



Women of Excellence in Metalforming and Fabricating Seek to Inspire More

To see how high American women can rise in manufacturing today, one needs only to travel to Detroit, MI. There, the buck stops with Mary Barra, the first woman to be named chairman and CEO of a global automaker, General Motors. She represents a culture change in male-dominated manufacturing in general, and specifically in the auto industry.

Barra began her career with GM in 1980 as a General Motors Institute (Kettering University) co-op student at the Pontiac Motor Division, graduating with a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering in 1985, followed by a master's in Business Administration from the Stanford Graduate School of Business in 1990. She served in several staff positions, and ascended to the role of plant manager at GM's Detroit Hamtramck Assembly in 2003 and then VP positions prior to earning the top spot.

Women currently run six of GM's 17 North American assembly plants, according to a recent article in the *Detroit Free Press* that chronicles how "a generation of women leaders is reshaping General Motors from the plant floor to the C-suite."

No doubt there are gains still to be made, but one indicator of progress made by women in manufacturing is the dearth of superlatives from those promoted at GM. Promotions were considered simply as the logical results of proper work experience and excellent job performance.

"It started quietly," GM global manufacturing boss Alicia Boler Davis explains so matter-of-factly in the article. "In 2007, I was the first African-American woman to run a GM assembly plant, and it was no big deal. It didn't feel like something odd... I had the (right) assignments and experiences. I had demonstrated my ability to get things done, work with a team and work with the union."

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As the sun sets on 2017, it rises on the opportunities available to women in traditional male bastions. To further promote manufacturing as a viable and rewarding career path, this issue *MetalForming*, in conjunction with the Precision Metalforming Association and Women in Manufacturing, celebrates its 2017 Women of Excellence in Metalforming and Fabricating. Our second-annual awards presentation

recognizes the honorees—26 winners and 11 honorable-mention recipients—all having demonstrated dedication to an industry that remains inclusive, innovative and productive, even as it constantly changes.

Those selected, from so many nominations of worthy candidates, range from shop floor to top floor. Some, similar to the path traveled by GM's Barra, worked their way up at a single manufacturer, others brought expertise from other industries to ours, and all have demonstrated accomplishment and pride in their professions. Just as our honorees inspired co-workers and industry associates to nominate them, they, too, can inspire the coming generations.

Beginning on page 32, we invite you to read our honorees' stories, and note their inspiring quotes. This one, which perfectly captures the aim of the awards presentation, comes from Angie Brick, director of community involvement and special projects at Rotochopper, Inc.:

"As more women enter STEM fields, it will be important for more women to fill positions throughout manufacturing to help ensure a welcoming work environment that enables all women in the workplace to realize their potential. Whether you love to weld or want to be the CEO, manufacturing offers many exciting and fast-paced career opportunities."

Senior Editor
lkren@pma.org

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© 2017 by PMA Services Inc.
6363 Oak Tree Blvd.
Independence, OH 44131
216/901-8800 | fax: 216/901-9669
www.metalformingmagazine.com
metalforming@pma.org



PMA President | **Roy Hardy**
rhardy@pma.org

Publisher/Editorial Director | **Brad F. Kuvin**
bkuvin@pma.org

Senior Editor | **Louis A. Kren**
lkren@pma.org

Associate Editor | **Joe Jancsurak**
jjancsurak@pma.org

Editorial Manager | **Marlene F. O'Brien**
mobrien@pma.org

Art Director | **Donna M. D'Amico**
ddamico@pma.org

Web/Graphic Designer | **Mike Novatny**
mnovatny@pma.org

Production Manager | **Susan Cubranich**
scubranich@pma.org

Circulation Manager | **Melody Berendt**
mberendt@pma.org

Circulation Assistant | **Terri Reid**
treid@pma.org

Sales and Marketing Staff

**OH, Western NY, Western PA,
Canada, International
MI, North Central, California
Ryan King**

[773/414-9292](tel:773/414-9292) | rking@rkmediaadv.com

**New England, Eastern NY, Eastern PA
Frank Colonna**

[201/962-2759](tel:201/962-2759) | fjcolonna@optonline.net

**South Atlantic, South Central
Bob West**

[678/377-5749](tel:678/377-5749) | metalform_bobwest@msn.com

**Inside Sales Manager
Ilene Schwartz**

[216/901-8800](tel:216/901-8800) | ischwartz@pma.org

Marketing Director | **Susan Hunter-Vazinski**
shunter@pma.org

Marketing Coordinator | **Drew Gutierrez**
dgutierrez@pma.org

Meetings & Events Manager | **Katlyn Stratis**
kstratis@pma.org

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