



PURSE POWER

We have it.
Let's use it.

pursepower.com

TAKE
THE
NEXT STEP



Purse Power
Publication No.1



PURSE POWER®

We have it. Let's use it.™

Published by Purse Power, LLC

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ISBN 978-0-9987301-0-3

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Please Note:

Readers will notice that some of our authors state different dollar amounts of American women's buying power and percentages of influence over purchases. As Catalyst* points out in a recent report, the numbers are calculated from reliable sources. Estimates range from \$7 to \$11 trillion in buying power and 70 to 87 percent in influence over purchases.

* Founded in 1962, Catalyst is dedicated to accelerating the progress for women through workplace inclusion.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Dorothy Ellen Kreinbihl Babcock, one of the extraordinary women and survivors on whose shoulders we all stand.

Donna Babcock Miller

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There have been many wonderful people involved in Purse Power from the beginning. It is truly humbling. I would specifically like to thank my sisters, Dr. Karen Nern and Dr. Phyllis Pennington, my husband Kurt and our children Sean, Anastasiya and Seth for encouraging me to “go for it,” my mentor, Martha Burger, for her wise counsel, my colleague Nancy Solomon for her partnership and extraordinary work on Purse Power’s behalf, and Jan Peery for her inspiring work empowering survivors of domestic violence.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Aldonna Ambler and Fred Green for their wise counsel, Susan Bickert for providing a corporate perspective at the beginning of the process, Elisa Camahort Page for sharing her knowledge about engaging others, Susan Chaires for trademarking the logo in record time, Catherine Corley from Catalyst for her support of Purse Power, Jacque Fiegel for being a senior female executive role model, Dr. Marsha Firestone for the amazing contributions she has made to female entrepreneurs around the globe, Malli Gero for all she has done to improve the participation of women on corporate boards, Jennifer Grigsby and Holly Page for their support and encouragement, Asemio for getting us started and developing the Purse Power website, Linda Haneborg for her insights, Lou Kerr for her extraordinary vision and efforts on behalf of women, MaryAnn Lucero and Gayle Marquez for their work on this collection of stories, Don Eastburn for his photography, Jenny Love Meyer for her support of women, Dr. Terry Neese for working for the economic empowerment of women worldwide, Sarah Sears for designing the original logo, May Snowden for her guidance as one of the top diversity and inclusion gurus in the country, and Jean Kelley for her brilliance, authenticity and mentorship. I would also like to thank our team of young moms—Brianna Cassell, Michelle Falco and Kelly McConnell—who helped us understand the needs of their generation and Kathy Shelton, my assistant, for her outstanding administrative and moral support.

Donna Miller

Edmond, Oklahoma

March 2017

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PURSE POWER

We have it.

Women in America control trillions of dollars in buying power and influence 85% of consumer purchases. Women own millions of companies in America and buy goods and services that include everything from heavy equipment and office supplies to training programs and software security.

Let's use it.

Let's use our collective purchasing power to buy products and services from companies that increase opportunities for women and girls.

What next steps are **you** going to take **today**?

Check all that apply and then **go do it**.

- Make sure you're signed up at www.pursepower.com. We'll send you updates, money-saving offers, event information, success stories and more. And we promise that we will NOT bombard you.
- Whenever you or your company need a product or service, check the list of woman-friendly companies at www.pursepower.com first to see if any of them have what you need.
- If you own, work for or know about a woman-owned or woman-friendly company, please let Purse Power know at inbox@pursepower.com.
- Help spread the word. Tell your family, friends, colleagues and social media network about Purse Power. Encourage them to sign up at www.pursepower.com.
- Send us your ideas for improving Purse Power.

Let's make history.
Or better yet, let's create the future.



The idea for Purse Power started a few years ago. As a seasoned corporate executive, happily married wife and busy mother of triplets (two boys and a girl), I became increasingly frustrated with the lack of women leaders in the top ranks of corporate America. Although we have had diversity initiatives for 40 years, progress has been untenably slow.

I felt compelled to do something about it because I want all three of my children to have equal access to the American dream.

I use a concept called Appreciative Inquiry in my executive coaching practice. It asks you to focus on what you want and on what works rather than focusing on problems and what is getting in your way. One day, I decided to apply this concept to increasing the number of women in senior executive positions.

When I started to think about what would work, I concluded that money talks and it does so in a clear, unmistakable and indisputable voice.

Corporate America cares about one thing—revenue. Women have extraordinary purchasing power. We control the purse strings in the United States. I reasoned that if we would act collectively and buy products and services from companies that support women and girls, glass ceilings would shatter and lives would be changed. We could create a more equitable future. Faster.

In addition to the under representation of women in senior executive positions, it is outrageous to me that one out of four women is a survivor of domestic violence or rape—or both. This statistic has remained the same since the 1970s.

Applying Appreciative Inquiry to domestic violence and sexual assault, it became obvious to me that we needed a funding stream to identify, publicize and implement initiatives that effectively reduce violence against women. Let's focus on, and widely share, what works.

Combining those ideas created Purse Power.

On the following pages, many people share their insights about Purse Power and what we need to do to create a more inclusive, supportive and safer world for women and girls.

The time for asking for a seat at the table is over. We don't have to ask for permission any more. We already have the power we need. All we have to do now is use it.

