

**Distinguished Daughters of PA
2023 Incoming Class PRESS RELEASE**

Governor Josh Shapiro and First Lady Lori Shapiro Recognize Ten Women as 2023 Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania

Bibiana Boerio, of Latrobe, the 25th President of the Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania, announced the new Inductees for the Distinguished Daughters Class of 2023. Governor Josh Shapiro recognized the ten women at this year's Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania annual luncheon, in the Governor's Residence in Harrisburg on Wednesday, October 11, 2023.

“For 75 years, the Distinguished Daughters have recognized the achievements of Pennsylvania women – leaders who make a difference in our communities every day,” said Governor Josh Shapiro. “This new class of inductees builds upon that long tradition, and Lori and I are pleased to welcome an incredible group of women – leaders in public service, health care, business, and education – into the ranks of Pennsylvania’s Distinguished Daughters. Your hard work showcases what we can accomplish for the good people of Pennsylvania when we all come together.”

The 2023 Class of Distinguished Daughters of PA are:

KENDRA A. AUCKER is the President and CEO of the Evangelical Community Hospital in Lewisburg, PA. Kendra's commitment to leadership through transparency, integrity, and communication has led Evangelical Community Hospital to increase employee engagement and patient experience scores, 5-star CMS status, community involvement, and the most transformational growth in its nearly 100 years. Under Aucker's direction, the \$72 million bed tower private room expansion project was completed, and she led the organization through the pandemic and its efforts to care for the community. Ms. Aucker is a relentless advocate for the importance of rural healthcare to the communities served. In 2021, she was recognized with the Pennsylvania Rural Health Leader of the Year Award.



Kendra A. Aucker

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DEBRA L. CAPLAN is currently serving as an Executive-in-Residence at The Forbes Funds, where she advises nonprofits in governance and leadership. During her longstanding career as a leader in healthcare at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Allegheny Health Network (AHN), and more recently as Interim CEO of Partner4Work, Ms. Caplan has been a steadfast advocate for community health and workforce development and advancing women's leadership. This passion continues through her many nonprofit board affiliations, including currently chairing the Jewish Healthcare Foundation Board and previously serving as WQED Board Chair and President of the Pittsburgh International Women's Forum. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College and Harvard Kennedy School, she has received numerous honors, including the YWCA Tribute to Women and the Pittsburgh Women of Influence Award.



Debra L. Caplan

JULIA A. HALLER, M.D. is the Ophthalmologist-in-Chief and William Tasman Endowed Chair at Wills Eye Hospital and Chair of Ophthalmology for Jefferson Health. She is a trailblazing retina surgeon-scientist who has innovated translational advances against blindness on many fronts, including drug delivery devices, ocular pharmacotherapy, retinal 'chip' implants, gene therapy, telemedicine, and combating health care disparities. A graduate of Princeton, Harvard Medical School, and Johns Hopkins, she has over 400 scholarly publications and is a National Academy of Medicine member. A trustee of the Philadelphia Orchestra, President of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, past trustee of Princeton, and past President of numerous professional organizations, she serves as Director of Bristol Myers Squibb, Opthea, and Outlook Therapeutics. She and her husband, John Gottsch, MD, have five children.



Julia A. Haller, M.D.

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NINA JABLONSKI, Ph.D. is an anthropologist whose most significant contributions have rested on her research on the evolution of human skin pigmentation that accounts for why dark skin evolved under conditions of high ultraviolet radiation (UVR) in the tropics. In contrast, lighter skin was favored under conditions of lower UVR nearer the poles. Jablonski has written extensively on the fallacy of skin-color-based human races and the pervasive damage done to human societies through the persistence of race concepts. She received her AB in Biology at Bryn Mawr College and a Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Washington. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Jablonski received an honorary doctorate from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa in 2010 for contributing to the worldwide fight against racism.



Nina Jablonski, Ph.D.

NANCY KUKOVICH is the CEO of Adelphoi USA, a leading programming provider for youth and families in Pennsylvania, serving approximately 2,500 youth and families annually. She previously served as CEO of the United Way of Westmoreland County. Before moving to Westmoreland County, Nancy worked as United Way of Pennsylvania's CEO and Deputy Director of the County Commissioner's Association of Pennsylvania, representing county government human service before the State's Administration and General Assembly. She also served three years in the Secretary's Office of the PA Department of Public Welfare and was Director of the human service office for Union and Snyder Counties. Nancy attended Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, Penn State University, and the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business.



