



# SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor Scott Walker Announces 2016 Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business**

**Madison** – Today, Governor Scott Walker, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, and the Wisconsin Women’s Council announced the recipients of the 2016 Governor’s Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business, recognizing women pioneers in the business community. Award recipients will be honored in a ceremony at the State Capitol later this spring.

“Here in Wisconsin, we have many woman-owned businesses leading the way for others like them,” Governor Walker said. “It’s great to acknowledge these business owners for their hard work and commitment to excellence. We hope they will continue their businesses legacy and be role models to other women who are considering opening a business and creating jobs in Wisconsin.”

This years’ 14 Trailblazer award recipients represent eight counties and a wide range of industries including non-traditional industries for women. These businesses have sustained families and anchored communities. Our 2016 Trailblazers bring leadership and lasting economic benefits to communities across our state, providing jobs and promoting innovation.

“A new study released just this week from American Express OPEN confirmed what I see all the time traveling Wisconsin: women-led businesses are an integral part of our growing economy,” said Lieutenant Governor Rebecca Kleefisch. “As we keep moving the state forward with jobs and opportunities, women like these award winners are leading their companies and bringing jobs and investments to their communities. ”

Trailblazer Awards are given to businesses statewide to recognize the legacy of women's business ownership in Wisconsin. Categories including family-owned businesses that are currently majority woman-owned and have been in operation for three generations or more, and businesses with sole or majority ownership by a woman, or series of women, for 25 years or more.

To-date, 71 Wisconsin women-owned businesses, across 24 Wisconsin counties, have been recognized with Governor's Trailblazer Awards.

"The value of these winners is not just in the past accomplishments we celebrate today – it is also in the women their trailblazing example will inform and inspire in the future to follow their own entrepreneurial passions and dreams," said Mary Jo Baas, Chair, Wisconsin Women's Council.

Woman-owned businesses were nominated for Trailblazer Awards through an open nomination process, receiving nominations from business and professional associations, elected officials, friends, colleagues and employees. The Awards are sponsored by the Offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Wisconsin Women's Council, BMO Harris Bank, The WIDGET Source, WMC, Wisconsin Women's Business Certification Program, and WWBIC. For more information, visit the Women's Council web site at [www.womenscouncil.wi.gov/trailblazer](http://www.womenscouncil.wi.gov/trailblazer).

### **Recipients of the 2016 Trailblazer Awards (by county):**

#### **Dane County**

*Pioneer Award* – The Creative Company, Inc., Laura Gallagher, President & CEO – Madison

*Torchbearer Award* – Lichtfeld Plumbing, Inc., Melanie Lichtfeld – Madison

*Pioneer Award* – Nan M. Zimdars, Inc., Nan Zimdars – Madison

*Pioneer Award* – Silver Leaf Interiors, Inc., Laura Groenier, President – Madison

#### **Fond du Lac County**

*Torchbearer Award* – Schlaefer Optometrists, Ann Schlaefer, Optometrist – Campbellsport

#### **Kenosha County**

*Pioneer Award* – Target Corporation, Carol Oxley, President – Pleasant Prairie

#### **Milwaukee County**

*Special Recognition* – Armstrong General Contracting, LLC, Lorian Armstrong, President – Milwaukee

*Special Recognition* – belabela, Bela Roongta – Milwaukee

*Torchbearer Award* – Coakley Brothers Company, Peggy Coakley, President & CEO – Milwaukee

*Pioneer Award* – Wauwatosa Day Care & Learning Centers, Inc., Rosemary Krause & Janey Brandt – Wauwatosa

**Sauk County**

*Torchbearer Award* – Meyer Insurance Agency, Inc., Lise Meyer Kobussen, President – Sauk City

**Sawyer County**

*Torchbearer Award* – Treeland Resorts, Cheryl Treland – Hayward

**Waukesha County**

*Special Recognition* – Milton Law Offices, Latrice Milton – Brookfield

**Wood County**

*Torchbearer Award* – Glacial Lake Cranberries, Inc., Mary Brazeau Brown, President – Wisconsin Rapids

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