About Donna Miller

Donna Miller is the founder of [Purse Power](#) and the president of the Executive Resource Center. ERC specializes in executive coaching, leadership development, strategic planning, change management,

team building, organizational development and talent management consulting. For more information, visit www.executiveresource.com. Donna is also the Oklahoma chapter chair of the Women Presidents' Organization. www.womenpresidentsorg.com



During my 30-year career in the energy industry, I did my best to hire, mentor and promote capable women. I did it partly because it seemed like the right thing to do. But I mostly did it because I saw firsthand that my teams performed better when a significant number of team members were women. It seemed simple and obvious to me that a diversity of perspectives and thought leads to higher performance and better outcomes.

But what seemed simple and obvious to me was hardly noticed by many of my male colleagues. Our company had some female managers in accounting and HR and women in administrative “back office” positions. But there were very few women in the rest of the company.

Over time, I’m happy to report, opportunities for women got better.

But many issues remain unresolved in the energy industry and in our country. Gender pay inequality is rampant and is even a topic by winners at award ceremonies. But there are other subtle

issues that happen all the time and disadvantage women—all male golf games where lots of business gets conducted and hiring decisions that assume that women with young children would not be able to—or want to—commit the time and effort that would come with a promotion.

I was fortunate. My male bosses appreciated my abilities, looked beyond any gender bias they may have had and promoted me right along with my male colleagues. I made it to the most senior rank of my company.

I’m retired from the energy industry now. As I look back on my career, I know that, although I did my best to sponsor and promote competent women in the workplace, it was always one at a time. As a result, the number of women I assisted was pretty small.

I want to make more of a difference. That’s where Purse Power comes in.

Purse Power’s founder, Donna Miller, knows from her professional experience that a company’s culture drives its commitment to gender diversity. And it must come from the top. That means there must be gender diversity at the top. However, the majority of boards of directors of public companies are all male.

But Donna also knows that 70 to 80 percent of purchasing decisions in the United States are made or deeply influenced by women.

Purse Power puts these two facts together.

Purse Power urges women to reward companies that treat women well—companies that put women on their boards, companies that believe in equal pay for equal work and companies that develop and support female leaders.

The reward comes in the form of increased business, which is what companies desire most. Purse Power encourages women to use our tremendous purchasing power to buy products and services from companies that have women at the top who are driving the culture throughout the organization.

Purse Power is helping women understand that we already have trillions of dollars of buying power and getting information into our hands so we can make informed decisions about which companies to support through our purchases.

I'm proud to be a member of the Purse Power team. I stand ready to help Purse Power in any way I can and I invite other women to join me.

About Martha Burger

Martha Burger retired as a C-suite executive with extensive finance, human resources, accounting and administration experience in diverse companies within the energy sector. She travels.



I've been practicing Purse Power's concept of mindful spending since I became a vegetarian in 1989. That's when I first consciously decided to spend my money to match my values. When I shifted to a vegan diet ten years ago, I completely overhauled my buying. It goes beyond buying plant-based food or cruelty-free cosmetics or not wearing leather.

How I spend my money is my economic vote every day. And it's part of how I live my values.

A dozen years ago I also found a way to more fully live my values in my professional life. I had been working in male-dominated industries, mostly technology. There was a lot of chest thumping. It wasn't collaborative. I wanted to succeed so I adapted, but I didn't really like it. Eventually I became disenchanted enough to walk away. My friends thought I was crazy to leave a good paying job when it was the nadir of the dot-com bust and jobs were not easy to find.

Soon after, in 2005, Lisa Stone, Jory Des Jardins and I co-founded BlogHer Inc. to shine a spotlight on and create opportunities for women who blog. At the time, social media was still a nascent "industry," and we didn't want to see it become an old boys' network like traditional media. As it turns out, women are the biggest users of most of the huge social media platforms. So we wanted to activate to make sure women got the opportunities they deserved.

BlogHer was a mission-based company that began as a grassroots effort, just like Purse Power. It was a movement that became a market. Companies advertise with us, sponsor our annual BlogHer conference, and hire influencers to create content for them because they want to reach the millions of audience members who follow them. In fact, working with and through bloggers has become part of most smart companies' marketing plans.

Women bloggers, then and now, are interested in economic empowerment. Blogging gives many women a way to contribute to or enhance their household income. Some support themselves, some can stop choosing between medicine and food, some can send their kids to college without incurring tons of debt.

Over ten years Lisa, Jory and I, along with our team of amazing colleagues, built a nationally recognized brand, attracting 100 million users across the web. We raised four rounds of venture capital and achieved a successful exit, selling our company to SheKnows Media in 2014.

I continued to work at SheKnows Media, most recently as chief community officer, until I shifted again. Now I consult with SheKnows Media part-time as the program chair of the annual BlogHer conference.

With this shift I'm starting a new adventure. I'm working on several book and coaching projects. What they all have in common is that I insist on working with people and on projects that stir my passion

and help me live my values. I'm never going to adjust my values to fit in ever again.

None of this could have happened if I hadn't made intentional decisions about who I wanted to be in the world and how I wanted to be treated by the world.

It also could not have happened without generous mentors, both women and men. Keep your eye out for them, including the men in tech who love to share their knowledge and get satisfaction from helping other people understand their fascinating work.