Nancy Kukovich

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VIRGINIA MCGREGOR is Treasurer of the Democratic National Committee, a position she was appointed to in 2021 by President Joseph R. Biden. She also served as National Co-Chair of the DNC's Women's Leadership Forum and was appointed to the America 250 Commission by former PA Governor Tom Wolf.

Virginia is a decade-long Board of Directors of Geisinger Health System member, where she chairs the Geisinger Family Committee. She is the first woman appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine. She also serves on the board of McGregor Industries, a family-owned steel business founded in 1919.

Virginia and her husband Bob reside in Scranton, PA, and are parents to six children and grandparents to three.



Virginia McGregor

RASHIDA NG. As a licensed architect and educator, Rashida Ng focuses her research on the confluence of climate change and racial equity, specifically emphasizing housing insecurity. Engaging researchers, practitioners, and community stakeholders, she recently organized the [Housing Justice Futures](#) symposium aimed at tackling housing inequities in Philadelphia and other US cities. Similarly committed to equity in higher education, she also seeks to address systemic disparities in architectural education through her writing, research, and administrative work. She served as the 2019-2020 President of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, the first black woman to hold this position. She is Chair of Undergraduate Architecture and Presidential Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design.



Rashida Ng

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MARSHA PERELMAN started her career in the energy business at Buckeye Pipe Line as one of the company's first female executives, followed by co-founding Clearfield Energy and serving on two NYSE energy company boards. She is Chair Emerita of the Board of the Franklin Institute, helping to build the organization into a premier science center during her eight-year tenure as chair. Her ambitious leadership raised over **\$65 million** for the Inspire Science campaign.

She is chair of Calder Philadelphia, responsible for Calder Gardens, set to open in 2025 and highlighting the work of world-famous artist Alexander Calder.

Passionate about helping animals, she served as chair of the ASPCA, is a founding Board member of Project Chimps, co-chair of ACCT Philly, and a Pennsylvania Dog Law Advisory Board member, where she led the effort to pass the significant overhaul of Pennsylvania's Dog Law in 2008. Perelman graduated from Northwestern University and received her master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania.



Marsha Perelman

KIM PHIPPS, Ph.D. In December 2004, Dr. Kim S. Phipps, an advocate for academic excellence, holistic student learning, and community engagement, was named the eighth president of Messiah University. Her tenure at Messiah has been marked by implementing a School of Graduate and Professional Studies, the successful completion of significant fundraising campaigns totaling more than **\$185 million**, and a rise in the University's regional and national visibility. Dr. Phipps actively models civic engagement by serving on local, regional, and national boards, including the Harrisburg Symphony, Keystone Human Services, Susquehanna Art Museum, and YWCA. She has received numerous awards from the Salvation Army, Central Penn Business Journal, Open Stage of Harrisburg, and more. In 2012, she received CREDC's Athena Award.



Kim Phipps, Ph.D.

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DEBRA MCCLOSKEY TODD, J.D., LL.M. is the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The Honorable Justice Todd was elected to the Pennsylvania Superior Court in 1999 and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 2007. On October 1, 2022, she became Pennsylvania's first female Chief Justice in the Court's 300-year history. Todd began her career as an in-house litigation attorney for US Steel Corporation and later entered private practice as a trial attorney. She chaired the Supreme Court's Elder Law Task Force and is the Court's Liaison to the Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts and the Pennsylvania Veterans Courts. She received her BA from Chatham College, JD from The University of Pittsburgh, and LL.M. from the University of Virginia. Chief Justice Todd and her husband, Attorney Stephan K. Todd, live in Pittsburgh.



Debra McCloskey Todd, J.D., LL.M.

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Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania was organized in 1949 to honor women who had given distinguished service through their careers to their communities, the commonwealth and the nation. In the 75 years since then, a total of 555 extraordinary women of Pennsylvania have been recognized for their professional and volunteer accomplishments.

Please contact Bibiana Boerio (bboerio2@gmail.com or 724-544-5045) for any questions.

www.distinguisheddaughtersofpa.org

Distinguished Daughters is a project of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities. The official registration and financial information of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.