

**BIG  
PICTURE**

# WOMEN IN PRINT AWARDS



BY ADRIENNE PALMER

## ***Big Picture recognizes six female leaders in the digital print industry.***

**O**ur first-annual Women in Print Award winners have been chosen. These six females are leaders at print service providers or print shops that provide printing services as a primary function. All serving in influential positions such as VP, president, owner, and CEO, these women have advanced the digital printing industry through their innovation, vision in leading successful businesses, and philanthropy, impacting our field as a whole as well as the communities they serve. They demonstrate leadership, progressive responsibility, and community awareness.

Our final six winners were chosen by the editorial staff of *Big Picture* and its parent company, ST Media Group, in conjunction with our Editorial Advisory Board. All were nominated by third parties, including colleagues, employees, vendors, and other industry observers. Nominators highlighted their candidates' leadership, forward thinking, experience, community involvement, mentorship, awards, certifications, and more.

Read on to meet six exemplary women who represent the digital print industry; the following contains just a few of the reasons why they are our 2016 Women in Print Award winners.



## KATHERINE BECHER

OWNER, CREATIVE DIRECTOR

WICKED WRAPS | MUKILTEO, WASHINGTON

**Industry innovations:** Focuses on customer education and relationships; debunks wrap myths, i.e., “bubbling on vehicles is normal”

**Philanthropy:** Regularly produces sponsored car wraps and free wraps for infant cranial helmets; founding member of Next Generation Mukilteo; Mukilteo Chamber of Commerce

**Leadership roles:** Set company standard that flawless work is mandatory; lead graphic designer for all Wicked Wraps projects

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

There are no more challenges in printing industries than a woman would find in any other industries; however, we do have a huge problem facing our industry and that is customer education. The biggest challenge that I encounter on a daily basis is working to educate customers that all wraps are not created equal. For so many customers, the question that seems to matter to them the most is “how much does it cost?” This is very troubling when talking about a major purchasing decision as there are many factors to consider besides cost. The important question(s) should be: What materials are being used? How long will it last? What happens if there are problems with the graphics over time? The list goes on and on.

Of course, “what does it cost?” is an important question, but it shouldn’t be the *only* question. It’s my job to educate customers about best practices in every aspect of the wrap industry, from designing wraps, to materials, printing equipment, and installation, as well as warranty and maintenance. I would rather help a customer get a high-quality, well-designed, and artfully installed partial wrap than see the same customer invest in a full wrap that features a bad design, is printed on inferior materials, and/or is installed poorly.

It is my hope that by educating as many people as I can about the ins and outs of the industry, the collective standards of all wrap providers will become elevated and that over time “crappy wraps” will cease to exist.

### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

In the printing industry and any other industry, my advice to a young woman would be the same: Invest in your education and then spend time finding out what you love. The ultimate challenge is to figure out a way to turn what you love into your career. And if/when you succeed in that, and/or during your journey, make sure to share your passion and help others along the way.





## DIANA HERRERA

### PRESIDENT

AP IMAGING | MIAMI

**Industry innovations:** Pushes for efficiency and conservation of natural resources; emphasizes cross-training

**Philanthropy:** Chair of National Association of Women Business Owners

**Leadership roles:** Climbed from answering the phones to owning the company; emphasizes staff mentorship

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

Print is facing challenges that I don't believe to be gender specific. I never saw myself as a woman in print or think comparatively as to what a man in my position could or would do. I am very passionate about what I do, and I enjoy working hard but smart. This is an industry that is constantly changing and that is one of the aspects I like the most. Some

women may be challenged with achieving their idea of a work/life balance being that this is such a demanding and disruptive industry.