Here's my advice to Purse Power as one woman entrepreneur to another:

- Don't just decide what you want to do, decide what you don't want to do. Learn what to say no to.
- Stay authentic and transparent. But remember, authenticity means that everything you say should be true, but you don't have to share everything that's true.
- Establish a strong social media presence.
- Trust your gut and when you've built your tribe, trust one another.
- Help other people and celebrate their successes.
- Celebrate your own successes, no matter how small.
- And mostly, continue to live your values. In your life, in your work, and with your wallet.

About Elisa Camahort Page

Elisa Camahort Page co-founded BlogHer, a women's media network, in 2005 and served as its COO. Now as a consultant to SheKnows Media, the company that bought BlogHer in 2014, Elisa chairs the conference program for the annual BlogHer conference. She is a popular public speaker, a coach for entrepreneurs and is working on several book projects.

BRIANNA CASSEL

Anyone can be a victim



As a busy mom with four small children, three girls and a boy, I support Purse Power because it's a convenient way to do my part and also because it's personal.

My college roommate is beautiful. She's brilliant. She's funny. She's a doctor. She's a woman who had her skull cracked open by an abusive husband.

Domestic violence happens every day to women just like me. Women who go out for sushi and wine and go home to men who hurt them. Purse Power supports programs and shelters that help women like my roommate get safe.

About Brianna Cassel

Brianna Cassel is an Army wife, homeschooling mom and part-time teacher who's living her dream every day. She participated in a focus group that helped put Purse Power on the right path.



I'm at a rich and rewarding place in my life. I'm old enough not to care too much about what other people think about me. I'm able to help others. I have a fulfilling career, children and grandchildren. I'm happy and grateful.

It took me quite a while to get here. I didn't feel empowered or valuable until I was 50 years old. I finally feel comfortable in my own skin.

That's one of the many reasons I'm attracted to Purse Power. It encourages women to become aware of our personal worth, gives us a way to support our values and one another, and teaches us that we have more power as a group than we do individually.

I was born in a small Minnesota town 70 years ago. The career choices for girls were teacher, nurse or flight attendant. But our real goal was to get married.

I dropped out of college in my junior year and got married at 20. When John and I first got married, we lived in modest circumstances. Everything exploded with his fame.

Getting a divorce in 1982 was a turning point for me. I felt I had to establish my own identity, to define myself. I spent a lot of time meditating, thinking and reading.

As a result, at the age of 40, I decided to finish my bachelor's degree. Two mentors, a woman and a man, both Ph.Ds, helped me figure out the courses I needed to become credentialed. It wasn't easy. Designing your own course of study wasn't as common then as it is now. And I hadn't been in a classroom for years.

I went on to earn a master's degree—also through a self-designed course of study. Today, I'm a practicing psychotherapist specializing in individual, marriage and family counseling.

Here's some advice, woman to woman:

- Discover something you enjoy doing and go do it.
- There's nothing like earning your own money. And it doesn't matter how much it is.
- Own your own truth. Play the game when you need or want to, but know when it's nonsense.
- Set boundaries. Know that you can stay or you can go.
- Get in touch with your own value and values.
- Own your flaws and vulnerabilities.

- Support other women.
- Be philanthropic. You enrich your life when you help other people.
- Treat other women well. Care about what happens to them.
- Talk to other women.
- Be assertive.
- Be kinder to yourself.
- And consider buying goods and services from companies that take women seriously.

About Annie Denver

Annie Denver is proud to be a woman, a mother, a grandmother, a spiritual seeker and a psychotherapist.



Encouragement, love and support from my family began early and still remains my foundation for success. College also played a significant role in my development. Throughout college, I was given opportunities to take on and learn from leadership roles. My sorority sisters still provide a network of support, introduce new circles of influence and create connections. A referral from a college friend or sorority sister has as much value today as it did when we were students. Purse Power builds on that same model of women helping women.

A conversation I had with a vendor early in my career shows the progress I believe women have made in the workplace. We were introduced and, when he heard my title, he reacted with dismay and shock. He apologized by saying he “couldn’t ever see his daughter in my position.” I hope he would feel differently today—that he would encourage his daughter and tell her that she could achieve anything she desired.

I was both privileged and blessed to work with an outstanding leader who encouraged me and believed I could achieve things I doubted I could do and felt unprepared for. He provided support, latitude and direction while letting me grow and learn from my successes as well as from my mistakes. He was my greatest cheerleader and my best critic.

He truly believed that it was more important to find the right person for the job than worry about forced or managed diversity. He was passionate about putting together the right team with the right attitude, integrity, respect for each other and moral compass. And that led to natural diversity of leadership and collaboration.

Here are some tips I’ve developed along the way:

- Surround yourself with successful people, family, friends and/or business associates. Success is defined and achieved in many different ways. Make your definition of success work for you.
- Give yourself permission to be uncomfortable. You will be amazed at how comfortable you will become. Discomfort is your best learning opportunity for growth and development, personally and professionally. Challenge yourself. You will look back at many of these situations as times of major breakthroughs and milestones in your life.
- Believe you can do it and willingly accept and embrace challenges. Display confidence even when you don’t feel confident. You will be amazed at how much you will accomplish.
- Continually learn. It will keep you relevant, prepared and moving in the right direction.
- Support other women and help one another succeed. Celebrate successes together. This can be one of the most important things you do. Far too often in the past, women resented other women in positions of influence. Appreciate that our influence is enhanced by our diversity of thought and perspective.

