

2018 Women of the Year Award Nominees

help Realtors® secure and sell properties up to \$30 million. Bonasoro earned an MBA from Chapman University's George Argyros School of Business and Economics with an emphasis in entrepreneurship. She serves on the Alumni Association Board of Directors to address next generation alumni issues. A founding member of OCYPN, she has held leadership positions and published a Playbook used by chapters nationwide. She is also a Big Sister with Big Brothers Big Sisters Orange County. Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties' dedicated real estate experts guide clients through the home buying or selling experience.

Adrienne Brandes, Real Estate Agent

Surterre Properties, Newport Beach

For 25 years, Adrienne Brandes has assisted her clientele in buying and selling luxury properties in the Orange County market. Armed with her master's degree in counseling psychology and her experience of running a cosmetics business and public relations firm, her contributions to the industry include her comprehensive expertise in all facets of the enterprise, negotiating skills, and her tireless work ethic to ensure every client is satisfied. She has closed some of the most significant real estate deals in Orange County, including more than \$194 million in sales in the last four years. Brandes is incredibly hands-on with each client, providing her undivided attention and personal touch to every encounter with passion from start to finish. Surterre Properties is a residential real estate brokerage.



Lynnette Brown, CFO

KKW Trucking Inc., Pomona

After graduating college, Lynnette Brown started working for KKW Trucking Inc. in an entry-level position as a programmer. Through years of hard work, she climbed her way through the organization, spent time in every department of the company, and eventually was promoted to CFO. She has held her current CFO position for the past 20 years and provides strategic direction for the company. Brown is also the current president of the California Trucking Association, an organization that promotes leadership in the California motor carrier industry; advocates sound transportation policies to all levels of government; and works to maintain a safe, environmentally responsible and efficient California transportation goods movement system. The organization has an 84-year history and is comprised of 12 regional units.



Michelle Brown, Real Estate Agent

Surterre Properties, Newport Beach

Michelle Brown is a highly acclaimed coastal real estate professional with 15 years in the industry and nearly \$400 million in sales. Brown is an active investor and a 25-year resident of Corona del Mar. She is well-known for her market expertise and passion for garnering the maximum for her clients from their real estate investments. She formed her real estate group 15 years ago and proudly works alongside her partners, Dana Christensen and Cara Farley. She has enjoyed a variety of rewarding careers, including director of marketing for The Irvine Company's Fashion Island, while also serving as an integral part of the development team of the Irvine Spectrum Center. Her past business experience includes consulting for high-profile retailers and an international pharmaceutical company. Early in her career, Brown served as investor relations manager and spokesperson for a 130-store publicly traded women's apparel chain. Surterre Properties is a residential real estate brokerage.



Leslie Calhoun, Senior Partner/Chief Compliance Officer

Optivest Wealth Management, Dana Point

In her 11 years at Optivest Wealth Management, Leslie Calhoun implements tactical investment strategies and monitors investment performances. With more than 25 years of investment industry experience, she works to provide the utmost care in serving her clients' financial needs and facilitating success. Calhoun's passion lies in fostering financial growth for successful women leaders. She takes great pride in her ability to do more than just manage client portfolios; she works to instruct, guide, and deliver customized financial and investment insight for her clients amidst their fast-paced lives. Calhoun also coaches individuals going through difficult transitions, working to build confidence, knowledge, independence and self-esteem. Optivest began in 1987 with the goal of providing holistic wealth management services to a select group of successful individuals and families in Southern California.



Victoria Carr-Brendel, CEO

JenaValve Technology Inc., Irvine

Victoria Carr-Brendel has more than 25 years of medical device experience, including the development and commercialization of medical device products across disease states. She began her career with Baxter Healthcare in research and development of an artificial pancreas. She held increasingly higher leadership roles within R&D, including women's healthcare (Adiana) and in glucose sensor technology (Dexcom). JenaValve Technology Inc. is a private, venture-capital-backed company headquartered in



Irvine with operations in Munich, Germany. The organization develops, manufactures and markets transcatheter aortic valve repair systems to treat patients suffering from aortic valve disease.

