

WOMEN ²⁰²³

OF NEVADA COUNTY

- American Association of University Women
- Bright Futures for Youth

A Tale of Two Cities •

Two Mayors and Their Stories

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Team Simmons



NEVADA COUNTY'S FOREMOST REAL ESTATE TEAM



Mimi Simmons

CalDRE# 00871435

Mimi in the Team Listing Broker, supported by Tammy. She works directly with Sellers from signing listing papers and reviewing disclosures to presenting and negotiating all offers. Meeting with inspectors, appraisers and completing transactions by attending the seller signing appointments with the title company. Her 39 years of real estate experience, as well as her enthusiasm, establishes her as the best Listing Broker in the County. Her passion and marketing strategies set her apart from other agents in the industry.



Holli Navo

CalDRE# 01370492

Holli has 22 years of real estate experience in Nevada County and is the Team's exclusive buyers' agent. She meets with potential buyers, showing them properties and educating them on the home buying process. Her management background, knowledge of the area, and attention to detail make her the ideal Buyers agent. She treats each client with the utmost care, whether first time home buyer or experienced investor, attending inspections, reviewing reports, and providing knowledgeable advice to help her clients achieve their real estate goals and experience a smooth transaction. Holli is a skilled negotiator and a Pepperdine University certified mediator. She currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Nevada County Association of Realtors and is the 2024 President Elect.



Tammy Andreozzi

CalDRE# 01264357

Tammy is a licensed Broker and has worked in all aspects of real estate over her 20 plus year history. She loves the paper trail and has been Mimi's Transaction Coordinator for 22 years. She is responsible for making sure all documents are signed by all parties and understands the legal ins and outs of technical transactions. She also supports Holli with her Buyers and Sellers.

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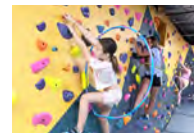
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WOMEN
OF NEVADA COUNTY

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Two mayors and their stories



JAN ARBUCKLE
Mayor of Grass Valley

1. Could you give a background about yourself? Where did you grow up?

I grew up in southern California, and I went to high school in Whittier, CA and then I moved to Pasadena where I worked with Jet Propulsion Lab for a while. Then, LA got too smoggy and I said, “I’m leaving.” The day I left, the sky was brown—you couldn’t even see across the street, that’s how smoggy it was. That was before they cleaned up the air down there. I moved up to Sacramento where I didn’t like it at first but I decided that I liked the open space, so I went through that, got married, had a child, and decided I needed a secure occupation so I went to Sacramento County Sheriff’s Academy where I passed. I was there until I got injured on the job, and I was there until the end of 2002—from ‘84 until 2002.

2. How was your experience as a Deputy Sheriff?

It was amazing. I mean it was something that I never thought I would do. I was one of those things—my life has been kind of weird in that I went to the academy to be a marshal, which was just a clerk at the court. During that, the beginning of my academy, where the marshals and the deputies went at the same time—they merged and everybody had to graduate as a Deputy Sheriff. It was really interesting because I had never touched a gun prior to. I was like, “Oh my god, how am I going to do this?” But, you know, I rose to the challenge. So it wasn’t

my plan to be a deputy but it was a great experience. It was something that basically changed me in that it gave me self-confidence that I needed, that I really never had completely.

3. What led you to get into politics?

I got hurt, and then looked for another place to live out of the Sacramento area and moved up here. I applied for the Nevada County Grand Jury. I was on there for two terms. It was a great experience getting to know what this county and community are about because I knew nothing.

One of the (Grass Valley) council members resigned, and the council decided to do an appointment process, and people that I met through the Grand Jury kept asking me to apply, and I said, “No, I’m not a politician. I don’t do that. That’s not who I am.” Basically, to keep them from knocking on my door, I applied knowing full well that I was not going to get it. So I went to a very public interview where I believe there were 11 of us. And they were people who had been in the community, they were born here. I mean, I didn’t take it seriously—to the point when they asked what affiliations and associations I belonged to, I replied, “Unless you count wine clubs, none.” They kind of just looked at me funny. You know, I did not take it seriously, and when the council actually made the appointment it was unanimous, it was me, and I was never so shocked in my life. Whoever was the photographer at the time, took my picture and it was like “Oh my god!” It was a horrible picture because it was like, literally, “Oh my god, what just happened?” They wanted somebody—number one, being in the sheriff’s department, I was involved with negotiations on some levels, and they wanted somebody who understood that because none of them did. They wanted somebody who really had no preconceived alliances or agendas or anything, and that was what I was told. Yeah, so they wanted somebody totally fresh and new. So, I’ve been there ever since 2003. I ran in my first election, terrified because I had never done that before, and have run successfully since.

4. How did actually being in politics change your perception of politicians?

It is public service in a different fashion, and being in law enforcement, that is public service on the ground. This is public service at a different level. Once I wrapped my head around that, it was like, “Okay, I can do this.” I’m the type of person who if I commit to something, I’m going to do it 110%. I’m going to do it; I said I was going to do it; I’m going to do it the best I can.

5. What is the League of California Cities, and how did you get involved with it?

It’s a California, state-wide organization that represents 482 cities in the state of California. What they do is basically lobby for local control to make sure the state doesn’t keep giving us unfunded mandates that are constantly being put down. They are a big lobbying firm, but their biggest value is the networking and the educational opportunities that they give cities, especially small rural cities; we don’t have the resources to hire somebody or have somebody in-house do it. To have that networking ability: “So what did you do in your city of the same size? How did you get around this problem?” is the biggest value that I have been able to glean.