Purse Power provides opportunities to support women in growth and development. Through the collaborative efforts of many, we have an easy way to identify those companies that support women. Women helping and supporting others is a powerful combination.

About Jacque Fiegel

Jacque Fiegel is an area chairman for Central Oklahoma at Prosperity Bank®. Operating under a community banking philosophy and seeking to develop broad customer relationships based on service and convenience, Prosperity offers a variety of traditional loan and deposit products to its customers, which consist primarily of consumers as well as small and mid-sized businesses. For information, please visit www.prosperitybankusa.com.

MARSHA FIRESTONE, Ph.D.

From backhoes to toothpaste



Purse Power recognizes that women are a large market with a great deal of influence when it comes to making purchasing decisions. Women are the primary decision makers when it comes to buying consumer goods and services—including healthcare, banking services, automobiles and travel.

We also have purchasing power as business owners. We buy everything from heavy machinery and enterprise software to pallets of bubble wrap and fire prevention sprinkler systems.

In 1977, women owned only 4 percent of companies in the United States. They were usually in one of three industries—fashion, beauty and fitness. Today, women own 35 percent of all businesses in all industries in the United States.

Women business owners often face special challenges. I founded the Women Presidents' Organization, WPO, in 1997. Our mission has always been to improve business conditions for women entrepreneurs and promote the acceptance and advancement of women entrepreneurs in all industries.

We currently have 2,000 members and 134 chapters on six continents. Chapters are usually composed of 20 entrepreneurs. They are CEOs, presidents and/or managing directors of privately held companies. To qualify for membership, service companies must have a minimum of \$1 million in annual revenue. Product companies must have at least \$2 million in annual revenue.

With the assistance of a trained facilitator, who is also a business owner, the chapter members discuss their business concerns in a non-competitive roundtable format. WPO provides a safe and confidential place for them to talk, work on their businesses, share their expertise and learn from one another.

WPO and Purse Power share common goals of mutual support, empowerment and inspiration. We are pleased to partner with Purse Power and look forward to our collaboration.

About Marsha Firestone

Marsha Firestone earned her Ph.D. in Communications from Columbia University. She published "The Busy Woman's Guide to Successful Self-Employment" and her research appears in business and educational journals. For more information, please visit www.womenpresidentsorg.com.



I founded 2020 Women on Boards with Stephanie Sonnabend in 2010. Stephanie was the president and CEO of an international hospitality company. She had worked hard to diversify her board. I was running the boutique marketing communications and public relations company I established in 1985, specializing in the business-to-business, non-profit and hospitality sectors.

One of my clients was a women's organization that tracked the boardroom diversity of the 100 largest companies in our state. That initiative led to the founding of a consortium of women's organizations around the country that tracked the boardroom diversity of the largest companies in their states. What we learned was that there was little, if any, progress being made on advancing women to the boardroom.

Stephanie and I had both been working to increase women's leadership roles in businesses for a long time. We especially wanted more women on corporate boards. We applied our

marketing expertise and, borrowing a page from the green movement, started a grassroots education and advocacy campaign to raise awareness about why boardroom diversity and the addition of women to boards is good for business.

2020 Women on Boards was born. Our goal was simple: to increase the number of women on the boards of Fortune 1000 companies to 20 percent by the year 2020.

We use social and traditional media to build our network of supporters. Our campaign is now recognized across the globe. We celebrate the companies that achieve or surpass our 20 percent goal and ask our supporters to contact companies with no women on their boards and ask them to do better. Like Purse Power, we provide a path for our supporters to become change agents.

We have been publishing our annual Gender Diversity Index of Fortune 1000 companies since 2011. We announce the findings annually and recognize the companies that have at least 20 percent women board members, our Winning "W" companies.

The campaign is working. When we began, only 14 percent of board seats in the Fortune 1000 were held by women. Today, six years later, the number has increased to 19.7 percent. We look forward to achieving the 2020 goal this year, ahead of schedule, but there is still plenty of work to do.

Purse Power is a valuable tool to educate women about their spending power. If we work together and use our economic power to buy products and services from companies that do well by women, we have the potential to change company practices.

We are delighted to be a strategic partner with Purse Power and are happy that they rely on the 2020 database to drive their mission. Together, we can make it happen.

About Malli Gero

Malli Gero is a co-founder and president of 2020 Women on Boards, which is dedicated to increasing the percentage of women who serve on the boards of directors of publicly held companies to at least 20 percent by 2020. For more information, please go to www.2020wob.com.



It is common knowledge that women lag in both C-suite roles and board positions across the Fortune 500. Not only are companies losing out on talent and innovation, they are also missing the huge revenue opportunities. Women are the \$7 trillion engine that drives the economy.

Purse Power encourages women to use their trillions of dollars in purchasing power to buy products and services from companies that are actively engaged in increasing opportunities for women and girls. Not merely companies who are talking about advancing women but companies that are actually doing it.

Consider this—according to SheEconomy.com, women account for 85 percent of all consumer purchases from groceries and home improvements to automobiles and healthcare. If women and like-minded men do business with companies that advance and support women and girls, I'm willing to bet that other companies will wake up. And the companies that are already improving their diversity will speed up their process.