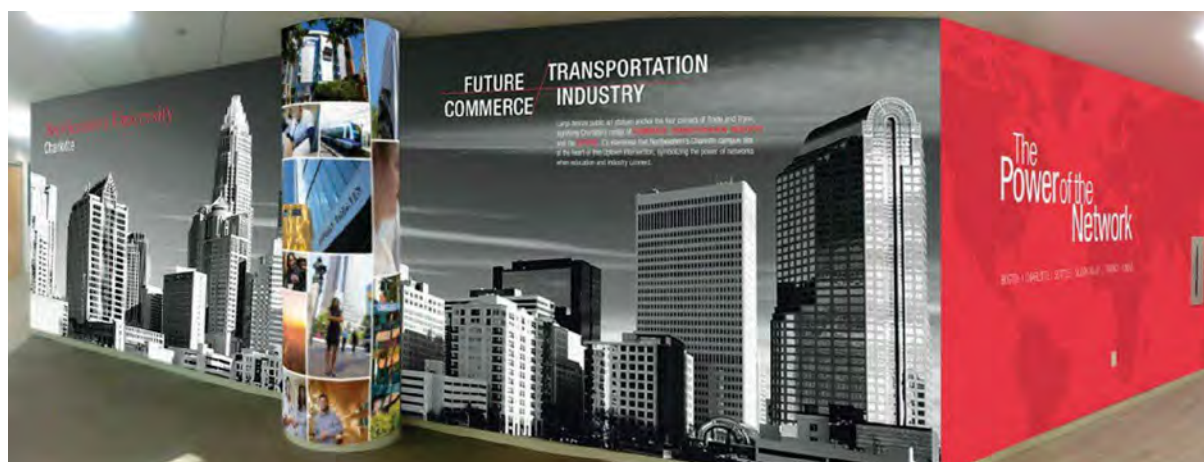
### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

This is a fascinating and exhilarating industry to work in and it is only getting more interesting as time passes. Off the bat, I'd caution that this industry takes courage and there is no substitute or shortcut for hard work, but nothing is as rewarding as earning your success and a good reputation. Now, more than ever, you have to be willing to stay ahead of the trend, think big – audacious, in fact – and show up to win every day. About three years ago, my daughter joined the industry, and the spark in her eyes speaks a thousand words.

# LYNN KRINSKY

PRESIDENT

STELLA COLOR | SEATTLE



**Industry innovations:** Emphasizes sustainable business practices; stayed ahead of the curve with digital technologies and often beta tested new equipment; first digital printing company to earn G7 certification for dye-sub printing

**Philanthropy:** Ad Federation of Tacoma and Seattle; Chairman of the Visual Graphics Committee for Shoreline Community College of Seattle; Seattle Green Business Program

**Leadership roles:** SGIA board of directors; SGIA 2013 Chairman of the Board; founding member of International Association of Fine Art Digital Printmakers; SGP Chairman of the Board

## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

I do not believe that women face any more challenges in print than men do. Print is just challenging these days as the market forces are pushing pricing down yet the expectations of the customers are higher than ever; the expectation that it can be done faster, as well, is challenging for any printer. There are more men in the business; however, that is just historical and is changing.

## WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

It's a fast-paced, interesting industry and one where you can actually use some creativity to set your company apart from others. The technology that impacts the changes in the industry make it a fascinating business.



## CATHERINE MONSON

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FASTSIGNS INTERNATIONAL | CARROLLTON, TEXAS

**Industry innovations:** Manned four companies' transitions from analog to digital; spearheaded PIP Printing's transition to online ordering; branded Fastsigns as "More than Fast. More than Signs."

**Philanthropy:** Dallas/Ft. Worth Corporate Walk Chair for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Light the Night Walk; board of directors for Brain Balance; Pi Sigma Epsilon National Education Foundation board of trustees

**Leadership roles:** Testified before Congress on behalf of franchisees; expanded Fastsigns franchise offerings and grew network to 617 locations in nine countries

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

I believe the challenges are the same for anyone in the print industry, male or female: Rapidly changing technology, more fragmented media, advertising clutter, life moving at "internet speed," understanding the work styles and purchasing behavior of different generations, etc. My advice to anyone looking to succeed would be to study the marketplace, understand existing and new technologies, develop outstanding communication and interpersonal skills, develop your management and leadership skills, and look for ways to bring more value to your customers and your organization.

