qatar. U.S. airline pilots call on the administration to end these foreign governments' interference and for all of American workers to honor the rights of American workers as required in our Open Skies agreements.

CAPE TODD INSLER  
Chairman, United Airlines Master Executive Council  
Air Line Pilots Association, International

#### Roskam broke a promise to us

In casting his vote to support the recently enacted Tax Cuts & Jobs Act, Peter

Roskam broke a promise he made to his constituents. He promised to deliver tax reform that would be "simpler, flatter and fairer for everyone." Yet the tax bill that he crafted and supported is none of these things.

The GOP promised that Americans would be able to file their taxes on a postcard. On his website Roskam noted that 99 percent of Americans either purchased tax software or hired a professional to comply with the complexities of the current tax code. Yet this practice is likely to continue as taxpayers struggle to make sense of the new tax law and its loopholes. This was evidenced within days of the bill's passage, when taxpayers in his district stood in long lines to prepay property taxes before the end of the year, only to find out that their payments may not be deductible.

Roskam and his Republican colleagues also promised a flatter tax system with lower tax brackets. They promised to reduce the current seven tax brackets down to three, then four, then five. In the end, there are still seven tax brackets. Yet the most egregious broken promise is that the reformed tax code would be "fairer for everyone." There is no scenario where a tax bill that increases the national debt by \$1.5 trillion and gives 83 percent of the benefit to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans is fair.

SANDRA ALEXANDER  
Glen Ellyn

CRAIN'S

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# OPINION

EDITORIAL

## Michael Madigan's #MeToo moment

It's too early to write Michael Madigan's political obituary, much as many in this state might like to do so. No one living has ever seen a more sly, opportunistic or tenacious civic being than Madigan—Chicago Machine potentate, Democratic Party chairman, iron-fisted ward boss and speaker of the Illinois House. That said, the scandal that erupted this month within his organization has done more to damage him than any attacks mounted by his eternally frustrated sparring partner, Gov. Bruce Rauner, have done in those almost-ecumenical Willie E. Coyote-style years of trying.

Based on what we know, that damage to Madigan's career is well-deserved. The scandal involves credible allegations of sexual harassment perpetrated by one of Madigan's myrmidons against a young woman who has presented herself as incredibly poised and remarkably sympathetic, coming forward as she has with further charges that the formidable Madigan machine slow-walked a response to her complaint in an effort to cover it up.

Madigan announced he'd fired the offending aide, Kevin Quinn, less than a day after the Chicago Tribune interviewed Alaina Hampton, who filed an Equal Opportunity Employment Commission complaint and provided text messages sent by Quinn, her former supervisor. Quinn is the brother of Marty Quinn, the alderman representing Chicago's 13th Ward, which happens to be Madigan's



Michael Madigan and Heather West Young, attorney for his personal political committee, address allegations of sexual harassment within his organization—but not quickly or effectively enough.

home turf, the Southwest Side fieldman he rules as committeeman.

Madigan's Feb. 12 announcement of Kevin Quinn's firing came about three months after Hampton sent him a letter describing her experience of unwanted advances and career frustration. It also came about 10 months after Hampton left Madigan's political organization rather than continue to endure a hostile work environ-

ment. The text messages alone are compelling evidence that this young woman faced relentless and unwarranted attention from Quinn as she simply tried to do her day-to-day job. That her career was sidetracked as a result—and that those in a position to do the right thing and protect her from this treatment failed to do so—is a disgrace.

Madigan may be a canny survivor, but even he is at risk of being overtaken by

the #MeToo wave, a cultural tsunami that is sweeping not only his office but the White House as well, as the Trump administration faces persistent questions about the abusive past of former Staff Secretary Rob Porter, a mainstream candidate that continues to uproot and resurface aspects of President Donald Trump's own history that he doubtless would prefer us all to forget.

This, of course, isn't the first time we have heard tell of sexual harassment in our local politics, and it surely won't be the last. Hampton contends she knows other women who have had similar experiences to hers. And in October, in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein imbroglio that rocked Hollywood, well-known Chicago political consultant Becky Carroll and a handful of other operatives published an open letter stating that "every industry has its own version of the casting couch. Illinois politics is no exception. Ask any woman who has lobbied the halls of the Capitol, staffed council chambers or slogged through brutal hours on the campaign trail. Misogyny is alive and well in this industry." The letter had more than 140 co-signers.

If we are to have any hope of ending this kind of abuse in Illinois politics, leaders like Madigan must change—or be forced to change. It's up to the Democratic caucus, particularly the women in both chambers, to speak up and push back. If they fail to hold Madigan's feet to the fire on this, they speak volumes about who's really in charge—and which side of history they prefer to be on. Namely, the wrong side.

### YOUR VIEW

## Somebody please show Rahm the Blue Line

Last week, four companies expressed interest in building an express train to O'Hare in response to a request for qualifications from the city. Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the project's most visible advocate, has argued the train would make Chicago more attractive to business and bolster our international image. But as researchers who study urban planning, transit investments and funding, we believe that an express train between O'Hare and downtown Chicago is a flashy solution in search of a problem.