To get started making mindful buying decisions, it is critical to start engaging men in this dialogue. Men still represent the majority of senior leadership in this country. My hope is companies would do this voluntarily given the overwhelming business case for women as purchasers and also the on-going war for talent.

My wake-up call came not from the identification of an untapped marketplace but from a very contentious lawsuit.

My epiphany

In 2000, I went from running a sales training program for The Coca-Cola Company to pioneering a diversity and inclusion education program as the company faced a \$200 million discrimination lawsuit. I had no idea how I—a straight white guy—got this assignment.

At the time, I did not know about white male privilege. But I learned. I had a “white male epiphany.” I learned that privilege is invisible to those that have it. When you have privilege, you don't count how many women and people of color are in the room. But the women and people of color are counting—and they have been their entire lives.

I did a deep dive into my company's candidate selection, training, performance management, succession planning, pay equity and diversity to understand the gaps. I advise my consulting clients to do the same thing and run the numbers for demographics, pay gaps and patterns everywhere in their organizations. The shortcomings and opportunities become clear—especially as they relate to advancing women and people of color.

The need for a fundamental change

A few companies approach advancing women as a business imperative with an integrated mindset and

a plan that's connected to all aspects of the business. But most organizations have a series of unrelated programs and processes—even though they know a diverse and inclusive workforce is crucial to encouraging different perspectives and ideas that drive innovation.

Advancing women in the workplace is a lot like diet and exercise—everybody knows it's the right thing to do but almost nobody does it. That needs to change.

Why men?

Let's be candid. Women have been talking about women's leadership and advancement for years and there has been some upward movement for women in the workforce, C-suite and boardrooms—but progress has been slow.

Significant change will only occur with cultural and systemic changes in the workplace. And for any major change to happen in the workplace we'll need the leadership and active involvement of men who make up 85 percent of senior managers and leaders.

“For some people, they're going to hear the message better from someone like them. If a man is talking about women's advancement, the men in the audience are less likely to think he's doing it because he has a personal agenda,” noted Cathy Gallagher-Louisy, director of knowledge services at the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion.

My passion

I'm dedicated to helping companies and individuals advance women and people of color in the workplace. I believe that at least 30 percent of men in the workplace want to help but don't know what to do. Especially fathers.

As fathers, our role includes advocating for our daughters at all stages of their lives. We raised strong daughters. Whether it was in sports, science, technology, social sciences or the arts, we supported our daughters. We made sure they went to great schools. But when they graduated and were only offered 79 percent of the salary for the same job our sons are offered, we did nothing.

To help other fathers take meaningful action, I created the Father of a Daughter Initiative. It's a simple opt-in program. Men commit to doing a minimum of one of 10 things (hopefully more) to advance women.

We have to stand up. It's part of our job as dads and as decent human beings. And I'm delighted that we can partner with Purse Power.

About Jeffery Halter

Jeffery Tobias Halter is a corporate gender strategist and expert on engaging men to advance women. He is the president of ywomen.biz, a strategic consulting company, a popular speaker at industry and corporate events, a thought-leader and two-time TEDx speaker. For more information about the Father of a Daughter Initiative, please visit www.ywomen.biz/father-of-daughter-initiative.



I'm a survivor of domestic violence. That's one of the reasons I support Purse Power. We have pledged to contribute 20 percent of our profits to shelters for battered women and their children and domestic violence prevention programs.

My emotionally damaged, alcoholic father had been a gunner at the invasion of Okinawa. He probably suffered from what we now call PTSD. I was the target of his rage—not my mother or my brother. I never knew if I was going to be kissed or kicked, beloved or beaten. He was alternately sweet and hateful to me.

Like many people who grow up in violent households, I was much less confident than I appeared and I had no sense of self-worth. I was an unlikely candidate for success in life, much less in business.

In the two years after I quit college, I had eight jobs and was fired from six. I lived in my car between jobs five and six. I made tomato soup from ketchup and water with saltines at a downtown diner. I didn't have a checking account until I was in my 20s.

But I was lucky and resilient and helped by many people, which is another reason I support Purse Power. We help other women succeed and improve opportunities for women and girls.

I'm a successful business owner because other people took an interest in me and helped me.

My first mentor was a woman who owned an employment agency. She was divorced and was raising three children under the age of 13. She gave me the break I needed.

She offered me job nine. She figured that because I was good at getting jobs for myself, I'd be good at finding jobs for other people. Back in the day, it was sink or swim from the get-go. On my first day she gave me a cashier's application. Armed with enthusiasm and the yellow pages, I found her a job that very same day.

My boss was thrilled with my instant and continual success and, over time, promised to teach me how to be financially independent, how to make my own money so I'd never have to be dependent on anyone else. Ever.

And she did.

I had been working for my mentor for six years and earning what CPAs were making at that time, when my uncle, a self-employed engineer who had been watching my progress, offered me a partnership.

My uncle said he would loan me the money I needed to start an employment agency. The partnership agreement specified that I would pay him back his original loan plus 100 percent interest within one year. If I did, he'd move out of the offices we leased and our business, Jean Kelley Personnel, would have one owner—me.

