



*The 2021  
Women  
in Leadership  
&  
Management  
Awards  
Luncheon*



**YOUR CHAMBER**  
North Clackamas

# Women in Leadership & Management (WILMA) Program

In 2016, under the Chairmanship of Mark Meek, the Board created a set of strategic goals designed to lead the Chamber through the year 2020. One of those goals was to advocate for education, training, and workforce development in the Clackamas region.

During a long drive home from a statewide chamber event, the upcoming Board Chair, Fred Charlton, and Vice Chair, Shelly Parini, had an in-depth conversation about addressing the critical shortfalls in leadership and management development in Clackamas, especially as it relates to investing in women.

With the encouragement and support of Chamber CEO Laura Edmonds, Laura and Shelly Parini pitched the idea of creating the Women in Leadership and Management Academy to the Chamber's Board of Directors who enthusiastically responded in agreement. Part of what made the pitch so perfect was Clackamas Community College, who for over a decade has provided hundreds of employees the opportunity to improve their management and interpersonal skills through a credentialed Leadership Academy offered by the Connections for Business and Industry.

The College took the Chamber's vision and created a customized professional development experience for future WILMA participants. To complement the learning experience, the Chamber also facilitates afternoon mentoring sessions with a myriad of diverse Clackamas County leaders who discuss issues ranging from intergenerational differences in the workplace; cultivating work life balance; to the power of mentoring.

It was important to the Chamber Board, however, that we not only invest in educating and mentoring our emerging Clackamas County leaders, but we celebrate those who go on to make significant contributions to their own organizations and communities. And that is how the Women and Leadership and Management Awards Luncheon came to be.



Pictured left to right: Clackamas Fire Chief Fred Charlton, 2018 Lifetime Achievement Awardee; Alice Norris, Shelly Parini and Laura Edmonds; N Clackamas Chamber CEO



## **Lifetime Achievement**

### **Shelly Parini, Runge, Clackamas Water Environment Services**

A native of Idaho, Shelly moved to Oregon after graduating from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Theater and Communications. A lifelong learner, she returned to school in her early-forties where she completed a Masters of Arts in Organizational Communications from Marylhurst University.

Shelly has spent the past twenty years serving her Oregon community in a variety of high profile roles. Before joining Clackamas Water Environment Services where she leads their External Affairs efforts she served: as Clackamas County's Economic Development Manager; spent a decade advancing Clackamas Community College as the Vice President of Community and Government Relations; and then transitioned into offering public affairs consulting services under the brand, "Parini Connects."

A passionate community builder, her career strengths include strategic communications, designing results-driven community engagement initiatives and raising support for critical public infrastructure projects. Her inclusive style provides a practical way to facilitate community-centered conversations that build trust and illuminate the roles that dialogue, social-networks, and leadership play, in creating and navigating sustainable change.

Shelly also understands that building healthy communities takes collaboration. She walks the talk by volunteering on Board's like the Oregon City Business Alliance and Water Reuse Pacific Northwest Section.

Shelly's mantra is "As leaders, we have to be willing to lift the heaviest loads, at the longest times, with the least light." To light the path for the next generation of leaders she co-founded and Chair's the North Clackamas Chamber's Women in Leadership and Management Academy Program. It's her hope these future leaders will continue to pass the torch on to others.

Shelly lives in Happy Valley where she and her husband raised two children. When she's not at work, she enjoys spending time with their grand-likes, hiking, gardening, and writing. Currently, she is co-authoring a children's book focused on the healing power of nature when dealing with grief. The book will be published in spring 2022.



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## **Manufacturing**

### **Kristine Gittins, Benchmade Knife Co., Inc.**

Kristine Gittins, a native of Idaho, grew up in Eugene, Oregon. She attended the University of Oregon where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting. She moved to Portland right out of college and became a CPA at Laventhol & Horwath, focusing on middle market audits and advisory services.