In other words: It's unnecessary. Worse, it could siphon political will and public resources away from needed projects, while triggering construction and capacity problems.

Here's why public transportation agencies and the general public should demand this process before momentum takes over: Chicago already has a direct transit connection between O'Hare and downtown: the Blue Line. In fact, among the nation's 40 busiest airports, a five-thirty-eight analysis identified O'Hare as a unique example where the train is already a good option for downtown and can often beat a taxi in travel time. Improvements along the Blue Line have sped up the trip, and the recently announced FastTracks pro-



Kate Lowe, left, is a faculty member at the University of Illinois at Chicago who focuses on transportation and planning. Janet Smith is a UIC faculty member and co-director of the Nashville P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood & Community Improvement.

gram will allow increased frequency. Chicago is already winning the competition for good train access to a major airport.

Beyond being unnecessary, we see risk for harm due to a possible diversion of scarce public resources. While the RFP clearly states there will be no public funds provided, transportation projections of ridership levels and recouping production costs are notoriously overly optimistic. It's likely that a funding gap will emerge as cost projections

escalate or a construction problem emerges.

We expect that the public sector would then fill the funding gap. This happened in Detroit, where business and civic elites first began planning a privately funded streetcar. Realizing they needed more money, they then turned to the public sector and even had to seek a second round of federal dollars to cover a funding shortfall. The project, which especially benefits those who own land along the streetcar—many of whom pushed for the public spending—will require public operating subsidies when the private operator turns over the infrastructure in 10 years.

Even before detailed planning has started, we see hints of public spending for the express train. Press coverage has already mentioned that the public sector might pay for a station or a station upgrade. Even if the public sector does not fund a cost escalation or a station, the private operator will turn to the public sector for subsidies if ridership and hence revenues fail to match overly optimistic forecasts.

An infrastructure project also comes with trade-offs. Construction causes hassles and pollution in impacted communities—something we have been living with in many parts of our city the past few years.

Furthermore—and perhaps more important—is the question of right-of-way competition between the proposed rail project and existing services that are vital to our metro. The Infrastructure Trust proposed two routes with rights-of-way along existing transit service (the Blue Line and Metra), which could negatively impact the capacity of these services.

If our leaders are going to push for infrastructure investment, let's see more work to improve our core system (a good example is the FastTracks program, which funds public transit improvements using ride-sharing services).

Social exclusion and limited transit access impact thousands of residents today. As the Metropolitan Planning Council has found, we all lose out because of segregation. The energy and political will expended on a flashy train to O'Hare could instead be channeled to accelerate efforts at the local, state and federal level to secure funds for the much-needed and high-priority Red Line extension or improvements in bus service. These investments will do more to advance an inclusive and prosperous Chicago and will address transit equity for people who live in our city, instead of a train that rushes the already privileged out of it.

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# BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

Though men still dominate, women are rising in Chicago venture capital | By Lynne Marek

Women in Chicago's venture-capital industry back in 1989 didn't have much opportunity for networking, even when they traveled to Washington for the National Venture Capital Association's annual conference. After spotting the few women from other cities, they went out for dinner; the reservation was for fewer than 10, recalls industry pioneer Ellen Carnahan, who at the time was at William Blair Capital Partners in Chicago.

That gathering became a ritual that lasted nearly a decade, but the numbers didn't expand much. In the past five years, however, they have. "The pool is much bigger now," she says, pointing to her younger peer Gale Bowman at IrishAngels, who regularly assembles nearly 50 women just in Chicago.

Women are still underrepresented in venture capital, both in Chicago and nationally, with just one woman in a senior post for every four men. But a new generation of women is gaining traction working alongside men and launching their own venture firms and small funds.

As they seek to raise larger subsequent funds, women's new track record of investment returns will be scrutinized closely. "The proof is in the pudding, and the proof takes 15 to 17 years," says Maura O'Hara, the longtime executive director of the Illinois Venture Capital Association.

### BIG-COMPANY BACKING

Pensions, foundations, family investment offices and other institutional investors had \$308 billion of value, both cash and assets, with U.S. venture-capital firms, as of the end of June, according to Seattle research firm Pitchbook. The firms, in turn, invest in startups and hope for big returns. They employed about 335 women in senior investment jobs, versus 1,239 men in those roles, such as CEO, chief investment officer and managing partner, Pitchbook says.

Chicago isn't a huge hub for venture funds, but it's the center of activity for Illinois. IVCA's in-state venture-capital members (a few are outside the state) have about \$10 billion under management. Of IVCA's 34 active venture member firms, only three are mainly led by women. Pitchbook doesn't parse the data by region, and the IVCA doesn't have any headcount figures.

In Carnahan's era, some of the city's biggest companies gave women a boost in the industry. In her 20-year career at Blair, she became head of technology investing before co-founding Soyuz Capital in 2006. Her industry pal Debra Williamson was a vice president at Baxter International from 1983 to 1992, with purview of emerging companies, before parlaying that experience into a



Modern Ventures' Constance Freedman says Chicago's profile in venture capital has grown significantly, but the presence of women hasn't kept pace.

**WOMAN UP**  
PROJECT

managing director post at ABN Amro overseeing private-equity investments in health care.