He had the money and I had the moxie. However, I'd also be competing with the woman who had taught me everything I knew. I was stunned and afraid, but decided to do it anyway. She wasn't happy with my decision but we have remained friends to this day.

I've had other incredible mentors and—as a small business owner for more than 30 years—have survived the vicissitudes of terrible economic slowdowns.

I'm grateful that I've been given talents to serve my community. My most rewarding volunteer experience was with Big Brothers and Big Sisters. I met Linda when she was 14. I wasn't much older than she was. Her parents were both deaf and she had never used a fork. I supported her emotionally through many rocky times and was with her when she took her last breath. She was 54.

Another mentor of mine, the late Cavett Robert, said in his slow, soulful Mississippi drawl, "Jean, if you really want to help people in this world, teach them how to live in it." I believe Purse Power teaches us how to live in this world and helps make the planet better for women and girls. I invite you to join us.

About Jean Kelley

Harvard Graduate Business School alumna Jean Kelley opened The Jean Kelley Alliance in 1981, which specializes in leadership assessment, executive coaching and team building. Jean is the author of several books, including "Look. Leap. Lead." which is available at www.jeankelley.com.



Purse Power is an uncomplicated and effective initiative to help women achieve a full measure of social justice. One of our challenges, as women in our society, is that not everyone—not even all women—understand that we have not yet achieved this. A recent New York Times article, for example, points out that some men think women have already achieved economic equality. Among other things, they don't believe there's a wage gap between women and men. And they don't want to believe many women with children easily slide into poverty when they get divorced.

So, the Purse Power initiative really has two goals.

One is spreading the word that women are not yet treated as economic equals. We have to do our part in educating women to find their own voices, recognize their value and demand respect. We can do this, for example, by partnering with organizations and companies that will promote the Purse Power concept of fair play. There are many ways of doing this, but one way might be to partner with a credit card company to

create a branded Purse Power credit card.

Which brings me to our other important goal. As our name suggests, we propose using the power of the purse to encourage corporations to do what is right by having more women on their corporate boards, more women in senior executive positions and by supporting women and girls in their communities. We can focus our purchasing power as a way of rewarding those companies who engage in good hiring and promotion practices and, thereby, withholding our money from companies that fail to fully recognize our worth.

It's a pretty simple concept really. And that's why it will be so effective.

Here's how I know it will work. My mother went to her local bank to deposit a check. The bank teller told her she didn't have time to help her. My mother repeated her request and got the same response. At that point, my mother explained that she was withdrawing her money and closing her account—that she would rather bury the money in her backyard than be disrespected. I should point out that saying this took some courage. It was 1945, my mother was eleven years old, African American and living in the deep South.

My mother lived her life this way in general. She required me to be curious, agile, persistent and resilient. Through her I learned that I can change others. Her example has been enormously helpful in my own work and private life.

I try to live my life with intention and purpose. One way I do that is by spending my time and money intentionally. I demand to be treated well and fairly. If not, I'll find a way to respond that will be heard. I encourage others to do the same. "Don't audition for the part," I often tell them. I also say, "Don't ask permission where none is needed. Be big and bold."

About Charmaine McClarie

Charmaine McClarie coaches C-suite leaders and executives preparing to move into the C-suite, specializing in leadership, communication and executive presence authority. She is a popular keynote speaker and a faculty member at Smith College and the University of Missouri, Bloch School of Business for Executive MBAs. As a volunteer mentor and coach for the Magic Johnson Foundation, Charmaine helps students prepare for—and succeed in—college and beyond. For information, visit www.mcclarielgroup.com.



I'm not oppressed, marginalized or ignored. I'm 52 and my mentors—both women and men—have championed and encouraged me. I'm lucky. (I also happen to be 6 feet tall, which helps in the respect department.)

My parents grew up during the Depression. To them, education was everything and opened all doors in life. If it had been allowed at the time, my mother would have become a doctor. But women of her generation were teachers, nurses or secretaries. She became a nursing professor, author, counselor and activist.

As my two sisters and I were growing up, my mother constantly reminded us that we were in a position to do anything. "To those to whom much is given, much is expected," was her battle cry. Our dad played devil's advocate. He teased us by saying, "You can't do that, you're a girl." We'd always answer, "Yes, I can."

My mother had been abused by her father. Her mother, my grandmother, only had an eighth-grade education and was trapped in her marriage. My mother swore that she would

never be in that position. She made sure she would also have the financial resources to leave if she needed to. Our mother earned two degrees, which she considered her two keys to the back door before she ever walked in the front.

My father grew up in a single-parent household, dirt poor. His ticket to a productive and secure life was his education as an engineer via the G.I. Bill.

Both my parents started Ph.Ds. Neither finished. But their three daughters have a total of eight degrees. We all have bachelor and master degrees. Two of us became doctors and Donna, my oldest sister, founded Purse Power and is president of Executive Resource Center.

After being a business consultant for five years, I decided to go back to college and take all the prerequisite science courses I needed to apply to medical school. I was 27. I got into medical school and after my residency, my husband Tom, our first daughter and I moved back to and worked in my home state of Colorado.

Tom has always been a businessman. Together, we opened Vail Dermatology in 2004. We both thought it would be a part-time gig. However, today we also have dermatology practices near Aspen and Breckenridge. We employ 45 people and will open our fourth office this summer.

