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11 Area Women to be Honored

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At its 30th anniversary gala, the Rochester Women's Network will recognize 11 women who have contributed to the region's marketplace, community and culture, and honor the network's Founding Mothers.

"It's time to shine a bright light on women's leadership in our region," said RWN board president Esther Maltese. Jane Plitt and Mona Miller started RWN in 1978, along with the support of B.J. Mann, Louise Spivak, Janis Dowd, Lynn Fowler and Ellie Hamilton Cushing.

They sought to create a community to address the "gender-wage gap, sexual harassment, the lack of quality childcare, the absence of women on corporate boards, the need to know about good job opportunities, and the need to find balance in our lives," says Plitt. She acknowledges that the issues that inspired the group to form still exist today.

In addition to the Founding Mothers, the following women will be recognized for their work:

- Dee Alexander is a New York City native and radio host — most recently of "Tony and Dee in the Morning" on WRMM-FM (101.3), which she began co-hosting in 1987. She was also a recipient of a Rochester-area Radio Broadcaster of the Year Award.
- Ursula Burns has been president of Xerox Corp. since 2002. Burns serves on the boards of American Express, National Association of Manufacturers and the University of Rochester.
- Virginia R. Cornyn retired from Xerox Corp. in Rochester to Hillsboro, Ore., where she is president of the Cornyn Foundation, which works to help women and children become self-sustaining.
- Kate Gleason began working in her father's machine-tool factory shop in 1876 when she was 11 years old. She went on to lead sales and finance there and continued her career, designing affordable housing for the working class. She was the first woman elected to membership in the American Society of Engineers. She died Jan. 9, 1933.
- Ruby Lockhart is executive director of Garth Fagan Dance, positively affecting the lives of women and girls in Rochester.
- Angella Luyk started Midnight Janitorial in 2005, and the company has grown from two employees to 28. She recently started a program that pays employees to volunteer for up to four hours a month.
- Patricia D. Marks was elected as a Monroe County Court Judge in 1984 and re-elected in 1994 and 2004, presiding over felony criminal and Supreme Court civil matters. Previously she

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served as assistant district attorney specializing with the Violent Felony Offense Bureau and as chief attorney for the Economic Crime Unit.

- Rose Marie Nichols is executive director of administration and finance for New Life Ministries. She became involved in Women of Hope Business Camp, which teaches young women life and business skills.
- Coral Surgeon is president of Women Gynecology & Childbirth Associates and is a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist. Surgeon is also a clinical associate professor in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.
- Abby Wambach was the United States' leading scorer in the 2003 World Cup. She was named U.S. Soccer's Female Player of the Year that year.
- Christine B. Whitman is chairman, CEO and president of Complemar and managing partner of CSW Associates. She is also co-founder of Greater Rochester Enterprise and chair of the Rochester Museum & Science Center.

The Rochester Women's Network Gala will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at the Bausch & Lomb Wintergarden. The event is open to the public. Tickets are \$45 for members or \$50 for non-members. Go to www.rwn.org/anniversary.asp or call (585) 271- 4182.

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