I may differ from some women in business in that I see no upside or benefit from focusing on challenges based on gender. Over my life, I have been collecting quotes and reflecting upon them for inspiration and growth. One is "Fair is two weeks in the summer with cotton candy and a midway." In other words, life isn't fair ... so get over it and move on! The reality is each of us, male and female, have challenges we each face. These challenges could be based on our IQ, our health, a physical disability, our upbringing, etc. Our responsibility is to do all we can to achieve our personal goals. I have chosen not to concern myself with any potential unfairness based on being female. Instead I have focused on being the very best I can be, contributing more than others do, and ensuring I bring the most possible value to my organization.

During my life, I have learned that all highly successful people share five common characteristics: positive mental attitude, goal-directed behavior, self-motivation, a sense of urgency, and never stopping learning. The great news about these common characteristics is that these are all learned behaviors: We can each learn to improve our skills in each of these five areas. Whenever I get the opportunity to share this valuable information with young people, I jump at the chance. Each of us can develop a more positive attitude, which is the foundation of all achievement and is achieved through self-discipline. The easiest thing in the world is to think negatively and to feel sorry for oneself. We all can learn to develop goal-directed behavior and self-discipline. All highly successful people are people of action; the universe rewards action. We each can learn to do today what could have been put off until tomorrow. To be the very best we can be, we need to continue to learn and grow. Read five books on any subject and you'll know more about that topic than 99 percent of the population. By focusing on being the best we can be and delivering the most value possible in all of our endeavors, we can achieve our personal and career goals.

### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

Learn to communicate well. Listen more than you talk. Stay current with technology across all platforms – to communicate, to market, to print and fabricate, etc. Attend industry tradeshow and join a local association. Join groups on LinkedIn and follow print industry leaders on social media. If you can, find a mentor to provide guidance, but don't rely on him/her to pave the way.





## NICOLE PIACH

### CO-OWNER

DIGITAL PRINT SPECIALTIES | HAZEL PARK, MICHIGAN

**Industry innovations:** Developed line of specialty print media; among the first to adopt dye-sub technology

**Philanthropy:** Supports students at Parsons School of Design; served on Olympic torch run committee

**Key accomplishments:** Produced 43,000 square feet of sublimated fabric in 36 days for Super Bowl XL

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

Being a glass-half-full kind of girl, and given the context of this question, I believe that being in a creative industry such as printing where the workforce is statistically predominately male opens the doors for opportunity more than poses a challenge.

In this growing and seemingly ever-changing industry, it requires ongoing learning, creativity, and innovation. This requires great teams, which create great businesses and products.

I see opportunity in the teams. It doesn't matter if you're a mom-and-pop shop or if you work for a multimillion-dollar organization. Great teams consist of different people, with different ideas, thought processes, and most importantly, personalities. Be the leader, the shaker, the expert, or the worker bee. These traits make up the team. With that being said, both men and women have a lot to offer, and yes, we may

be wired differently, but it's when you combine all these unique facets that teams and businesses and, ultimately, the individuals find success. That's opportunity!

### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

The first thing I'd say is "have fun"; it's a great industry to be in. It's creative and you get to work with other creative people, and it's where no two days are ever alike. In some cases, one day you'll be printing a poster for \$1 tacos and then the next day thousands of graphics for the Super Bowl – true story!

