



## **IWA Woman Extraordinaire (WEX) and Rising Voice of Woman (RVW) Past Honorees**

- **2022 Nancy Economou** is the founder and CEO of Watts of Love, a global nonprofit bringing people the power to lift themselves out of the darkness of poverty through solar lighting and financial literacy training. Watts of Love was founded in 2013 when Nancy went on a business trip to the Philippines and saw the devastating effects of kerosene after seeing a child's face burned. Compelled as a mother, Nancy set out to bring her patented solar lights to the nearly one billion people living in the darkness of poverty and teach financial literacy to change communities. Over the last nine years, Nancy has delivered solar lights and the Watts of Love program to 52 countries, giving 77,554 lights, and changing 542,878 lives forever.
- **2019 Amy Maglio** is the Founder and Executive Director of Women's Global Education Project (WGEP), an international NGO focusing on girls' education and gender equality. Amy is on a mission to enroll every girl in Africa in school. She is a tireless activist who campaigns for the advancement of underserved girls and women. Her organization WGEP subverts the traditional top-down, big development approach by operating on micro-levels within communities to identify girls who are not in school and provide them with the tools necessary to enroll and excel in school.
- **2018 Shermin Kruse** Dedicated to raising awareness for international human rights, cross-cultural peace dialogue and negotiation, diversity, and women in leadership, Ms. Kruse serves as a director of RefuSHE, the international refugee center formerly known as Heshima Kenya, and as co-founder and director of the Pasfarda Arts and Culture Exchange, which promotes peace between Iran and the United States through the arts. She has worked to strengthen cross-cultural understanding and to empower refugee women, even traveling to the Turkey-Syria border to interface with Syrian refugee children.
- **2017 Kimberly Jung** is an Army veteran and passionate international entrepreneur. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point who served in Germany and Afghanistan and then earned her M.B.A. from the Harvard Business School, Kim is the CEO and Co-Founder of Chicago-based Rumi Spice, [www.rumispice.com](http://www.rumispice.com). Named after the 13th century Persian poet, Rumi began with a mission to cultivate peace in Afghanistan and does so by partnering directly with Afghan farmers to grow exceptionally high quality saffron and export the precious spice to customers around the world.
- **2016 Vicki Escarra** is Global CEO of Opportunity International, the premier non-profit financial services organization for the poor. Escarra leads a network of 20,000 staff and 30,000 donors who are helping 14.3 million clients in 24 countries work their way out of poverty. Escarra was formerly President and CEO of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. Prior to that, Escarra rose to Chief Marketing Officer at Delta Air Lines.



- **2015 Karen Koning AbuZayd** currently serves as a Commissioner of the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, informing the United Nations on the refugee problems arising out the current conflict in the Middle East. She began her humanitarian career in the Sudan in 1981, dealing with Ugandan, Chadian and Ethiopian refugees fleeing from war and famine in their own countries. From 1991 to 1993 Ms. AbuZayd directed the South African repatriation operation and the Kenyan-Somali cross-border operation. She was Chief of Mission for two years during the Bosnian war—four million war-affected people were kept alive by UN’s airlift and convoy activities. From 2005 until 2010 she was Under Secretary-General as UNRWA Commissioner-General. Based in Gaza, she helped to oversee the education, health, social services and microenterprise programs for four million Palestinian refugees.
- **2014 Sheila Roche** is an international marketing and communications consultant. She launched the (RED) AIDS organization in 2006 for its founders, Bono and Bobby Shriver to help provide a sustainable flow of money from the private sector to fight AIDS. To-date, (RED) has generated \$250M+ and is the largest business sector contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the investor of (RED) money in African AIDS programs).
- **2013 Catherine Bertini** has devoted her career in the last 25 years to public policy activity organizations related to food and agriculture throughout the world. She is the former director of the United Nations World Food Programme, a faculty member at Syracuse University, and holds 12 honorary doctorates.
- **2012 Connie Duckworth** founded ARZU STUDIO HOPE in 2004 and serves pro bono as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. This non-profit organization supports the reconstruction of Afghanistan by empowering women, their families and their communities through opportunities for generating income, sustainable economic development, instilling personal worth and building gender equality.
- **2012 Kathryn Bolkovac\*** Human rights activist and former police investigator who worked with Human Rights Watch in Bosnia to expose the abuse committed against young girls forced into prostitution and used as sex slaves by U.S. military contractors, other police, and various international organizations.
- **2011 Anna Eleanor Roosevelt:** In her role as Vice President of Global Corporate Citizenship for Boeing Company, Ms. Roosevelt provides philosophical and strategic direction to a network of US and international community investors.
- **2010 Marjorie Craig Benton** served as the U.S. Ambassador to UNICEF and Board Chair of Save the Children Federation. Benton co-founded the Chicago Global Donors Forum, Chicago Foundation for Women and the Peace Museum in Chicago



- **2010 Prudence Bushnell\*** Diplomat and educator; U.S. Ambassador to Kenya when the embassy was bombed by Al-Qaeda; State Department official, who worked to prevent the genocide in Rwanda; long focused on improving the status of women, especially in developing countries.
- **2009 Major L. Tammy Duckworth** was named by President Obama to be Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Previously she served as director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs. She is an Iraq War veteran with severe combat wounds that cost her both legs and damaged her right arm.
- **2008 Bliss Browne, M.Div.** Founder and President of Imagine Chicago; founding partner of Ubumama, a global and arts-based maternal health initiative.
- **2008 Molly Melching\*** Founder and Executive Director of Senegal-based Tostan, a non-governmental organization dedicated to community education and empowerment in several African countries. It is perhaps best known for virtually ending female genital cutting and forced child marriage in those countries.
- **2007 Funmi Olopade, M.D.** Professor of Medicine and Human Genetics at the University of Chicago; breast cancer specialist; 2005 MacArthur Foundation fellow.
- **2006 Kim Barker, Liz Sly, and Christine Spolar** women foreign correspondents from the *Chicago Tribune* who have literally put their lives on the line to keep us informed about important issues—particularly those involving human rights.
- **2006 Mary Margaret McCarthy, J.D.** Attorney representing asylum clients and trafficking victims from more than 90 countries; head of the Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center
- **2005 Mary Robinson\*** First woman President of Ireland; former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; *Realizing Rights* founder.
- **2005 Adele Simmons, PhD** Global Philanthropy President; former President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- **2004 Georgie Anne Geyer** Foreign correspondent; syndicated columnist; television analyst; author
- **2003 Cheryl I. Niro, J.D.** Founder of the National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
- **2002 Nina Nathan Schroeder** Co-Founder of the Tibetan Alliance in Chicago; advocate for children in Chicago Public School system



- **2001 Jeanne L. Nowaczewski** Director of the Public Education Project and Staff Counsel for Business and Professional People for the Public Interest; founder of The Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago
- **2000 Ronne Hartfield** Arts educator; multicultural education specialist; author
- **1999 Janet Davison Rowley, M.D.** Professor of Medicine, Molecular Genetics, and Cell Biology at the University of Chicago Medical School
- **1998 Eva L. Maddox** Co-Founder of Archeworks, an alternative design school; president of Eva Maddox Associates, an interior design and architecture firm
- **1997 Stephanie Pace Marshall, Ph.D.** Founding Executive Director of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy
- **1996 Mary Zimmerman** Artistic Associate at the Goodman Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre

**RVW Honorees indicated with \***