Just prior to me getting sworn in the longtime city manager had left, so they had an interim city manager, Jeff Foltz, he came and he was amazing. He helped me do City Council 101 because I knew nothing; I didn’t know what the issues were, because it was just not my thing, and I had only been up here for a couple of years.

He told me to go to a meeting in South Lake Tahoe for the California League of Cities, and I thought, “Okay, this is apparently what the new person does.” So I went, and they were all shocked because they had never seen anybody from Grass Valley at their meetings. I met some really great people who served as mentors for me, and they kind of directed me. They were like, “Oh, you are retired law enforcement? You need to be on the Public Safety Policy Committee.” I was like I don’t even know what that is, but you know, I’ll go with it. From that point forward, I got super involved with the League of California Cities, and I saw what an opportunity it was to bring things back, to not just Grass Valley, but to Nevada County.

From the League of California Cities, I kind of went through the roles. I have been President of the Women’s Caucus, Chair of the Public Safety Committee, and President of the League of California Cities, which is a huge thing for somebody from a small city who had never participated in the League of California Cities. Which, that was an amazing experience because I traveled up and down the state of California. I was born here; I’ve never left anywhere else, but I was able to see just how diverse our state is. From rural to LA-side to little tiny Yreka down to Palm Desert. From that, one of my duties as president was to attend the National League of Cities—conferences and summits—and of course, I got hooked into that, and last year I was president of Women in Municipal Government for the National League of Cities, and that was for all the cities, towns, and villages in this entire country.

6. Could you tell us about how you helped found the Women's Caucus and its purpose?

I started getting involved [in the League of California Cities], and there was a women's caucus that was trying to be founded. And I thought, "Well this is something that I'm really interested in." So I am a founding member of the Women's Caucus of the League of California Cities, which serves to mentor women and young women, specifically, to show them that they can do this.

What we do is we have outreach. We did a study years ago that showed how disproportionately women are in elected offices. Over the years, it's getting better. The reason why women don't run for elected offices is that women care about their families—I'm not saying men don't—but they care about their families; they care about what other people are going to say to their children, and they feel an obligation to their families first. And men tend to say, "Oh, I can do that," and they just do it.

Women, we analyze everything. We say, "Okay, if I do this, then this, this, and this." We usually talk ourselves out of doing things. So the Women's Caucus, what we have done, we are successful in saying is, "Yes, you can do this," and "Be a mom, be a wife, if that's what you want. You can do all of this. And you are good enough; you have the ability to do this." Basically, it's getting women to believe in their own power. So, that's why we started, and that's how we have continued to grow within the League of California Cities.

7. What is your most memorable professional moment?

I was invited to the State of the Union in Washington DC, which was an incredible, surreal experience. It's something that not many people get to experience, and it was a surreal moment realizing you are sitting where so much has happened in the history of our country. It doesn't matter who the president is, it just matters that this is the history, this is what the United States was founded on, and this is where it has all happened.

For my law enforcement career, it was when somebody came up to me and said, "You saved my life. By talking to me, you saved my life. I was ready to commit suicide, and you saved my life."

8. What are some of the obstacles the city of Grass Valley is facing?

Obviously, wildfires. We have been very fortunate this year, we haven't had a lot of smoke, and the fires that we've had have only been the small ones that have been able to be put out fairly quickly. But if we ever have a major one again I'm not sure we are prepared for it.

Obviously, a tax isn't something that anybody wants to do. We want input from the community. Of course, the con side of increasing taxes is how going to affect businesses. Again, it's a balancing act and that's why we want to hear

whatever the community says.

One of the things that I think is difficult a lot of times for people who have never been in an elected position to realize that sometimes you have to vote for or against something that you really believe in because it's the best thing to do for the whole community.

For me, the one I always go back on is the fireworks thing. I love fireworks, I love the experience of kids being able to set them off and do the sparkler things. But in this community it's not good, it's a fire hazard. And that was a very hard decision for me because personally, I think everybody should be able to have that experience. In the interest of the community, the right thing to do was to ban them. Sometimes that's hard to distance yourself from your personal life to what's best for the community. And I think I have a little bit of an advantage being in law enforcement because you do. You can't let your feelings get involved with what's right and wrong. I've arrested people I probably didn't want to arrest, but it was the right thing to do. So I have a little bit of an advantage with that background, but it's a challenge to be able to do that.

9. Are there any obstacles you have had to overcome in your career?

When I was in law enforcement there was, because when I joined law enforcement I want to say that there were less than 100 females in the entire Sacramento Sheriff's Department. We were still considered, "You can do this. You can work in the women's side of the jail. You can go to patrol, but you probably shouldn't be out there by yourself." That mentality was still there. So we had to try harder, work harder, prove ourselves more, and I think in politics you do the same thing. It's just now that we have so many women who have become really good leaders, aside from politics, that have done the extra, that have gone that extra mile, and show that it is possible.