Northbrook-based insurer Allstate hired a cadre of women as investment professionals in its venture-capital arm, including Sara Wang, who left with colleague Len Ratterson and Dan Johnson to form Ratterson Johnson & Wang in 1987, where they invested in high-tech startups. "They were just open to diversity, so that's probably what really drove it," Ratterson says of Allstate.

Wang, a Korean immigrant and one of Chicago's accomplished women in the field, left the firm in the mid-1990s to join other partners in founding Inroads Capital Partners, which focused on investing in female and minority entrepreneurs. Later, she teamed with Williamson and another woman to found Coreo Venture Fund. While Wang is optimistic about the future, including for her daughter now interning at Chicago accelerator Techstars, she says it's hard to point to "significant progress." "Highly qualified women... are still finding their way," she says.

Both the annual Washington dinner that Carnahan instituted for the NVCA and a local women's committee of the IVCA she started there as chairman in 2009 died off. O'Hara says the IVCA women's group was disbanded to bolster national women's groups, such as the Women's Association of



IrishAngels' Gale Bowman launched networking group Chicago Women in VC in 2016.

Venture and Equity, and avoid duplication of effort. "If those efforts fade, we will pick it back up," she says.

### A FOCUS ON NETWORKING

Wang's Midwest chapter picked up the ball in 2013 to bring together women who invest in privately held companies, including venture investing and private-equity investing in more mature companies. Women have struggled to get a foothold in both.

Wang meets a few times a year and hosts a popular annual grill

annually, mainly in businesses with a University of Notre Dame connection.

One woman in her new directory is Jessica Drouse Yagan, who, along with Tasha Seitz, has been a trip partner at Chicago venture investing firm Impact Engine since 2014. Yagan says that drawing more women into the process makes for smarter investing. "Having one kind of person making investment decisions is limiting," she says.

Some companies propelling women into leadership roles appear to agree. Futures exchange operator CME Group promoted Rami Morales to head its ventures unit in 2013, and Kim Trautmann took over the venture unit at trading company DOW Holdings in 2016. Other women on the rise include Dana Wright, who was hired as a managing director at Math Venture Partners in October, and Momen Qa, a vice president who left Baird Capital in February for Penny Pritzker's PSP Capital Partners. "There is a movement of far more women getting involved," says Nancy Sullivan, who became CEO of Illinois Ventures in 2013.

### 'KEEP HANGING IN THERE'

Women today are taking another stab at starting their own funds. Constance Freedman, who founded Moderne Ventures, raised that firm's first \$33 million fund in 2015. She got her start at Boston fund Cue Ball Capital and eventually moved to Chicago, where she led Second Century Ventures' \$20 million fund for the National Association of Realtors. Now she's on the cusp of raising another fund next year.

Chicago's profile in venture has grown significantly, but the presence of women hasn't kept pace, Freedman says. It's a "network business," and people invest in people they know, she says. Until the playing field is leveled, there will be more funding for men than for women, she adds.

Gerri Kalustelev and Cayla Weisberg also launched their own Chicago firm, Inverlith Ventures, in 2016 to invest in startups with at least one female equity partner. Morales, who left CME Group last year, is also angling to launch a fund.

Carnahan remains an investor in nine venture-capital funds through her Machrie Enterprises. For her funds must have female investment professionals. "The more you can source from different networks, the better the deal flow you're going to have," she says. "It takes seven to 10 years to get a track record. You have to be patient and keep hanging in there."

That's key advice for anyone investing in startups, but perhaps especially for women forging a new place in the venture arena.



The finalists for the **BEST PLACES TO WORK** in Chicago are... on **PAGE 9**



**A RISING FORCE IN CHICAGO VENTURE CAPITAL—WOMEN. PAGE 8**

# CRAIN'S

CHICAGO BUSINESS

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## CHICAGO BLUES

Among the nation's biggest metros, Chicago has been slowest to recover from the housing bust. Here's why.

BY DENNIS RODKIN

**W**hen Keith and Valerie Alessi paid \$2.7 million for a 5,900-square-foot house in Lincoln Park in 2007, it was largely because they liked Chicago. Though Keith ran a mining company based in Colorado, "Chicago felt more comfortable to us than Denver," he says. "I was spending my life on airplanes anyway, so O'Hare made it convenient."

In January, planning a post-retirement move to Virginia, they sold the five-bedroom residence for \$2.2 million. He's kicking himself over what turned out to be a rotten investment. "If I had put that \$2.7 million in the stock market," he says, "I'd probably have \$6 million now."

See **HOME PRICES** on Page 20

ONE-YEAR CHANGE IN HOME VALUES FOR 20 LARGEST METROPOLITAN AREAS



Source: S&P Case-Shiller Index

**CHICAGO WAS THE ONLY ONE OF THE NATION'S 10 MOST-POPULOUS METROS TO LOSE PEOPLE IN EITHER 2016 OR 2017.**

**A GLIMMER OF GROWTH OUTSIDE THE CITY. PAGE 3**



SPECIAL REPORT

### Balancing act

Employees want greater flexibility in their schedules. Bosses want one-size-fits-all rules. This and other findings from our 2018 workplace survey with the Chicago Network. **PAGE 14.**

**GREG HINZ**

Three years ago, Emanuel was re-elected after showing a softer side. With a growing list of people running against him, how should he pitch himself in 2019? **Page 2**



**JOE CAHILL**

What Allstate's Wilson needs to do before it's too late. **Page 4**



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# The flexibility conundrum



Workers overwhelmingly want more flexible schedules, but they acknowledge that too much time spent outside the office will hurt their careers. This and more from our new workplace survey.