Leslie Carter, Chief Operating Officer

UnitedHealthcare, Cypress

Leslie Carter has worked hard and accomplished a great deal in her 30-year tenure in the healthcare industry, most of which has been with UnitedHealthcare and its predecessor companies. She spent the majority of her career in network management, negotiating and managing relationships with key hospital and medical groups in California. She was instrumental in building the PPO network that now serves almost one million UnitedHealthcare members. Her achievements in her current role are focused on driving improved operational performance and employee teamwork by aligning goals and improving accountability. In addition to a wonderful combination of professionalism and enthusiasm, she has often been commended for her achievements in helping fellow executives and rank-and-file employees understand the complex world of health insurance.



Antonella Castro, Business Owner/Founder/Real Estate & Business Attorney

KAP7 International Inc., Newport Beach

Antonella Castro is a strategic leader making impactful strides in Orange County. She represents Mobilitie LLC as the special outside counsel and is the acting general counsel for KAP7 International Inc. She has been recognized numerous times for her accolades in law and business and through her community and charitable efforts. In 2005, Castro and her husband founded KAP7 International Inc., the official water polo ball of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, USA Water Polo, CIF, League of European Nations and is played with throughout the world. Recently, KAP7 International Inc. opened in the New Zealand market. As the special outside counsel for Mobilitie LLC, she drafts and negotiates agreements related to construction, installation and operation of distributed antennae systems and small cell wireless networks including, but not limited to, venue lease agreements, design, construction, installation and maintenance agreements.



Geri Cerkovnik, CEO

Dale Carnegie of Orange County, Santa Ana

Founded in 1912, Dale Carnegie has evolved from one man's belief in the power of self-improvement to a performance-based training company with offices worldwide. The company focuses on giving people in business the opportunity to sharpen their skills and improve their performance in order to build positive, steady and profitable results. Dale Carnegie emphasizes practical principles and processes by designing programs that offer people the knowledge, skills and practices they need to add value to the business. Geri Cerkovnik serves as CEO of the company's Orange County office. Under her leadership, the office received Dale Carnegie's Award for Top Franchise Quality Training in Orange County.



Zara Cerni, Health Coach/Patient Liaison

Physicians Center For Renewal, Newport Beach

Zara Cerni is currently aesthetic director and patient liaison at Physicians Center For Renewal, which she co-founded 10 years ago, with her husband, Dr. Michael Cerni. As a certified aesthetic consultant, it was Cerni's vision to provide wellness through nutrition and lifestyle modifications, along with cutting-edge aesthetic procedures to optimize health and appearance. Physicians Center For Renewal currently has locations in Newport Beach and Laguna Niguel. In addition to aesthetics, Cerni holds certification from the Inflammation Foundation in Anti-Inflammatory Nutrition founded by Dr. Barry Sears, author of *The Zone*. A significant part of Cerni's outreach includes giving lectures with her husband, providing the latest breakthrough trends in healthy lifestyle and fitness.



Bernadette Chala, SVP/General Counsel

Arbonne International LLC, Irvine

Bernadette Chala joined the Arbonne team in 2012, first serving as the corporate counsel and now as senior vice president, general counsel. Chala serves as a key business advisor, advocate and liaison between the business units and Legal Team to maximize value to the company's ownership. She successfully navigates emerging legal trends to serve the business needs of the company to ensure the highest rate of return to business stakeholders. Since her tenure, the company has nearly doubled in size, yet Chala continues to steer the entire organization through various legal, regulatory and compliance challenges. From her start as a member of the Legal Team, to now leading three teams including Legal, Regulatory & Scientific Affairs, as well as Compliance or the Business Ethics Standards Team (B.E.S.T.), Chala serves proudly as a someone who is not afraid to be a "working leader" and believes the best form of leadership is the one that is set by the example of one's own actions. Arbonne International LLC creates personal skincare and wellness products.