One of the women that always comes to mind is Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I mean she was iconic on the Supreme Court. She didn't let her politics get into her judgment, which I think is really good; her whole story is amazing of how she came from a "Well, I'm going to do this!" attitude. The obstacles are there, and they are still there in certain parts of the country. Being in the National League of Cities and seeing the women from other parts of the country—it's still there in some parts of our country. Fortunately, in California, we are very, very fortunate that we have a lot of women who are willing to put themselves out there, so there is always someone you could go to for guidance: "What did you do? How did you get here? How did you get support?" That's what the Women's Caucus does. That barrier is still there, but it's getting less and less all the time.

10. What advice do you have for other professionals, especially women, in Nevada County or those who aspire to get into a leadership position?

Do it. If you think you can, you can. Because we as women this is what we do, and I think it's our nature—we study everything before we go into it. Study it, but don't overthink it. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and show what you are truly capable of doing. We are all capable of something great, it's just a matter of finding that, what that is, and how it relates. As long as you have a goal out there and you continue to do the steps—you may never reach the epitome of it—but you can be successful in your life, and be happy with what that success brings for you.

11. Who was your biggest female role model while growing up?

When I was at the sheriff's department, there was a woman who was one of the first female deputies hired by Sacramento County—her name is Carol Daly. I believe she was a sergeant at the time when I was out at the correctional facility, and she gave me the best advice ever and that was, "You're going to look like a man, you're going to dress like him, but do something for yourself that you remember you're a woman." It just stuck with me so I did. I wore frilly underwear underneath my uniform. I got teased a lot in the locker room for that. Basically, what she was saying was, "Remember your humanity." And throughout my career, she ended up retiring as the undersheriff—the first woman ever—and she was an inspiration throughout my entire career at the sheriff's department. She was somebody that kept the highest ethical values, in spite of whatever happened, and she encouraged women to do whatever they felt they wanted to do. Having her at that particular moment of my life made me also want to help women reach their full potential. Whether it be in politics or as a mother, whatever it is, if you truly feel you want to do this, you can make it happen if you try. That was something that has just resonated with me since I became a deputy in 1984 which was a very long time ago.

Then I had a friend throughout my career as a sheriff's deputy. She told me one day, "The dream you dreamt may not be the dream you were meant to live." And that has resonated with me because I seriously never thought I was going to be here. I never thought I was going to be a sheriff's deputy. I never thought I was going to be in politics. I never ever thought I was going to be the President of the League of California Cities and be so instrumental in being a positive resource for women to reach their full potential—never in a million years. So, again, what she said to me has always resonated with me, because you never know what life is going to be, you just have to be open to the opportunity.



DANIELA FERNANDEZ
Mayor of Nevada City

1. Could you give a background about yourself? Where did you grow up?

My name is Daniela Fernandez. I am the current Mayor of Nevada City. I've been in the county for about eight years. I moved here from the San Francisco Bay area where I went to grad school. I'm originally from Orlando, Florida—a long way from home. My father is an immigrant; I had young parents. I grew up in Orlando, Florida. I was the first person in my family to go to college, the first person in my family to get a master's degree. I always knew that I wanted to be in California. So it was just a matter of figuring out what the avenue was knowing it would be grad school, but just not quite knowing what yet.

So I moved here eight years ago with my former partner and loved the area, the land, and the access to nature. Coming from the Bay Area, I was feeling really, really crowded. And my energetic body needed some relief. So coming here, and having open space, and access to nature, I could breathe a bit easier. And it occurred to me after arriving here, that this place is culturally very different than anywhere that I've lived. And I thought, if I'm going to stay, I want to dig in and help make this place a place that I want to grow old in.

2. What is your professional background? How did that lead you into political engagement?

I've worked in nonprofits for over 20 years in social services. And I started becoming active in community organizing, particularly around racial and social justice issues, which are really near and dear to me. Knowing that we live in the whitest county in the state, there's a lot of work to be done around that. And so as I was organizing, I realized I was looking at the government structure of Nevada City, and realizing that the people that I was

with, the people that I was organizing and protesting with, didn't feel like they had a voice in government, or someone to be their advocate for them. And so I met former councilmember Erin Minett, who kind of took me under her wing and talked me through the process and convinced me to do this wild thing to run for city council in March of 2020 just before COVID shut the world down. And I got in. And so at the time when I got on council, I was the youngest person by 20 years at age 40. And that felt really important; particularly for people in my age group, for people in their 30s and 40s, and now I'm realizing in their 20s too, to have someone who's focused on social-cultural issues in addition to the important things like water and fire and housing and homelessness, that the social and cultural pieces are also represented. I think has been a really, really missing piece in Nevada City for a long time. And I'm really happy to have filled that gap.

3. What was the moment you knew you wanted to get into politics?

There was a moment here, in this room, the first time I was in council chambers there was this issue to go up before the council. They wanted to put up a statue of former Senator Aaron Sargent and his wife, which is all good and well. Aaron Sargent helped write the language for the 19th Amendment, which gave white women the right to vote. His wife was a suffragette. They hosted famous suffragettes at their house at the top of Broad Street. Aaron Sargent was the number one supporter of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was the first piece of racist legislation that kept an entire group of people from a specific country out of the country.

In collaboration with others, we packed this room with people who had concerns about that. It was set to pass; one of the council members was part of the organization that brought forth the initiative. We packed the room and people gave brilliant public comment. By the end of it, they said, "We can't approve this." That's the first time I thought, "Wow, you can really make a change in this community. This is a small enough community that if you show up and you bring your voice, you can shift the needle." That was really inspiring to me because living in other places—big cities—it feels impossible to make any kind of change. So that was super inspiring.