By Cassie Walker Burke Research by Sabrina Gasulla



**"THE QUESTION WAS, 'HOW DO YOU BUILD A CULTURE IF YOU'RE NOT ALL TOGETHER?' I THINK IT'S REALLY WHO WE ARE AS A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE THAT SETS OUR CULTURE, NOT WHERE WE ARE."**

Angela Korompilas, CEO, American Hotel Register

**W**hen Angela Korompilas began working at American Hotel Register 22 years ago, the phrase "work from home" had barely entered the lexicon. "Flexibility" best described the contortions required to crawl under a desk and plug in a desktop monitor, CPU and landline, though the company did allow staffers to start anytime between 7 and 9 a.m. and end the day accordingly.

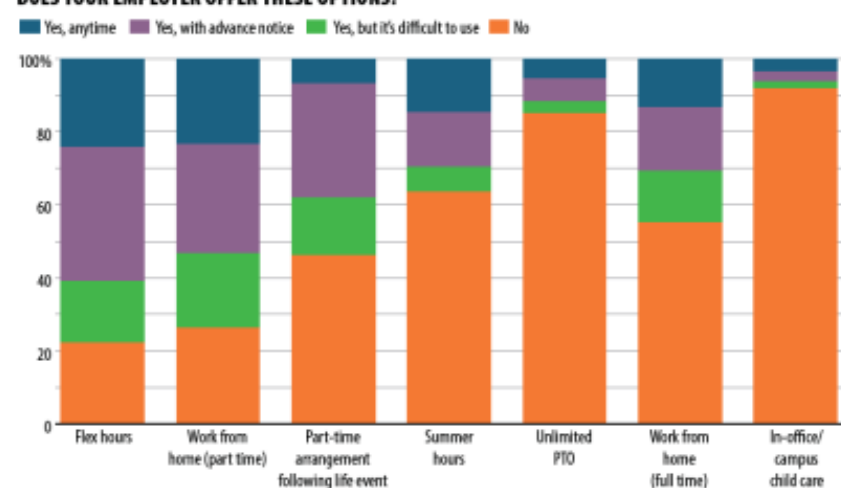
Today, flexibility is an integral part of the culture at the Vernon Hills-based hotel supplier, and nearly a third of its 1,100 employees take advantage of the company's custom-scheduling option, says Korompilas, who was named CEO in 2014. American Hotel Register has invested countless hours into drafting a policy that avails high-performing employees of such options as working from home up to two days a week, variable start and end times, summer hours and part-time arrangements.

"The question was, 'How do you build a culture if you're not all together?'" Korompilas recalls being asked. "I think it's really who we are as a community of people that sets our culture, not where we are."

But as a new Crain's Chicago Business survey illustrates, many Chicago companies are still clinging tightly to the 9-to-5, butt-in-seat culture. In the survey, which measured responses from more than 1,700 Chicago-area employees across a wide range of industries, 39 percent of our respondents say either their employer doesn't offer flextime or their company makes it difficult to use. When it came to work-from-home policies, 1 in 4 say they can't work from home and another 20 percent say their company offers the option but makes exercising it difficult.

Yet, according to our survey, which was conducted in January in partnership

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER OFFER THESE OPTIONS?



with the Chicago Network, a leading group of female executives, flexibility is a much-in-demand benefit. On average, respondents rate flex hours—that is, the ability to customize a work schedule, say, from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for an early riser—as the most valued flexible benefit, with nearly 80 percent rating it as very important or important. That is followed by the ability to work from home a day or two a week, with 70 percent ranking it as very important or important.

Of course, pay still reigns supreme as the reason people stay or leave, followed by a virtual tie between pleasure in the work itself and trust in leadership. But working remotely and opportunities for growth are right behind. Women value flexibility and extended leave more than men—a finding supported

by a new global survey from Accenture that finds 83 percent of women who are on the fastest management tracks took advantage of some sort of flexible arrangement.

Despite employee wishes, 68 percent of respondents say their company handles flexible arrangements on a case-by-case basis. Only 1 in 10 say their company has a written policy. More than half of Chicago workers (52 percent) say their employer does not equip them with sufficient tools to achieve work-life balance. By gender, more than 56 percent of women feel ill-equipped, as do 44 percent of men.

