



Sharon Bernard,

Nominated by Dr. Sharon Miller, MD

2009 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

In 50 words or less, What can I possibly say to adequately describe the most influential person of my day. Well... She inspired 2 daughters to become a Doctor and a Lawyer. But around town, she is known more for being a distinguished warrior. She taught us to truly believe

that there was nothing that we could not achieve. In 1968, she defied the rule and graduated 1st Black female from the University of Arkansas Law School! Mom has tremendous class and style. Her 3 grandsons can really make her smile. I am confident that you know my mom, Sharon Bernard is my SHERO. She blazed a trail like no other and she is the world's Greatest Mother!



Betty Brooks,

Nominated by Linda B. Forte

2005 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

Betty is a long standing philanthropist and community leader who commits her talent, time and financial resources to strengthen our community. Her passion and focus is on supporting youth to enable the best possible future for our children.

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Janice Cosby,

Nominated by Dr. Patricia Maryland, Dr.PH

2009 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

My relationship with Janice Cosby proves that the best thing a CEO can do is to find and keep the right people. I hired Jan at three organizations as VP of Marketing. She taught me the power of public perceptions, the value of forthright communication and importance of not sweating the small stuff.



Harriette A. Gillum,

Nominated by Rhonda Walker

President & Founder

Rhonda Walker Foundation

I nominate my mother because she is and will always be, along with my dad, my biggest inspiration for all that I do. As a child it was to live up to her example, expectations and to make her proud. As an adult the same holds true. My mom is the epitome of what a great mom definition embodies. She is nurturing, supportive, tough, loving, giving, kind and has always put her children and family first. Just look in the dictionary and you'll see her picture and biography of how she lived her life under the word "MOM". I often feel guilty because I've had it so good, it almost doesn't seem fair that there aren't more Harriette Gillum's for the many children and people I've met along my journey of life that didn't have the perfect mom as I have been so fortunate to have. My Mom taught me to love and help the less fortunate, work hard, be humble, become an independent woman that can take care of herself and never be fully dependent on anyone else to take care of me. She also taught me to find my own happiness and not to depend on anyone else to make me happy. As a registered nurse she taught me to live a healthy life and gave me the courage and determination to take anything negative that comes my way and make it positive. My mom instilled in me strength and confidence in myself that I hope to build in the RWF teens I'm fortunate to nurture!

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Diana Lewis,

Nominated by Rhonda Walker

President & Founder

Rhonda Walker Foundation

As a professional journalist in a competitive, once much more male dominated field, I nominate Diana Lewis because she has inspired me professionally to see and believe as a young African American child who could grow up to be a broadcast journalist. At first it was through the television airwaves growing up wishing that I could be her. It is her humble grace, professionalism, confidence, cheerfulness, comfort, spirit, unbiased and nurturing assurance in times of tribulation and joy in our city that I have always admired. She commands respect and lived her entire life in the public spotlight flawlessly. She is a great mother, wife, friend, colleague and mentor. Her longevity in broadcast journalism is truly remarkable but her timelessness and beauty are perhaps the qualities, let's be honest, we all hope God will bestow upon us. But my greatest and most cherished memory came in my first few days on my first job in television as a 20 something traffic reporter for Fox 2 news in Detroit. A surprising delivery arrived, a dozen red roses from "DIANA LEWIS" welcoming me to Detroit television news and telling me what a great job I'm doing, Wow! The woman I grew up admiring and hoping to emulate that I had never met reached out and welcomed me? That genuine act of kindness is Diana Lewis, she cares and loves everyone and never passes up the opportunity to extend that love. That class act inspired me all over again that day to extend that same kindness and welcome the new journalist to Detroit television that have come after me.

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Barbara Mahone,

Nominated by Barbara L. Whittaker

2009 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

Barbara Mahone is a strong, courageous, intelligent, strategic business woman. She was the first African American female executive I had ever met at General Motors Corporation. She took me under her wing early on in my career and I watched and learned from her how to navigate a large organization without losing who you really are. I am nominating her as my mentor because she cared enough to share herself with me and others in a way that continues to inspire me. She is now retired from GM however she had a long illustrious career and in her retirement life she has dedicated herself to continue to guide and nurture people through their career goals.



Veronica Murff,

Nominated by Suzanne Shank

2007 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

As a working mother running a business, Veronica Murff has excelled in every aspect of her life; being a wonderful wife and mother, a superstar entrepreneur (owning an award winning State Farm Agency), and taking leadership roles in meaningful civic and charitable organizations (Jack & Jill, Great Lakes Chapter of the Links, Inc. among others). Despite her demanding schedule, Veronica always makes time for her friends, offering support and encouragement unselfishly. (In fact, she has the largest number of friends that I have ever seen one person have!) The manner in which Veronica lives her life has been an inspiration to me and is an example that we should all follow.

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Wendy Turner Lewis,

Nominated by Dr. Elayne Arterbery, MD

2009 Rhonda Walker Foundation

Powerful Women of Purpose

Wendy Turner Lewis is the perfect combination of an inspiring entrepreneur, mother and the best friend you could ever have. As a great mother of two sons, she has also lead an exemplary life filled with a challenging and fulfilling career as a

federal bankruptcy trustee. Wendy is one of the few women appointed to this demanding role and the ONLY African American woman in the Midwest to hold such a prestigious legal position. In addition to being a pioneer in her field however, she is a focused, caring and attentive fun mom that also finds time to fulfill her passion for creativity, community service and friendship. As a member of many community and social organizations Wendy is known for her creative ways of developing unique themes for successful fundraisers as well as motivational and fun events to bring people together to make a significant impact helping at risk youth in the city of Detroit. Wendy with her admirable organizational skills and hard work eithic was born and rased in Detroit and is my confidant, cheerleader, motivator, supporter and proudly a woman that I can call my true friend.

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