4. What is your most memorable professional moment?

I'm gonna give you two. One of them was the night I became mayor, which was really special. I put out an invitation to just people who have supported me and people who have been allies, and that I've worked with for the last two years. And 111 people showed up in this room. That felt really special. My parents were here, which just felt equally special. They came from Florida. Having this room full of familiar, friendly, supportive faces, as I

moved into this role was just a beautiful moment for me.

I used to work with adults with disabilities. I did this work for like three years as an activities therapist, and we just played, we just did all kinds of fun things. We used to put on plays. We would write the scripts, design the costumes, and build the set and it would take months of preparation. I'm thinking of a very specific performance of *The Lion King* that we did. You know, when you work so hard with a group of people on every aspect of something, and then it comes together, and you see the light in their eyes and you feel the magic. That's a really special memory.

5. What are some of the obstacles the city of Nevada City is facing?

Yeah, I think, you know, the easy answer to that is fire and climate resiliency. And, with that, emergency services, it's all kind of bundled together. I think Nevada City has the opportunity to be cutting-edge and innovative in a lot of ways. I think there's both been a lack of leadership at the city, and a lack of creativity on the council to really leverage your four years to make this a better place for the future. I think Nevada City has focused so much on the past 1850s that we haven't done much to prepare for the future. And that's across the board though, right? The whole country, essentially, but Nevada City has its unique version of that.

We're small enough that we can do exciting new things that maybe other jurisdictions around us can't because they're navigating other things. But with that, we also have one of the smallest budgets of any city in the state. Finding new revenue streams to do exciting new things is also a piece of that. I'm really excited about our new city manager, Sean Grayson, who is not only forward-thinking but also has the experience and the knowledge to back that up. And so it's really exciting working with him and figuring out new opportunities and new revenue streams. So fire is the easy answer and climate resiliency.

And then the more complicated answer, I think, is we have to evolve, or we die. That is my personal belief. I think that Nevada City can be both a modern and historic town. The historic piece has been emphasized, and maybe even over-emphasized. We've done a really good job of telling our Gold Rush history. We've got a great look to match that with, which brings in tourists—it's our tourist economy, right? But we need to take care of the people here, and the people who want to be here, and the people who want to invest; I'm the only renter on the council.

I think that piece of smart, measured growth for Nevada City, and modernizing this historic town is both an opportunity and a challenge. And the challenge piece is that we have to bring some people along that maybe have been opposed to that in the past, and are currently opposed to that. And that's a challenge.

6. Are there any obstacles you have had to overcome in your career?

I went to graduate school to become a therapist, and I worked in the San Francisco County Jail with incarcerated women and their families and it nearly wrecked me, not the women—the women and their stories will live with me always with such fondness and tenderness and gratitude—but the broken system of care, the broken incarceration system. The prison system was just almost too much to work inside. And I think it's been a challenge to navigate how I want to live my life and spend my energy working.

I think that in my parents' generation, you did the thing that you did, and you always did that thing. My grandparents' generation was even more entrenched in that. My generation was maybe the first generation to begin to question our systems in a more meaningful way. A lot of big movements, starting social, cultural, and political movements, and I think really evaluating how I want to spend my life. How do I want to spend my energy? What kind of work do I want to do in the world? So that I can preserve my sense of self.

I had an advisor really early on in my campaign say to me, “Just so you know, you can never fully be yourself in public again.” And it floored me.

There are ways in which in this position, specifically, I've had to rein in aspects of “Daniela” to be in this role to represent an entire town. I'm not just representing myself. It's not about me and my opinions, it's about the whole, which sometimes is in conflict with me and my opinions and my values. And so I think that's certainly a challenge, like how do you do it? How do you represent the whole of the people when the whole is sometimes fractured? I have voted for things that I didn't fundamentally, personally, agree with. It's been very few. Two that I can think of. But that's a challenge, right? Because it's ultimately not about me.

7. Who was your biggest female role model while growing up?

The answer is Madonna. It was the first concert I went to in 1985—my dad and my gay uncle took me. There was something about Madonna, particularly in the '80s, there was something so fresh and new and cutting edge. And she was pushing the envelope. The first time I saw queer people were in her videos—her dancers. When I was growing up, we didn't have queer characters on television, we didn't have LGBTQ movies, there weren't a lot, and if there were they were underground and I didn't have access to them yet. But in the videos there were these themes with Madonna; there was this presentation of queerness that I hadn't ever seen before, and she was so controversial. And she was always pushing the edge of the status quo. I do feel like that informed a bit of who I became. I am that person who pushes those edges. Oftentimes, I say that my work in this position often feels like I'm poking tiny holes, and other people feel like I'm

dropping bombs. There is something that I'm doing here that is pushing what has always been, and that makes people nervous, and it makes me controversial, and I think some of that comes from Madonna—it's the silliest answer, but it's true.

8. Throughout your term as mayor, you continuously support and advocate for the Nisenan tribe. Could you elaborate more on this and the importance of supporting marginalized groups locally?