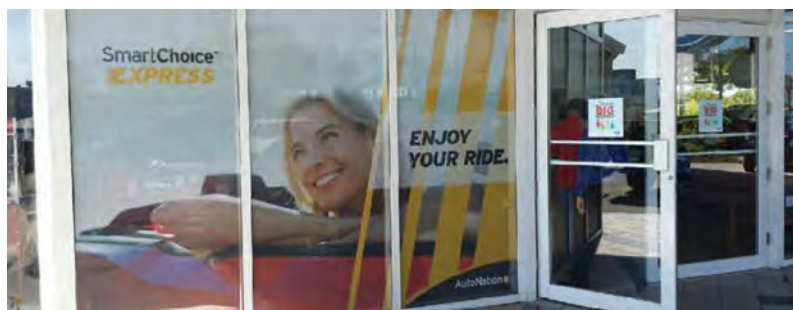
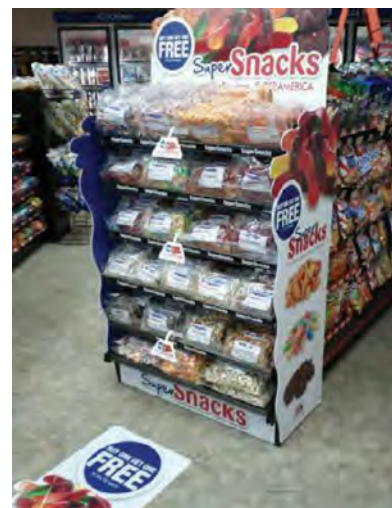
Secondly, being a mom to a 20-year-old daughter and an 18-year-old son, my advice to both of them is to make sure you're passionate and love whatever you do. Success is built in time, by trial and error, in both good and bad economies. Resilience, whether you are an employee or self-employed, is much easier to achieve and maintain when passion is part of the equation.

Lastly, gravitate to and surround yourself with great, knowledgeable people across all sorts of industries. Printing spans so many markets that you never know where your next account or big project will come from. It could be a fashion designer in New York, a hospital in Toronto, or your favorite restaurant down the street. It really is an exciting industry, and it can be whatever you make it to be!

# ELAINE SCRIMA

## VP OF OPERATIONS

GSP MARKETING TECHNOLOGIES | CLEARWATER, FLORIDA



**Industry innovations:** Took GSP from an almost-bankrupt P-O-P display company with old-school tech to cutting-edge inkjet digital PSP delivering 60,000 kits per month

**Philanthropy:** Krewe of Cavaliers member (supports Multiple Sclerosis Society, Children's Home of Tampa, Children's AIDS Foundation); supports Tampa AIDS network

**Leadership roles:** Oversees 400 employees across three facilities producing more than one million sign components per month

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PRINT?

This question was really very thought-provoking, and I am sure it means something different to each person based on the experiences they have encountered throughout their career. I think the issues that faced women in print 10, 20, and even 30 years ago are still there, but what has changed is that opportunities now exist with more frequency to overcome them. The obstacles, while not removed, are smaller.

I think the wage gap is closing. Women are being considered for and getting positions that they never would have been considered for in the past. Technology has allowed women to be even more competitive, and we have seen a shift away from the physicality of many positions.

I honestly think the biggest challenge facing women in print is overcoming the confidence gap. You know you are

good enough to be there; you have the same or better credentials as the next person, but there is still some self-doubt.

I feel fortunate that GSP has always had strong women in leadership roles, and so many of the above challenges that others may have faced, I really didn't.

### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

This is one of the most all-encompassing, ever-evolving industries there is. No two days are alike. There are things we touch and see in our everyday lives that in some way, shape, or form, were produced or involved in our industry.

When we open a candy bar or Gatorade, unwrap a sub sandwich, read a magazine, see ads on the subway or on a billboard, all the labels, the packaging, the P-O-P signage, the digital displays, the marketing materials come from our industry. Whether you want to be part of the industry that produces those things or the industry that makes the equipment that produces them, there is something for everyone.

When I began in this industry 21 years ago, I never even knew this world existed. Now I can't even envision myself doing anything else. When you look at the advancements that have been made over the past 20 years, I can't wait to see what the next 20 bring. The opportunities are endless for enterprising and talented young women! **BP**