

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN

For all the progress that has been made toward gender equality in the United States, many glaring disparities still exist, most notably when it comes to pay. Additionally, studies have shown that women continue to be underrepresented in corporate boardrooms, among law firm partnerships and in the C-suite.

Despite these challenges, however, women are making a significant impact in the business world, especially in San Diego.

So for our inaugural Influential Women section, we wanted to showcase the unsung heroes of the San Diego County business community. Those women whose stories have yet to be highlighted, but who are helping manage tricky construction projects or handling multimillion-dollar real estate leases. Those who are litigating complex intellectual property lawsuits and launching innovative products.

The women on the list have had an impact on their company, industry and community. Many hold leadership roles in industry organizations. They are paving the way for future generations and making life better, not only for women, but for men, too.

As you read, we believe you'll agree that San Diego County is home to some of the most influential women in the country.

— The Editors

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NONPROFIT

Teresa Stivers

WALDEN FAMILY SERVICES
CEO

Stivers first learned about Walden Family Services while serving as executive director of the Child Abuse Prevention Foundation. Walden's mission to offer foster, adoption and youth services to children who might otherwise be overlooked — including those with disabilities, mental health needs, and even those on hospice care — resonated deeply with her.

“What drew me to Walden is these are the neediest of the youth,” she said. “Children have always been a passion of mine.”

As Walden's CEO since 2010, Stivers oversees development and planning for the nonprofit's five Southern California offices while guiding its relationships with donors, the media, community groups and partners.

Since taking the helm, Stivers is credited with providing more services to young people in foster care through age 21, making it easier for birth families and foster children to have supervised visits, and creating programs that support teens who are pregnant or who have children. Walden's annual budget has more than doubled during her tenure to \$13 million, she said.



Beyond her work with Walden, Stivers is a member of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce's education and workforce development committee, the San Diego County Taxpayers Association's subcommittee on health and community services, and the executive board of Housing You Matters, an affordable housing advocacy group.

Stivers' early career was in advertising

and public relations, culminating with six years as deputy chief of staff to Mayor Susan Golding. Those times were exciting but not always fulfilling, she said.

“I wanted to be a mover and a shaker. What you think you want to do when you're younger can be very different from where you land. I'm fortunate that it brought it me to my calling,” she said. “Every day is joyful.”

— Jennifer McEntee