I talk to young people a lot—I work with youth—and I say that culture moves a lot faster than policy. So I've been trying to push that policy along to catch up to the shifting culture. The Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan tribe has been actively rising in the last decade or so, and inviting their voices to the table is something that I've been proud of. I volunteered with them before I got into office, and so we had a relationship. Shelly Covert, the tribal spokeswoman, and I often talk about institutional memory, and how it's really short. It's great when I'm in there, and I can focus on bringing their voice to the table, making room for them. But if I'm gone after four years, if nobody else sees that as a priority, then they have to start all over. So, with the support of our city manager, we have now instituted a tribal liaison position. In addition to other committees, we have one council member who will always be assigned to be the liaison with the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe.

Additionally, we engaged in a strategic plan this year in a meaningful way for the first time since I've been here in the last three years, and we have a series of priorities. And then we have something called “embedded initiatives”. Those embedded initiatives are things that we consider in all of our decisions moving forward. Those embedded initiatives are climate resiliency, infrastructure and technology, and the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe. So, in addition to this land acknowledgment that we do at the beginning of each meeting, I'm proud to say that Nevada City is also walking the walk. When we say, “We support the Nevada City Rancheria Tribe in efforts to stabilize their people, as well as their campaign to restore federal recognition,” it's not just in sentiment and words, that we are actually supporting them. That's been a really big initiative of mine.

Another cultural piece is the pride flags in town. We've raised the pride flag for the third year, atop city hall this year, and then for the second year in a row up and down Broad and Commercial Street. It has been so overwhelming, wonderfully overwhelming, to get such positive feedback from the community. There has been negative feedback, but the positive feedback has far outweighed that. And I'm talking from youth, LGBTQ+ youth, to elders to allies, how important that is for them to feel like their city acknowledges and recognizes who they are. And so that's been really cool, and I've been proud to spearhead that.

9. With a background in social services and mental health counseling, what are some ways your experience has helped you with your duties as mayor of Nevada City?

I think my work and training as a therapist has helped me to sit with people and listen. Listen in a way that allows me not to take it on personally, but to be present with people and really hear what's going on with them. I think that translates well to this work. Also, just the empathy piece of being able to understand where people are coming from, even if I don't fundamentally agree with them or I'm not aligned with their experience.

I think my background in social services and nonprofits—I've worked with so many different populations; I have worked with seniors with Alzheimer's and dementia, incarcerated women and their families, LGBTQ+ youth and adults, communities of color, adults with disabilities—and the gift of working with these populations was that I got to know them, I got to know their struggles, and their joys, and their successes. I think it's easy to not consider the “other” when they haven't been humanized to us, or they are not a part of our life. Having that rich, diverse experience with so many populations has allowed me to consider a multitude of voices that aren't at the table. I like to think that I make it my business to make room at the table for those voices.

10. Anything else you would like to share?

The policies that we are putting forward, the land acknowledgment that we give, these sort of proclamations that we stated that Nevada City is a hate-free zone—this is all a start. It's an intention, it's a start, but I think it's a good start. If we start there and we work to live into our words, to breathe life into our words, then we can become a place that is more open and accepting, and, dare I say, safe to people who maybe previously haven't felt that here. So I kind of just wanted to say that the work that I'm doing is a start, it's a beginning, and it's aspirational. And it's a measure of accountability, to say, “The city has this on the books, we have this policy on the books, how are we living into it? How are we holding up against it?” It's definitely a measure of accountability, and I think that's important moving forward for sure.

So much of what I do, and I've said this publicly before, is that I want to help create a place that people want to come back to—that young people want to come back to. I think that's so important. We talk about diversity in race and other aspects, but also diversity in age, we've got a lot of work to do around that. A big part of the social and cultural piece that I bring is to make this a place that people want to stay, including myself, and a place where people want to come back to.

Mary Margaretich

PROFILE



Mary Margaretich, a local realtor who has been in real estate for 37 years, started her career in South Lake Tahoe but then moved to Nevada County in

2001. Since then, she has successfully built a career and created one of the top teams in Nevada County—opening the only Christie’s International Sereno between the Bay Area and South Lake Tahoe.

When asked what one of her top professional achievements is, Mary responded that she built a career that supported her family: “[I] helped my husband achieve his dream of going to chiropractic college and becoming a chiropractor, and being a top producer in all three markets that I’ve worked in.”

Though Mary aspired to actually become a veterinarian when she was young due to her love for animals, her career goals changed when she became a mother. “Real estate was the best opportunity to provide for them while still being around lots of animals at all of my amazing clients’ homes and properties,” she explained.

For instance, one of Mary’s most memorable professional moments was when she negotiated a deal for her client to buy a horse ranch—all while riding her horse on the beach in Moss Landing!

Just as she has dedicated herself and her profession to family, Mary’s number one female role model—her mother—did the same. “She had seven children and taught school while continuing her education to get her master’s degree. She started a Head Start program that was the first one in the Southeast and she even drove a bus. She never had a bad word for anyone and she never complained,” Mary recounted.

When asked if there were any obstacles she’s had to overcome in her career, Mary explained, “Real estate is putting together a puzzle, and comes with many obstacles. However, I don’t call them obstacles; I call them pieces. You have to work to get all the pieces in the right place.”

For those who aspire to go into real estate professionally, Mary advised: “Real estate can be a trying profession, and my advice to other professionals is that if you have the right team and the knowledge that goes with the experience, it’s a very rewarding career. Having the right people by your side is key.”