Being a woman has been an advantage in my field because some patients want a woman doctor to perform cosmetic treatments and dermatologic surgery. However, I have had the privilege to mentor many young men and women who are interested in dermatology. I am watching gender barriers evaporate in my discipline just as they are in most other areas of medicine.

Gender has never been an obstacle for me, thanks in large part to my parents and the women and men who came before me. I see Purse Power as a way for more women to have the opportunities I've had.

Rewarding companies that care about substance and talent encourages inclusion and benefits our male counterparts, our businesses, our families and our communities. In addition, Purse Power's commitment to share profits with shelters for battered women and their children and programs to reduce domestic violence honors my mother, creates opportunities and makes our communities safer.

Women have been asking for a seat at the table for generations. It's time to stop asking and take our rightful place.

About Karen Nern, MD, MBA

Dr. Karen Nern is a board certified dermatologist and dermatologic surgeon. She and her husband own dermatology clinics in Aspen, Vail and Breckenridge. The clinics offer complete skin, hair and nail care and specialize in medical, pediatric and cosmetic dermatology and Mohs surgery. For more information, please go to www.vaildermatology.com



I am thrilled to be a part of Purse Power. It gives women a special opportunity to recognize our economic power, to pull together and use our collective voices to make a difference and promote equality.

As the CEO of the YWCA Oklahoma City, I'm delighted and awed that Purse Power has pledged to support shelters for battered women and programs that reduce domestic violence.

For too long, society has considered domestic violence to be an isolated women's issue with limited effect on the wider community. But Purse Power understands the impact that domestic violence has on child abuse, mental health, economics, productivity, community safety and the many other factors that affect our country's quality of life.

Studies, statistics and my organization's experience operating the only certified shelter for battered women and their children in Oklahoma County prove that domestic violence affects us all.

Here are just a few:

- The annual cost of lost productivity due to domestic violence is estimated as \$727.8 million, with more than 7.9 million paid workdays lost each year.
- The cost of intimate partner violence annually exceeds \$5.8 billion, including \$4.1 billion in direct health care expenses.
- 33% of all police time is spent responding to domestic disturbance calls.
- More than 10 million children in the United States are exposed to domestic violence in their homes each year.
- Between 30% and 60% of children in homes with domestic violence are directly abused. And in 70% of the cases in which an abused child dies, there has been a pattern of abuse against the mother.
- Children who are exposed to domestic violence are less likely to succeed in school than children who are not exposed.
- Up to 60% of men who abuse women also abuse children.
- Male children who witness the abuse of their mothers by fathers are 50% more likely to become men who batter in adulthood. And youth who witness domestic violence are at increased risk for suicide and substance abuse.
- There are more than 32 million domestic violence victims annually.
- About one-third of all women murdered each year are killed by their husbands.

We can reduce domestic violence and support empowerment at the same time. It's simple. All Purse Power asks is for women and our male allies to consider buying products and services from companies that actively support women and girls. I believe that other companies, if they want our business, will think about improving their practices faster. It's that easy.

Purse Power also gives women a chance to decide what's important to us, to know what we want and to go get it. It's a chance to give other women a hand up and forge alliances with other groups.

For Purse Power to be effective, we have to work together and create a massive network. And we also need to:

- Let companies know what we're doing
- Set up a communication system
- Let our personal and professional networks know about Purse Power and encourage them to sign up
- Use Purse Power to make purchasing decisions
- Come up with lots of ways for Purse Power to sustain itself—and make a profit that it can distribute to battered women's projects. Would we use affinity credit cards? Shop online when part of the money goes to Purse Power? What are some ideas for Purse Power products?
- Expand our searchable database to include privately held woman-owned and woman-friendly companies
- Invite men to join us on our journey

I look forward to sharing your ideas and additions to our to-do list. I'm glad we're on this journey together.

About Jan Peery

Jan Peery has worked for the YWCA Oklahoma City for nearly 20 years, 14 of which as CEO. She is a founding member of the Oklahoma Women's Coalition and serves as an appointee on the Oklahoma Justice Reform Task Force. The YWCA Oklahoma City operates an emergency shelter and a two-year housing program for battered women and their children.



When women support other women, we make one another stronger. With Purse Power, we can use our collective purchasing power as a strategic leveraging tool in the empowerment and elevation of women nationally and worldwide. I am proud of my history with Purse Power. I know we've made a huge difference already and we are just getting started.

I started my business for one simple reason: I needed a job and there weren't many design jobs to be had in the mid-1990s in Oklahoma City, my hometown.

The only way for me to be a designer was to open my own firm. It was scary and at the time it sometimes felt like a burden. But it was, in fact, a huge and valuable gift. I became a woman with a mission—I wanted to use good design to make my city more beautiful.

As a business person, I never think twice about my gender. My parents raised two daughters without ever suggesting that being female was even remotely a limitation. My grandmother and her sister were engineers. My mother is an artist who knows no limits and my dad instilled confidence in me that my intellect is as sharp as anyone else's. The few times that I have run into gender bias in my career made me angry and even more motivated to succeed.

