

JOURNAL Montecito

SUMMER 2025

**GIVING LIST WOMEN
THE MONTECITO-BORN
MOVEMENT GETTING
NATIONAL ATTENTION**

**ALSO:
THESE WOMEN
MEAN BUSINESS
SB GOES ALL IN ON
FEM-FOUNDED STARTUPS**

**MORE:
AMY CHRISTINE
1 OF 25 FEMALE
“MASTERS OF WINE”
IN THE U.S.**

Doing it
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“Working with Gwyn Lurie and the Giving List Women was such an honor,” says photographer Lucia Kiel. “The energy at these shoots was incredible. These women shine so much light at a time we critically need it. I was grateful for the chance to contribute in any way I could.”

mj: women

SHE MEANS BUSINESS

Are women quantifiably better entrepreneurs than men? Look at it this way: yes. The number-crunching U.S. Census Bureau, Dow Jones, and the Harvard Business Review concur: women-owned firms generate higher revenue and create significantly more jobs than their male-owned counterparts. Women are measurably more effective in senior leadership roles. We could go on... and in this issue we do.

From medicine to marketing, design to AI, this visual compendium showcases local women who lead with expertise, heart, and vision across every corner of our community. You'll find them reimagining real estate, revolutionizing fitness, restoring skin, and refining spaces with equal parts precision and passion.

Their roles are varied—entrepreneurs, practitioners, advisors, artists—but their collective impact is united by a common thread: empowerment. In every profession, and through every project, they show us that success isn't just about achievement—it's about connection, purpose, and resilience. She's a leader, a creator, a problem-solver. Simply put: she means business.

INTERIOR DESIGN & HOME IMPROVEMENT

W *ith personalized design, technical prowess, and unfiltered focus on how people truly live, these women craft spaces that balance spatial allure with function. These creatives prove that comfort, efficiency, and elegance are not a “choose two” proposition, but a seamless trifecta – home design as both emotional sanctuary and luminous lifestyle statement.*

CHRISTI KAEFER-CLAYTON

PROJECTS GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

From the earliest days of her childhood in Fremont, California, Christi Kaefer-Clayton was captivated by how things are constructed. “At a very early age, I had a passion for learning how everyday things were made from raw materials,” she recalls. This fascination led her on a path through community college courses in graphic design, interior design, and architecture, eventually culminating in a transformative construction class that shifted her passion from drawing designs to bringing them to life.

It wasn’t until Kaefer-Clayton’s final year at Cal Poly that she found her calling. A field trip to Santa Barbara introduced her to the custom builder Giffin and Crane, where she watched a mason building a rock wall with meticulous care. “After seeing the quality of the workmanship and the care and attention that the mason put towards his craft, I knew the custom builder who hired this artisan was high quality,” she says. “I wanted to continue to grow in the construction industry with that company.”

She did exactly that—starting as an estimator for Giffin and Crane, then buying into its Kitchen and Bathroom remodeling division and in 2016, purchasing the company outright and renaming it Projects General Construction. Since then, she has built Santa Barbara’s only all-female construction company. “As women, we’re approachable. Clients don’t hesitate to ask us questions, and I think they feel more valued and appreciated with us,” says Kaefer-Clayton. “We communicate with clients as much as possible. I think that’s a key ingredient to becoming a good contractor.”

Her company has expanded from kitchens and bathrooms to include full remodels, additions, and new builds. Kaefer-Clayton’s latest endeavor, in partnership with Girls Inc., brings her story full circle: a two-week summer course teaching girls the role of math and hands-on skills in construction. “I want to teach girls at a young age that they can find their passion in life and pursue that,” she says. “You don’t have to be in a typical female role.”

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