She left public account to work for a client, Pierce Pacific Mfg, as their Controller. Pierce Pacific was, and continues to be, a family-owned manufacturer of specialized forestry equipment. In the ensuing years, the owner of Pierce Pacific expanded from manufacturing into distribution by starting Triad Machinery in 1992. Kristine joined the Triad team at that time and progressed from Controller to VP of Finance to VP of Operations, and ultimately became President in 2002. In 2010, Kristine went back into her finance roots, becoming Director of Finance at the highly respected and family owned Sokol Blosser Winery where she was pivotal in the planning and launching of their world class tasting room.

Kristine transitioned to Benchmade Knife Co. in 2012 as VP of Finance. Well versed in family-run businesses and specifically experienced in manufacturing, Kristine has supported the company's robust financial growth with strong financial acumen and leadership. In 2020 she was named Executive Vice President and partners with the President/CEO to execute the company vision and strategy.

Kristine brings her deep love of people to her financial roles. Her passion is growth and development. Her greatest professional happiness is seeing people grow in their roles and find happiness and joy in the work that they do, and seeing organizations thrive as a result.

Kristine lives with her husband (and yellow lab Cooper) in West Linn, Oregon, and has two adult children who live with their partners in Portland. She loves to read, hike, kayak and spend time with family and friends.



## **Large Corporation**

### **Jill McGinnis, Safeway/Albertsons**

Jill grew up in Randle, WA, and moved to Longview, WA, upon graduation. She began her grocery career a few short years later, in 1996.

She started at a Longview Safeway store while attending college. She worked in bookkeeping in numerous stores until 2001, when she moved into the Clackamas Division Office. She has worked at the Division Level for the last 20 years.

There, Jill spent over a year in the Training Department, 7 years in Loss Prevention overseeing bookkeeping for the division, and has been in Communications for the last six– since Safeway and Albertsons merged in 2015. She also helped the company in the Integration Department while the two brands were being merged.

As the Director of Communications, Jill oversees Internal Communication for 17,000 employees in Oregon and Southern WA, External Communication including all media relationships, The Albertsons Safeway Foundation, and Government Relations. Her passion lies in her work with the community. Jill enjoys meeting new community members, spending time with local non-profits, volunteering, and finding ways to say yes to community organizations in need – across the region. With stores in 141 locations, there is no shortage of opportunities to be meet new people and get involved in many local neighborhoods.

Jill has helped the company's foundation guide into uncharted waters during Covid, striving to become more hunger relief focused. She is responsible for all non-profit relationships and works with our community leaders to successfully plan and execute fundraising campaigns throughout each year. She also spearheads food drives to provide critical donations to food banks in need.

In 2021, Jill received industry recognition as a Top Woman in Grocer, awarded annually by Progressive Grocer magazine.

Jill is the proud mom of a 14-year-old boy, Carson, and an 11-year-old girl, Saren. She spends her spare time attending their soccer games.



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## **Small Business**

### **Susie Sisk, Cup of Tea**

Growing up there were two things I wanted to be more than anything else, a Child Therapist and a Mother. I spent my twenties and early thirties working in the social services advocating for the youth in our community before giving birth to twin boys. For the next 15 years, I completely focused on my family with the goal of one day going back to the social services. When the time came for me to give some of my focus to a job, I took a part time job at a tea shop in the mall. I know, a job at a tea shop isn't the social services. It was a rather spontaneous pivot. I really hadn't given it much thought, I just happened to be buying tea, which I did on a weekly basis, when I found myself blurting out, "Are you hiring?" I justified this decision as a way to transition my family to not having me around 24/7 without jumping through the hoops of getting my licence again and the emotional commitment of a case-load. However, this job ended up being short lived because the owners of the teashop decided to close the doors. Each day I worked, I had to tell customers that the tea shop was closing and each day the feedback I received was mournful. The customers were truly distressed about not having a tea shop in their community. This need gave birth to the idea of opening my own tea shop.