Mary attributes her success to her team and her family. “I couldn’t accomplish what I do in business without my fabulous team of real estate professionals supporting me. My son, Laif, who is my partner in this endeavor; Susana Knox, who is my Executive Assistant of almost 18 years and is truly my right hand; and our team of agents, Jenny Miller, Farris Gaylon, Kellan Lake, and Stephanie Lanza. And, of course, my husband Dr. Kebby Margaretich who has supported me in anything I’ve wanted to accomplish.”

CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL



Jenny Miller



Jenny grew up in Humboldt County and fell in love with the area and all it has to offer. Her husband bought their first home and they began. Jenny rapidly fell into work and assist clients with their Real Estate Team. Her past years in Real Estate which shows in her professional with, she is honest and will help

Susana Knox



Susana has been a part of the most integral parts of our system is the Assistant to Mary and T aspects of our transactions, leading to successful, close ar

Stephanie Lanza



Meet Stephanie Lanza, a seasoned Real Estate professional dedicated to the vibrant real estate market with a unique edge with extensive experience Born and raised in northern California, Stephanie broadening horizons and gaining diverse business, Stephanie has a profound understanding A green thumb with a passion for sustainable greenhouse, specializing in growing and she finds joy in the great outdoors, whether it's connection to the land and a love for all things making every transaction an enriching ex

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— sereno —

nty, she moved to Nevada County in 2003, where she
the beauty the foothills have to offer. In 2011 Jenny and
ome together, this is where her journey into Real Estate
orking as a REALTOR® and started to successfully
ate needs. Jenny is a great asset to the Margaretich
ate has helped mold her into the agent she is today;
ism and commitment to her clients. She is a joy to work
buyers and sellers feel comfortable and confident.

Margaretich team since 2005, and is one of the
em, the “glue” that holds everything together. She
The Margaretich Team and handles all systemic
nsuring smooth timelines and communications,
nd happy clients.

Estate Agent with a decade of industry expertise, five of which have been
et of Nevada County. Beyond buying and selling homes, Stephanie brings
in construction, remodeling, and landscaping.

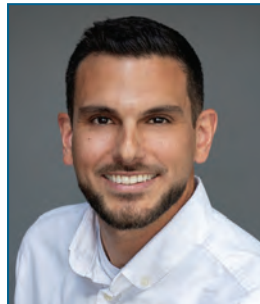
Stephanie spent two formative years at Boise State University in Idaho,
perspectives. Hailing from a farming family with vineyards and a wine
standing of the land, complemented by two decades of raising livestock.
ability, Stephanie holds a nursery license and operates a large
selling vegetable transplants. When not closing deals, Stephanie
s hiking, camping, snowboarding, or nurturing a garden. With a deep
hings outdoors, Stephanie brings a holistic approach to real estate,
perience.

Laif McClellan



Laif's career journey from construction to real estate showcases his adaptability, commitment to growth, and dedication to client success. Starting as a construction framer at 19, he progressed to become a residential remodel Foreman, honing project management and budgeting skills. In 2005, he transitioned to real estate, leveraging his construction background and family ties to excel in the field. His rapid rise in the East Bay Area led to a partnership in 2009, highlighting his business acumen. Returning to his hometown of Santa Cruz in 2011, Laif deepened his local market knowledge. In 2016, he earned his broker's license, reinforcing his expertise. Relocating to Placer County in 2016, he joined The Margaretich Team, combining construction know-how with extensive real estate experience to benefit clients. Beyond work, Laif enjoys outdoor activities like mountain biking and snowboarding, enhancing his well-rounded lifestyle. Laif's journey epitomizes his adaptability, personal and professional growth, and commitment to client satisfaction.

Farris Galyon



Farris is a member of the esteemed Margaretich Team at Christie's | Sereno, in the beautiful Sierra Nevada Foothills. With both a military and business background, Farris serves as a trusted fiduciary, while helping you navigate the unique circumstances of your next real estate transaction.

Kellen Lake



“Home is where one starts from.” –T.S. Eliot Hello! My name is Kellen Lake and I am a native of the small town of Grass Valley in the Foothills of Nevada County. The beauty of my town lies not only in its picturesque landscapes and historical charm but also in its tight-knit community properties. As a professional, I take pride in my abilities to help others in this ever-changing world of real estate. Having grown up here, I am intimately familiar with the local market trends, property values, and development projects. Our team provides over 70 years of experience in real estate sales. This team concept allows me to focus my time with my clients knowing that they will always be served at the highest level.

INCREDIBLE WOMEN WHO ARE MAKING A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT!

Not too long ago, the world of professional orchestras and classical music was predominantly dominated by men. As early as 2001, when Ken and Julie Hardin, the artistic and executive directors of InConcert Sierra (ICS), attended a performance by the Vienna Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in New York City, they observed that out of the 99 performers, only one was a woman—the harpist. Fast forward 25 years, and there has been a significant transformation in this landscape. During the InConcert Sierra Orchestra performance this

past September, an impressive 20 out of the 34 musicians were exceptionally talented women, including Kirsti Powell, ICS Orchestra Manager and Jolán Friedhoff, ICS Concertmaster.

During the same concert, ICS unveiled a stunning new composition by Nevada County's own Alexis Alrich (you can find "Sierra Rhapsody" on YouTube!), which featured the remarkable pianist Lynn Schugren from our community. Furthermore, our Sierra Master Chorale's music director, Alison Skinner, stands

as an exemplary conductor and musician.

We aren't advocating for men to step aside; rather, we are insisting that they share the stage. The beauty of it all is that the men of ICS wholeheartedly support this change. Let's raise a toast to all of the incredible women who are making a significant impact!