But there's a clear gap between policies—written or verbal—and employees' comfort level using them: More than half of those surveyed believe that working from home is likely to thwart

**IS ANYTHING PREVENTING YOU FROM TAKING ADVANTAGE OF FLEXIBILITY POLICIES?**

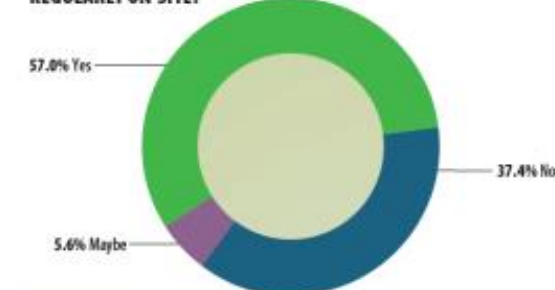


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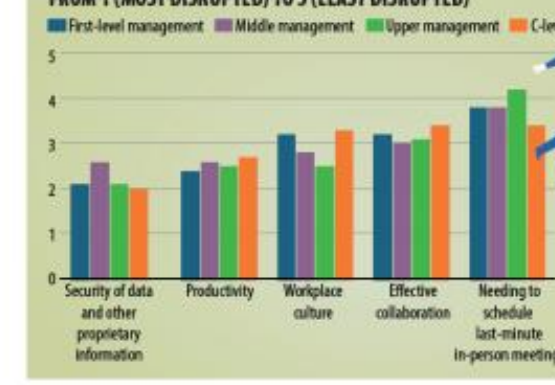


Erin Inman, who bought Primavera Engineering two years ago, loved the culture but thought the company's approach to flexibility needed definition. She and her HR director studied the issue and drafted a policy; employees now have structured options.

**IF YOUR WORKPLACE ALLOWS WORKING REMOTELY, DO YOU FEEL THAT THERE ARE RISKS TO YOUR ADVANCEMENT IF YOU ARE NOT REGULARLY ON-SITE?**



**AS A MANAGER, RANK YOUR CONCERNS ON FLEXIBILITY FROM 1 (MOST DISRUPTED) TO 5 (LEAST DISRUPTED)**



### Employers seek balance on flexibility

**FLEXIBILITY** from Page 15

are pushing Korompilas to institute reviews every three months.

Other CEOs are more resistant to formal policies, preferring an ad-hoc approach. Kevin McCarty, CEO of West Monroe Partners, a Chicago technology consultancy, says he prefers to be "policy-light."

In part, that reflects the desires of the people he's trying to hire and retain: millennials and technologists. "Technologists love the startup world because there is not a lot of bureaucracy or rules. They want to work in an environment they deem to be more nimble and agile," McCarty says. The challenge for him is trying to be more agile at scale.

When the idea of unlimited PTO surfaced, it was initially met with skepticism, he says. But three years ago, the CEO took the plunge. "People enjoy the empowerment," and it has helped with recruiting. One safeguard: Every employee has another person on staff who serves as a career adviser, and regular communication between the two is a must.

**AN ARTISANAL CAFE AND BANK OF LOCKERS**

The dismantlement of the 9-to-5 culture may be unfolding slowly in Chicago, but there's one area that has felt the impact already—office design. Tom Zurowski is the founding principal of Chicago-based Eastlake Studio, which has

designed offices for the likes of streaming music site Pandora, Levy Family Restaurants, PR firm Cision and Kimberly-Clark. The physical layout of the local office has changed radically in the past five years, with flexibility driving some of the dominant trends.

In fact, the end of days for assigned desks may soon be nigh. More CEOs are asking Zurowski's 24-person firm to design such features as a bank of desks that anyone can use when they're in the office—a practice called "hoteling." Employees, meanwhile, tell designers they want to work untethered with mobile phones and laptops, so there's demand for a menu of workspaces: small cafes, one- or two-person phone booths, cozy libraries, "huddle rooms" (translation: small conference rooms for four to six people), nook areas with stylish furniture. One increasingly popular feature of the Chicago office layout is a bank of lockers where itinerant workers can store important papers, changes of shoes and favorite coffee mugs.

Perhaps ironically, CEOs are now hyper-focused on attributes that will lure employees back into the office: Kitchens with artisanal coffee options and stylish social spaces, such as bars, outdoor decks and pingpong rooms. "There's still an importance of people being around each other—that's what builds culture," Zurowski says. Translation: Bosses may be increasingly bending toward flexibility, but most still want their employees to want to come to work.



CRAIN'S CUSTOM MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT

## BEST PLACES TO WORK SPOTLIGHT

Employees get what they need to succeed at Altair Advisers



Since the firm's founding in 2002, Altair Advisers' owners have been strategic and deliberate about creating a collaborative workplace culture where employees feel empowered in their jobs and appreciated for their contributions. Maintaining the firm's culture is a commitment that influences hiring, training and promotions. CEO Rebekah Kohmescher emphasizes that it requires a great deal of listening, asking employees how they can do their jobs better and what support they need to make that happen.

This collegial, open-dialogue culture is one of the reasons why Altair Advisers has been named one of Chicago's Best Places to Work for 2018. The Chicago-based wealth management firm provides investment management, financial planning and client education for high-net-worth

individuals and their families. The firm has 50 employees.

"Altair offers opportunities for employee growth," Kohmescher says. "But you have to ask people how they see their role evolving and be open to new ideas. Some people are looking for a more traditional career ladder and change in position. Others want to become more knowledgeable and efficient in their current role. We invest in the education of employees across the firm."