The true creation of this tea shop was inspired by the research I had been reading at that time about the growing epidemic of loneliness. What if I created a space that is all about community, a place where you would feel comfortable to hang out, a place where you would feel like you belong? These "what ifs" created a vision in my head of a 25 foot bar that would run down the center of the store with bar stools to encourage people to hang out with me. You know the feeling, think back to the T.V. show Cheers, where the theme was "where everyone knows your name", but this tavern would be a sober tavern. The concept of a sober tavern, spun me around to look at the community and ask, where do people go at night to hang out that isn't a bar? Where do our youth go at night to hang out? This set the stage for Cup of Tea to have late night hours on Friday and Saturday. (a goal that has been slowed by Covid, but it is still a goal)....Once I started looking at all the concepts involved in creating a community space, I added a piano for music night and recitals, games and of course free wifi.

Another way I have tried to create community is by giving a voice to community resources. I did this by creating a Tea of the Month program where I donate a portion of the sales of one tea to a non-profit. I have sponsored a variety of different programs like Adult and Teen Challenge drug treatment program to Autism Awareness.

The icing on the cake has been the amazing opportunity to have Clackamas Coalition for Suicide Prevention come in to train the staff on suicide prevention. This is an amazing program and well worth your time to take the training.

The last thing I want to say about Cup of Tea is that I believe in supporting other small businesses and vendors. I also have a great collection of products that give back to the world. I am grateful for a spontaneous moment that created a place that allows me to support the community.



## **Public Service**

### **Lynne Chicoine, PE, BCEE, Clackamas Water Environment Services**

After 35 years in consulting, Lynne joined Clackamas Water Environment Services (WES) in 2015 where she leads their Capital Program. Lynne and her team oversee the planning, design and construction of the wastewater infrastructure in Clackamas County. She also supervises the Asset Management team for WES, a group responsible for inventorying and tracking WES infrastructure. That infrastructure includes 360 miles of sewers, 23 pump stations and five water resource recovery facilities (treatment plants) and serves approximately 190,000 people.

Lynne was born and raised in central Illinois. She holds a BS and MS in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. After graduation, Lynne worked for a decade in Chicago before moving to Oregon to spend more time outdoors with her three children. Lynne has been a ratepayer in West Linn since 1990.

During her six years at WES, Lynne built an engineering team which completed two major treatment projects totaling over \$50M in construction value and developed a 10-year, \$250M capital program to implement construction of wastewater infrastructure required to provide reliability and accommodate growth in Clackamas County. Lynne is currently assisting the county with creating and implementing a program to increase opportunity for women and minorities in the construction trades. In 2018, Lynne initiated a cooperative program between WES and a local high school to introduce students to wastewater engineering and construction.

When not at work, Lynne is a master gardener. In addition to creating and caring for her own gardens, she raises vegetables for a local food pantry. She enjoys road bicycling, hiking, and cross-country skiing, weather permitting, and reading, needlework and baking when it doesn't. Lynne is an avid rower and most early summer mornings, you'll find her on the Willamette River.



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## **Large Non-Profit**

### **Loraine Collacchi, Willamette View, Inc.**

Loraine is originally from England. As a child she moved to Canada and later found her way to Oregon as a teen. She developed her love of philanthropy at a young age. Her dad would always say "the most valuable thing you can give someone is your time".

Her early career was at Charles Schwab where she worked her way up to Vice President and Branch Manager of the Beaverton office. Loraine retired from Charles Schwab after the birth of her second daughter, Lynsey.

Loraine joined Willamette View in 2011 where she began working in Assisted Living, then Human Resources, and in 2014, stepped into her dream job in the newly created *Blue Heron Foundation At Willamette View*. BHF's tagline "building community together" is reflected in the many programs and activities for the residents that it supports.

Loraine lives the mission of Willamette View, which is "to inspire the art of living well". One of her favorite roles as Philanthropy Director is awarding scholarships. She is an advocate for staff education and career advancement. In the past two years BHF has awarded six scholarships from the three funds she administers.