From left to right, Sydney Joyce, Kirsti Powell, Lisa Alcantara, Robin Laverty-Reves, Barbara Drew, Valarie Bush, Julie Hardin (not pictured Hindi Greenberg & Heidi Hall)



Alison Skinner



Alexis Alrich



www.InConcertSierra.org

530-273-3990

AAUW: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Education, Empowerment, Engagement

Submitted by AAUW Nevada County Branch

In 1937, twenty women met at Claire Tuttle's home to learn more about the American Association of University Women (AAUW), a national service organization formed in 1881 to open the doors of higher education to women. This local group, all college graduates, knew the power of education and community service. Nevada County AAUW was born.

These ladies worked to educate themselves and the community with programs about international relations, war work, legislation, and civic issues. Over the years, AAUW has played a critical part in the county's General Plan, Meals on Wheels, the Volunteer Bureau, and even our county waste program. In the '70s, Nevada County lacked a framework for recycling. AAUW sponsored a "town hall" on waste disposal, featuring high level officials and engineers to answer questions. The result: the Nevada County Waste Disposal and Recycling Programs.

In 1989, AAUW, in support of a woman's right-to-choose, partnered with the Business and Professional Women and the League of Women Voters to provide expanded reproductive choice. In 1992, that coalition resulted in the independent nonprofit, Nevada County Citizens for Choice, still active and still serving women (and men) today.

Above all, AAUW has helped young people. Early on, members tutored elementary students who were behind in reading and math. Led by Hazel Bramkamp, they worked to start tutoring programs at the Youth Authority Camp and at the county jail. AAUW members, led by Margaret Squaires, studied the need for a Literacy Center, donating funds to start the program and train tutors. The Literacy Center became a community-supported entity in 1987. The commitment to community continues as AAUW members discover ways to make a difference whether through free educational forums and monthly programs, such as CalMatters' "Navigating Today's Media Language", or projects, including making and filling holiday stockings for CASA or donating books for Bright Futures for Youth.

As the new century approached, AAUW's focus on educational opportunity for young women intensified. AAUW Nevada County Branch began providing scholarships in 1946 with one scholarship the first year; with more than 250 scholarships and grants awarded since then. This year, 2023, the Branch is giving \$47,000 to 17 recipients. Current award categories include annual



Submitted photo | Tech Trekkers at camp. AAUW facilitates a Tech Trek camp for girls to show them the different opportunities in STEM.

and renewable scholarships for high school graduates attending college in the coming year; annual scholarships for Sierra College graduates who will attend a four-year college; and grants for women returning to college after a break in their education.

AAUW California recognized that girls who were interested in math and the sciences during elementary and middle school often lost that focus during high school. To help change that trend, AAUW created Tech Trek, a one-week residential Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) camp for girls entering eighth grade. Held on university campuses, Tech Trek offers a chance to explore myriad STEM fields, meet women in STEM careers, and imagine future possibilities as



Submitted photo | Local scholarship recipients showing their AAUWT-Shirts.

continued to page 12

“If you get involved with AAUW, stay involved. It will be a life-changing experience.”

—Ava Johnson, Former Trekker and 2023 Local Scholarship recipient

college students and in STEM careers. The Nevada County Branch has been sending local girls to Tech Trek since it began in 1998; nearly 150 girls as of 2023. Many have gone on to careers in engineering, technology, medicine, research, and other STEM fields. Chelsea Sharon, who was the first Nevada County “Trekker”, went on to study astrophysics and is an assistant professor at the Yale-National University of Singapore.

From its 20 original members, AAUW Nevada County has grown to more than 125 members. As Ava Johnson, former Trekker and 2023 Local Scholarship recipient, notes, “If you get involved with AAUW, stay involved. It will be a life-changing experience.”



Submitted photo | Diane and Robin donating books to BFFY.



Retired attorney **Susan Wallace** founded **Scooter's Pals** to rescue dogs from high-kill shelters. Now we also help Nevada County dog or cat owners to rehome their pets if they are unable to give them proper care.

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“Treating You Like Family”

Nevada County is home to a top-rated outpatient surgical facility, where the area’s best doctors and a highly trained staff utilize the latest equipment for a vast range of medical procedures. Did you know the **Grass Valley Surgery Center (GVSC)** is also led by a team of incredible women?

It starts with facility Administrator **Wendy Browning, RN**, who manages all the day-to-day aspects of keeping a quality surgery center running. Director **Mary Whitmore** oversees revenue cycle management for the surgery center’s corporate network of surgery centers. Business Office Manager **Amanda Jensen** and Materials Manager **Chrissy Pusateri** round out the team that handles business operations, financial, material acquisitions and coordinate with local medical providers who operate at GVSC.

This female leadership extends into the operating rooms, where the anesthesia department is led by two dedicated Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA). **Rebecca Seijas-Ball, CRNA** and **Amanda Badgett, CRNA** bring master’s degrees in anesthesia and well over a decade of experience providing safe, competent and comfortable anesthesia care to patients ranging from infancy to older adults.

What’s more, two of the aforementioned women – Rebecca Seijas-Ball and Wendy Browning – help lead the center’s Medical Executive Committee, which creates policies with attending surgeons to continue the Grass Valley Surgery Center’s mission of providing the best quality care close to home and treating you like family.