I've been lucky to have great mentors. One of my college professors, Thomas B. Allen, was an illustrator of album covers and children's books. He had worked in New York for many years. Tom not only taught me my craft, he also helped me discover my personal philosophy—to seek out the most talented people we know and ask them to critique our work. He often sent our work to his New York colleagues, which taught us to be academically curious and to leave our egos at the door. Tom also showed us the importance of embracing the world around us. For example, he would assign a book on writing to help us understand how writing and design overlap. The impact he made on me was huge, and I am so grateful to him for that.

Dean Wilhite, an established designer and illustrator, was another mentor during the early part of my career. I was teaching design and typesetting at a college while building my clientele at S Design. Frankly, I think he took pity on me. He'd walk me through the production steps I needed to take to make sure projects were completed. He built on what I had learned in college and in my early career and helped me take my work to the next level.

Today, one of my current mentors encourages me to ask, "What's the gift in this?"—even when things go differently than planned. Finding an answer to that question has taught me that what may seem negative at first loses its sting when you talk about it and also provides opportunities to grow.

My advice to young women is to take the time to discover what your values are and to set specific goals. Seek out and surround yourself with people who share your values and are willing to honestly talk with you. And focus on quality rather than quantity. Quality never goes out of style.

About Sarah Mason Sears

Sarah Mason Sears opened S Design in 1994. A collaborative firm, S Design specializes in marketing, public relations, branding and design services for small and midsize businesses. Sarah designed the original logo for Purse Power. Explore S Design's services and blog at www.sdesigninc.com.



Purse Power understands that as women's money, power and authority increase, everyone wins. Purse Power gives us an easy way to take action, to encourage companies to add more women to leadership positions and support programs that empower women and girls simply by being mindful of our purchasing decisions.

Women control 73 percent of all consumer spending, which, according to Catalyst, was \$11.2 trillion in the United States in 2013. If we use our buying power to reward companies that increase opportunities for women and girls, we can help change the culture of companies.

But culture change must occur on two levels to be effective—within individuals and within the system. A company's culture is made up of shared attitudes, assumptions and values, all of which determine a company's governing practices. Women must also examine and adjust our attitudes, assumptions and values of separateness—our personal cultures.

As women, we must find our voice and focus our energy. We must see ourselves as powerful people to be reckoned with. We have to stop colluding in the stunting of our dreams.

We must rethink our roles. Even today, many independent young women have been essentially trained to be only caretakers. Little girls were given baby dolls to take care of while most little boys were not. Girls and boys should learn to be nurturers as well as leaders, problem solvers and athletes. Girls are taught to be courteous and ladylike almost to a fault. We learn to be submissive and passive instead of asking for what we want and deserve. We must learn to express our thoughts or disagreements with confidence and love. We are often so concerned with being too assertive that we resort to manipulation to have our voices heard.

Women are fifty percent of the American workforce. But very few are in leadership positions. Gender equity remains elusive. Women still don't believe they're heard. There are still too few programs for girls.

It's not as bleak as it used to be. We have made significant progress on our journey of women helping women grow.

In fact, we are on the brink of a major change for women and the communities we belong to. Purse Power is part of a global effort to achieve greater inclusiveness, collaboration, justice and empowerment for women and girls.

We can speed up the process—if we are willing to leave our comfort zones, take responsibility and expand our awareness at home, in our communities, at work and worldwide.

As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change that you want to see in the world."

As individuals, we must educate ourselves not only about the problems, but also about solutions. What have other communities done to achieve greater gender equity? What are we willing to give up to

achieve this change? What can we do in the short term and finally over the long haul?

Strategic businesses stay competitive by understanding their consumer base, which is composed of a growing number of women with increased earnings, buying power and awareness. We can use our collective economic power to reward companies that support women and girls.

Making personal changes at home and at work can be more complicated.

I have four children and a husband who is my partner. But I had to learn how to be me—how to be a wife, a mother, a person involved in the community and someone who worked outside the home. I had to give up the domestic control I tried to exert in the name of caretaking. I had to stop being judgmental about how things were done at home while I was away on business trips. My husband and I learned to talk about what we wanted to give and receive. We had to come to an agreement about our common vision.

At work, I noticed that when there was spare time at offsite management meetings, the women went to the spa and the men played golf. I took golf lessons. My male colleagues got to know me and like me. I got to know them and trust them. To be really included, people must know you, like you and trust you.

I'm sure my ability to create the changes I want is a gift from my parents. They taught me that I could be anything I wanted to be. My parents told me that I should never let any obstacle hold me back. Excuses were not accepted.

My parents knew what they were talking about. My mother was one of nine children. A middle child on the far end, she took care of her three younger brothers and sisters and didn't start school until she was 12 years old. My father was orphaned at 14 and took on the responsibility of keeping his five siblings together.

My parents created my personal culture by giving me a structure and belief system that I am whole and can be anything I wanted to be. They got me started correctly and I took it from there.

Purse Power invites all women (our sisters) and righteous men (our brothers) to join us. I look forward to continuing this journey with you.

About May Snowden

May Snowden is the president and CEO of Snowden & Associates, which offers coaching, consulting and professional facilitation to individuals and organizations worldwide. May is a nationally recognized diversity and inclusion expert and an experienced C-level human resources leader with major P&L operating experience for global corporations. For additional information, please contact May at maysnowden@msn.com.



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Published by Purse Power, LLC

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ISBN 978-0-9987301-0-3

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