As staff lead during the BHF's Capital Campaign for the re-development of the Willamette View Auditorium and Dining Services Loraine's efforts steered the campaign to exceeding its goal. Current BHF initiatives are focused on an "Honoring the Aging Mind" campaign to support dementia services. So far, BHF has raised nearly \$500K to launch an adult day respite program and initiate a campus-wide memory care education series for residents as well as staff.

Loraine completed a certificate for Nonprofit Fundraising through PSU and Willamette Valley Development Officers along with graduating from a Plain English Planned Giving program. She is active in peer group networks and a wide range of community service; including high school and college dance teams, youth groups, the Start Right Program through Clackamas County, and Backpack Buddies through the North Clackamas School District. She is visible at Chamber, Clackamas Emergency Services, Rotary, Clackamas Service Center, Oregon Impact, and the North Clackamas Education Foundation events.

Loraine's biggest love is spending time with her daughters, Sophia, a junior at University of Oregon, and Lynsey, a junior at PSU. Loraine tragically, lost her oldest daughter, Brenna and strives to create a lasting legacy for her. She continues to grow as a person and focusing on how she can impact other lives in a positive manner, regularly reaching out to other families in her community who have suffered the same loss, offering support.

Loraine is a great compliment to the leadership team of Willamette View, directing a successful course of cultivating a culture of philanthropy.



## **Small Non-Profit**

### **Melissa Erlbaum, Clackamas Women's Services**

Melissa Erlbaum has served as the Executive Director at Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) since 2007. With a mission to break the isolation of domestic and sexual violence, CWS offers culturally responsive emergency, transitional, and long-term supports and services for survivors and their families. Under Melissa's leadership, CWS has grown from a staff of 17 and a budget of under \$500,000 to an agency with over 50 employees and an annual budget of over \$8 million dollars. She was a driving force in establishing *A Safe Place Family Justice Center*, where nonprofit and public agencies collaborate to provide comprehensive trauma-informed support and services for those experiencing domestic and sexual violence, stalking, trafficking or elder abuse.



Melissa has championed several innovative approaches that are breaking the isolation of domestic and sexual violence. She implemented the first comprehensive housing program for survivors in Clackamas County by developing the Beyond Shelter Initiative. She also supported the development of the Village Model, CWS' ground-breaking emergency shelter program, which is based on best practices that encourage the creation of a community where survivors can reconnect with their strengths and receive the support.

A number of other pioneering programs have been added during Melissa's time with CWS. This includes the creation of a Legal Empowerment Accelerator Program to increase access to affordable civil legal services, while also building a community of legal practitioners skilled in supporting survivors. Melissa is a staunch advocate for youth violence prevention programming and CWS plays a key role in providing over 20 schools with abuse prevention programs for K-12 students. Melissa also led the establishment of Camp HOPE Oregon, the first evidence-based camping and mentoring program for children exposed to domestic and sexual violence in the state.

Melissa has worked in the field of public safety and victim and homeless services for over 25 years. She is a highly regarded collaborator who is called upon regularly to help incubate and advance community-wide initiatives that focus on the safety and well-being. Melissa is an alumnus of Emerge Oregon and works to diversify and expand women's participation in civic engagement and leadership. Melissa has also provided consultation on implementing integrated multi-disciplinary service models and developing coalitions to reform public safety policy.

## **2022 Women in Leadership and Management Academy**

The Women in Leadership and Management Academy provides staff, managers and emerging leaders with the opportunity to learn and practice interpersonal skills they will use every day. It combines classroom training, skills practice at work and the advice of professional mentor speakers.

WILMA Academy, as we fondly refer to it; is an accredited program and put on by our partners at Clackamas Community College.

### **2022 Schedule:**

January: Communicating for Leadership Success

February: Leadership Skills

March: Effective Conflict Management

April: Coaching & Performance Management

May: Creating Shared Goals

June: Delegation & Development

Plus - afternoon breakout sessions with Regional and Statewide business leaders.

Participants who successfully complete this training will be eligible for 2.7 Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

6 sessions over 6 months - one day per month.

Call the Chamber for more information (503) 654-7777

# Thank You Women in Leadership and Management Award Sponsors



## OREGON TOOL



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