Fun is also part of the mix. An active employee life committee plans outings and events, and departments host quarterly in-office happy hours where they compete for the best theme. Last fall, employees held an Oktoberfest party complete with German costumes and beer steins.

As part of the open culture, firm owners are transparent on the business goals, sharing firm financials with all staff members at regular quarterly meetings. This transparency builds trust across all levels of the firm and creates a real sense of team. "We get a lot of engagement from our employees because we treat them like professionals," says Kohmescher. "I am really proud of the Altair culture."



CRAIN'S CUSTOM MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT

## BEST PLACES TO WORK SPOTLIGHT

Employees take ownership at Burwood Group



Burwood Group, a leading IT consulting and integration firm, invests in its people to create an ownership culture. Burwood is employee-owned: Once employees reach one year of service, or 1000 hours, they are allocated Burwood shares that continue to grow as the company grows.

"We want our people to feel and truly be invested in what we are doing," says Jim Hart, president of Burwood Group.

Focused on client service and technology innovation, Burwood has been named one of Chicago's Best Places to Work in 2018. Headquartered in Chicago, the company has 230 employees in 20 states without a traditional

top-down hierarchy. Instead, employees are encouraged to provide feedback through an open-door policy. "We choose to listen to our employees," says Hart. "They have a voice in our strategy and growth."

Employee development is a priority. The company formed Burwood University about a decade ago to onboard new hires and provide continual technical and business skills training. "We take a lot of pride in the program," Hart says.

The company also supports worthy community causes through its Burwood Cares program. "We have a social responsibility to the communities in which we do business," says Hart, a long-time board member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago.

The work environment at Burwood is "high-performance," Hart says. Employees work hard and play hard. "We are serious about our work but don't take ourselves too seriously. It's important to have fun."



## The best workplaces for women

BY LENA SINGER

The future is female, and it holds true in the American workplace. According to Department of Labor statistics, women's participation in the labor force is projected to increase by 2024, while men's participation is expected to shrink.

The companies on this list were identified as the Best Places to Work for Women because the women employed by them had the most positive responses about their workplaces. So what do these organizations have in common?

Admittedly, there's a lot we don't know. How well each has closed the gender wage gap (women on average make 83 cents on the dollar compared to men), for example, wasn't measured. But the available data shows that the

companies on this top 10 list share a few crucial things: At least half of their employees

are women, and women serve on executive teams. And they offer flexibility, either in scheduling or work-from-home options.

When it comes to the gender makeup of companies' executive teams, the average on our 2018 list of 100 Best Places to Work is 28.9 percent women. The figure soars when comparing just the 10 Best Places to Work for Women, where executive leadership is a much higher average 51.3 percent female.

### THE FLEXIBILITY ISSUE

Kristen Taruc is a nurse practitioner and a mother. She identifies MPAC Healthcare's culture of flexibility as the factor that persuaded her to move from San Francisco to Chicago to take a job as regional clinical manager at the startup. When her 3-year-old son got sick on a weekday, Taruc stayed home to care for him. MPAC's leadership allowed her to make up the eight missed hours that weekend. "People know that their management team is going to do everything they can, within reason, to say yes when they need support," she says of MPAC's culture.

Perks like these have been singled out as ones most American workers—women and men—desire most. In its most recent State of the American Workplace study, analytics service Gallup reports that it "consistently has found that flexible scheduling and work-from-home opportunities play a major role in an employee's decision to take or leave a job."

"We tend to focus (on women) because women, of course, seemed to have this very objective disadvantage in some areas," says Eleni Lobene, a researcher and talent consultant at Aon, which published its own 2017 study on how women and men experience

### TOP WORKPLACES FOR WOMEN

1. Bluedog Design
2. Beacon Hill Staffing Group
3. Walker Sands
4. Zorch
5. Assurance
6. AgencyEA
7. ThinkCerca
8. Fulton Grace Realty
9. MPAC Healthcare
10. Horizon Pharma

work differently. "But at the end of the day, if we make an improvement, it helps everybody."

One such improvement, for all genders, is the ability to telecommute. Gallup found that "employees who spend at least some of their time working remotely have higher engagement than those who don't ever work remotely." Nine of the 10 companies on our Best Places to Work for Women list allow workers to do so. Companies seem to be aware of just how enticing the perk can be—it's not unusual to see the benefit advertised on organizations' careers pages these days.

Harder to find is information about where they stand with paid parental leave. Companies don't always disclose their benefits until a job offer has been made. Not all of the companies on this list would discuss their maternity leave policies with a reporter. "One reality right now is that women can't ask what (maternity leave) benefits are out there," says Lobene. "In fact, women often take care not to even mention family, especially children, in interviews and pre-hire processes."

But parental leave benefits are what bring us back to the future: 44 percent of millennials, reports Gallup, would change jobs to get paid maternity leave.

ThinkCerca, an education tech company that launched an online literacy platform in 2013, offers three months of paid leave to birthing mothers and six weeks of parental leave to other employees with newborns or newly adopted children. During maternity and parental leave, workers receive 100 percent of their salaries. CEO Eileen Murphy Buckley admits she didn't embrace the idea at first. "I was thinking of it probably the same way most people do, which is that we can't afford it," she says. "And (co-founder Abby Ross) pointed out that we can't afford not to invest in the people who have built the company."