Mimi Simmons

PROFILE



The minute you meet Mimi, you feel her passion for real estate and her community. A 5th generation Native of Nevada County, Mimi has been in real estate 39 years and loves every moment of it! 1992 Mimi co-founded Cornerstone Realty Group. Starting with 6 agents and built the company to 4 offices and 65 agents before selling the Company in 2006. During this time, Mimi served two years as President of Nevada City Chamber of Commerce and on the Board for 18 years. She is also

former President of Big Brothers Big Sisters, Nevada County Board of Realtors and has received numerous awards for her community service and involvement. Mimi is also involved with Nevada City 49er Rotary Breakfast Club and Board Member of Bright Futures. Every Escrow that Mimi closes benefits these non-profit organizations. She created Team Simmons with Holli Navo and Tammy Andreozzi, who have been with her over 22 years. They all welcomed Kaetlyn Lientz to the team in 2022. Team Simmons has been the top producing team in Nevada County for over 13 years and is currently 6th in the Nation and 15th in the World with Century 21 Global. Mimi is an avid water and snow skier, and married to her only love, Phil Rubble for 25 years. They love to travel and been to 38 countries in total with more to come!

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BRIGHT FUTURES FOR YOUTH AND THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Building a stronger foundation and expanding opportunities for girls and young women in Nevada County

A city councilmember along the central coast of Oregon, a county correctional officer, a registered nurse, and a small-business owner in downtown Grass Valley—these young women reached their accomplishments through commitment, focus, and hard work.

They also attribute some of their success to The Friendship Club, an after-school program of Bright Futures for Youth that helps girls become young women.

The program allows girls to connect with and develop friendships with peers, learn new skills and get the help they need, from ensuring access to health care to healthy meals. Hundreds of girls have participated in—and many have graduated from—the free program.

The Friendship Club is about education, empowerment, and embracing endless possibilities such as completing high school, earning a college degree, or becoming an entrepreneur.

Every year, hundreds of young people benefit from Bright Futures for Youth and its three core programs: The Friendship Club, NEO Youth Center, and SAFE, a program for youth experiencing homelessness in Nevada County.

“What began as a small program to help girls stay in school has seen the community come together to ensure our youth reach their potential to lead healthy, fulfilling and purposeful lives,” Friendship Club cofounder Mary Collier said of Bright Futures for Youth.

It’s a big challenge.

Many young people, especially girls and young women, are dealing with anxiety, depression, loneliness, and much uncertainty. And cyberbullying has become a serious issue with smartphones and social media.

“The stories and challenges are just so overwhelming,”



Submitted photo | Hundreds of children and young adults are helped by Bright Futures for Youth, including many who attend summer camps where they develop new skills and make new friendships.

said Jennifer Litton Singer, Executive Director of Bright Futures for Youth.

But Bright Futures for Youth’s Board of Directors, 31-member staff, and dozens of volunteers are committed to making sure the next generation is the best generation.

“I continue to be inspired by our professional teams and volunteers,” said Singer, who cofounded The Friendship Club with Collier. “They work tirelessly to ensure youth have access to a positive environment, relationships, and experiences. We know that this helps youth build resiliency and thrive.”

For example, Bright Futures for Youth announced a \$500,000 capital campaign to establish the new NEO Youth Center, the first of its kind in Nevada County. The 3,700-square-foot youth center on Litton Hill includes a café, a game area, a music room, small stage, and a patio.

The NEO Youth Center, which opened in late October, helps young people get together, make new friends, and share experiences.

The Youth Center is a “space for them. . .where they aren’t afraid to let loose and have fun,” said NEO Program Director Halli Ellis-Edwards, who cofounded NEO with Lynn Skrukud in 2008. “They can try new things, make mistakes, learn, grow, and thrive.”

A commitment that started with four women at two organizations—that merged to become Bright Futures for Youth in 2020.

“We want youth to feel accepted and loved for who they are, wherever they are, so they can have a positive self-image and treat themselves and others with kindness and respect,” said Dena Valin Malakian, Associated Director of Bright Futures for Youth.

“[The Youth Center is a] space for them. . .where they aren’t afraid to let loose and have fun.”

—Halli Ellis-Edwards,
NEO Program Director

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Pawnie's Home Care

PROFILE



Pawnie's Home Care is proud to be a Women Owned Company! When Founders Kristen and Melissa met, they instantly bonded over their common profession of in-home caregiving. They had each started their journey years ago working in local skilled nursing facilities. This led them to their shared

passion and realization of the need to make it possible for everyone to have the opportunity to remain independent and safe in their own homes as they age. Kristen, having started her own in-home care company in 2006, joined forces with Melissa to use their combined 35 years of experience to build the company known today as Pawnie's Home Care.

They chose the name Pawnie's to pay homage to one of the original, dearly loved clients, Edna.

Pawnie's management team is a group of 5 women that have worked as caregivers with Kristen and Melissa over the last 10 years. They felt that the experience of truly knowing what a caregiver goes through day in and day out and also having the ability to keep caregiving at the heart of it all, were the most important attributes of the team they chose. Serving Nevada and Placer counties with about 70 caregivers locally, they strive to provide a team behind every caregiver providing independence and the utmost quality of life to our senior community in their own homes.

Melissa and Kristen share a deep passion for giving back and they are excited to continue to build a company that is a strong contributor to the community they serve!

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