At MPAC, the CEO, COO and CFO are all men. But Taruc, the nurse practitioner, stresses that leadership intentionally created policies to support the majority-female staff. "In a company that is dominated by women, we have dude bosses who really do care about their employees, and it trickles down."



# IN HER OWN WORDS

Female manufacturing executives talk about running companies in a male-dominated industry. These excerpts have been edited and condensed for clarity. | By Claire Bushey



"SOMETIMES YOU QUESTION—OK, IS THAT PATRONIZING?"

**PATRICIA MILLER, 35**  
Matrix 4  
Woodstock  
Revenue: \$8 million

CEO Patricia Miller was a marketing director at Eli Lilly before taking over a plastic injection molding business started by her grandfather. She sits on the board of the National Association of Manufacturers.

When I went to the White House last year to meet with President Trump around manufacturing, they sat me right next to him on the left-hand side, and then to the right of him was the National Association of Manufacturers president, and he's a man. But clearly that was an epic moment, right? That they're going to put this young woman next to him as every single news source was filming that day. He pulled out my chair for me and then pushed it in for me, which is a nice, gentlemanly thing to do. But he's not doing that for the man who's the president of the association next to him. Then he said something to me like, "Nice to meet you, sweetheart" or "You're welcome, sweetheart" when I said thank you for pushing my chair in. I'll get that often, like "young lady" or "sweetheart." I appreciate the gentleness around it, but there is something where sometimes you question—OK, is that patronizing? Is that not being put as an equal because I look young or sound young? It felt a little bit interesting to me being in the White House Roosevelt Room with the president calling me a term of endearment.

My first year in the business, I went to the International Manufacturing Technology Show and was chatting with a few other people in manufacturing. A man came up to me and started asking me about the machines in the booth we were in. I'm like, "I'm sorry, I don't work at this booth." He said, "Oh, you're so gorgeous I thought you must be one of the sales reps." I said, "No, I'm sorry, I'm in the industry." And he was like, "Well, gosh, we just don't see many women at these shows, and we definitely don't see many women that look like you." So anytime I go to a manufacturing show, because I wear high heels or dresses, I must be a salesperson.

I don't feel like I'm sexually harassed. I feel like it's more, "Oh, my gosh, we've just never been exposed to a woman who's 35 who bought a company and is running it." But I feel like the minute that people catch up, for the most part, they're not dismissive as much as they are surprised. The assumption is going to be you're not the CEO, because we face a huge disparity in how many women are at the C-level, and then compounded with you're in a manufacturing organization, which in general has been male-dominated for as long as it's existed.

**ANNIE MOHAUPT, 42**  
Mohap  
Rockford  
Revenue: Less than \$1 million

CEO Annie Mohaupt started her custom shoe and hauling company in 2005. She graduated from 1871's WISEM program, a training and support program for female tech entrepreneurs.

I took on a male partner in 2014. It's really, really helped the business a lot, having somebody who can help me along with the operations, but the technology side of things is what I've come up with. I'm the one who programs the robots. But when we are in meetings, a lot of times—and we both fully recognize this—he's the one who gets spoken to. There's a lot of times where we actually have to make a choice, where we have to figure out, is it in our interest to let him be the leader in this conversation? Because maybe me being the tech leader would be seen as a weakness. My feminist pride wants to be like, "Hey! I'm the one who came up with this stuff! I'm the one who's like, 'Let's revolutionize fashion manufacturing.'" In fashion manufacturing, there are actually a lot of women, but these are women in developing countries who may be exploited, and that's an issue that I care about, as well. So my vision is more important than my ego in some cases, more important than making myself feel like I put some guys in a room in their place.

The reason we are so small is because I basically have had to make a choice between growth and R&D. I've kind of given up on pursuing venture capital. I went to the WISEM program at 1871, and we talked a lot about the amount of venture capital that women receive, which is like 2 percent. I did do a few meetings, and some went better than others, but I was like, "Do I want to be spending all of my time convincing people that I'm competent, or do I want to be spending my time pushing my business forward?" Like right now even, I'm able to say: We bought a factory. A 10,000-square-foot factory. We bought all of our robots, tools and equipment. We did this on our own. I feel very uncool that we haven't gotten as fast as we could if we had lots of investment money, but I have grown to accept we have our own road.



"WHEN WE ARE IN MEETINGS, A LOT OF TIMES, ... HE'S THE ONE WHO GETS SPOKEN TO."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENIFER BOZHA



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# Four nonprofits, four financial turnarounds

BY LISA BERTAGNOLI

Nonprofits are businesses. Few people know that better than Michelle Larson, Tania Castroverde Moskalenko, Jackie Edens and Jennifer Kim Matsuzawa. All four women run nonprofits at which they have orchestrated substantial financial turnarounds, a feat not particularly tricky at nonprofits.

"People are there because it's speaking to their heart," says Kimberly Svoboda, founder and CEO of Chicago-based Aspiration Catalyst, a leadership development firm. "It can be difficult to make business-oriented decisions, fact-based decisions."

Leadership skills often attributed to women can go far in fixing financial woes, she says. "Women often prioritize relationships along with strategy and execution," Svoboda says. With that trio of priorities, "they can execute a turnaround without alienating

people or burning bridges." The four turnarounds detailed here acquired tough decisions and firm stances, the kind that sometimes earn men accolades like "strong leader" and women labels that are less complimentary.

"I have run into that consistency in my career," says Matsuzawa, president of the People's Music School, a music education nonprofit, who inherited declining revenue and rising expenses when she joined the school in 2014. Matsuzawa, a for-profit management consultant in her previous career, knows how to handle that reaction: "Rely on data and facts, be as objective as possible," she says. "It's much harder to argue with data and facts."

Here, case studies of four nonprofit CEOs who used data and facts to pull their organizations out of budget black holes.

**JACKIE EDENS**  
CEO, Inner Voice

In 2012: \$1 million in debt and near bankruptcy.

Fiscal 2017: Operating deficit of \$73,000 on a \$2 million budget.

The issue: Delays in payments to its subcontractors, which resulted in terminated contracts from the city. That in turn led to diminished cash flow and mounting unpaid bills. Bookkeeping overall had been neglected, Edens says, and Inner Voice was behind in payments on a line of credit. The nonprofit, which helps homeless people find shelter and stability, was at one time an \$11 million agency that subcontracted to smaller organizations.

The fix: Edens, 66, picked up the phone, apologized to creditors and began negotiating payments. "That worked wonders," says Edens, who had worked for the city of Chicago for 29 years in human services and workforce development and retired in 2004. She consulted until 2012, when



she joined Inner Voice's board. The organization also moved into shared quarters with another nonprofit, and Edens installed new bookkeeping and IT systems. In December 2013, a grant from a corporate benefactor paid off the line of credit.

These days: The agency has a \$2 million operating budget and

has gotten new contracts from the city. Edens has trained the staff, almost entirely new, to pay close attention to finances and case management—and to answer emails. The result is a productive agency that helps 1,000 clients a year and is approaching financial breakeven. "There's such a shift in energy," she says.

**TANIA CASTROVERDE MOSKALENKO**  
CEO, Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University

In 2016: Operating deficit of \$313,000.

Fiscal 2017: Operating deficit of \$2,000.

The issue: High programming expenses and too little contributed revenue. "We relied heavily on earned revenue, like a for-profit entertainment company would," Moskalenko says.

The fix: Moskalenko, 56, strengthened the development department and hired a chief programming officer, a new position, so she could spend more time curating donors. "I can really tell the story of the organization and express the strategic vision," she says. She also began reviewing all contracts and negotiating with vendors, plus starting from scratch with the budget each year.

Her next challenge: In 2020, Joffrey Ballet will move to the Civ-



ic Opera House of Chicago from Auditorium Theatre, where it has booked 14 weeks a year for the past 28 years. Joffrey's absence will dent earned revenue but also open opportunities, Moskalenko says. For example, Broadway in Chicago has been unable to book the theater because of Joffrey's

residence. The Joffrey announcement "kicked us into a mode of strategic visioning," she says.

Next up: Drafting a strategic plan and raising funds for a total renovation of the 128-year-old landmark building. "When something breaks, it isn't a \$5,000 fix," she says.



# WOMAN UP

THE PROJECT



Q3	MAIN NEWS/FOCUS/LIST	CUSTOM
7/2		Business Disputes Roundtable
7/9	Venture Capital / Private Equity	Family Law Roundtable
7/16	Tech 50 – Women in Tech	Building Chicagoland Roundtable
7/23	List: Largest Banks	Food & Beverage Roundtable
7/30		Notable Women Lawyers
8/6		Insurance Roundtable
8/13	Nonprofit / Philanthropy	Aviation Roundtable
8/20	Biggest Out-of-Town Employers	Cancer Care Roundtable
8/27	Life: Culture Preview	Notable LGBT Executives
9/3	Who's Who / Most Powerful Women	Accounting Roundtable
9/10	List: Largest Law Firms	Family Law Roundtable
9/17		Executive Education Roundtable Corporate Holiday Guide
9/24	List: Largest Hospital Systems / Largest Hospitals	Private School Planner

Q4	MAIN NEWS/FOCUS/LIST	CUSTOM
10/1	Most Innovative Companies	Notable Women in Commercial Banking
10/8	MBA Guide	Mini Logistics Roundtable Illinois' Healthiest Employers
10/15	Best Steakhouses	Wealth Management: Independent Firms Roundtable Colleges Guide
10/22	Cooldest Offices List: Largest Commercial Building Sales	Cyber Security Roundtable
10/29		Building Chicagoland Roundtable Notable Minority Lawyers
11/5	Life: Culture Preview	Trial Law Roundtable Last Minute Holiday Party Planner
11/12		Medical Cannabis Roundtable
11/19		Labor And Employment Law Roundtable Luxury Gift Guide
11/26	List: Largest Accounting Firms	Private Equity Roundtable Giving Tuesday
12/3	40 Under 40	Executive Recruiting Roundtable
12/10		Luxury Gift Guide
12/17		
12/24	Book Of Lists	Big Dates



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