

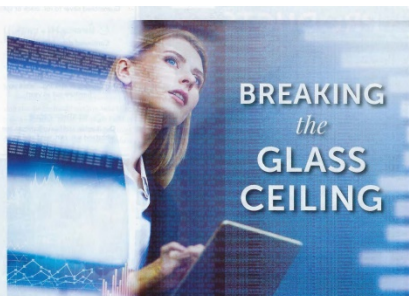
Castelle



3. Castelle

The Antler Hill collection is the latest offering from the Biltmore by Castelle line. Named after Biltmore's Antler Hill Village, which pays homage to the estate's agricultural heritage, the collection has a chic farmhouse feel. castellexury.com
Showroom: IHFC M101

Treasure Garden



In the casual industry, women leaders are the rule, not the exception

By Jennifer Bringle

In the home furnishings industry you hear a lot about the old "boys' club." It's odd for the fact that the majority of those in charge—CEOs, VPs, business owners—tend to still be male. Furniture isn't the only male-dominated industry in this country: of the 2008 *Forbes* 500 list of top U.S. companies, a mere 24 had female CEOs.

But in the casual world, it's sometimes easy to forget that, across the outdoor industry, women hold positions of power—CEO, CFO, owner, executive director, manager—making decisions, developing products, and setting trends that help drive the industry forward.

"The casual nature of our business allows more females to

be recognized for their contributions," says Margaret Chang, president, Treasure Garden. "There is also less of a structure or sense of maintaining what has always been, replaced by more openness to diversity. Women in general are noted for their innovation, fashion sense and creativity."

These women in the casual industry have an innate ability to lead that will serve them, their companies and the industry as a whole.

"The qualities that are often associated with being a woman—compassion, humility and strength—are also these qualities that are associated with being a good leader," says Megan Pierson, VP of business development, Polywood.

THINK THAT PRIVATELY HELD COMPANIES ARE IN A BETTER POSITION TO LISTEN TO AND FOSTER THE NEEDS OF OUR SPECIALTY INDUSTRY.

—*Sally Levingers, President, IHFC*

"With the casual industry heavily made up of independent and family owned businesses, the prevalence of females in leadership positions is a more common and organic occurrence," says Chang. "These independent and family owned businesses also provide a nurturing that allows females to grow and be recognized as leaders. Women leaders are known for developing successful products and programs that benefit the consumer, dealers and manufacturers alike."

Watermark Living

"I definitely think that the presence of strong, intelligent and open-minded individuals of any identity benefits the casual community," says Ashley Newton, executive vice president, Leader's Casual Furniture and Watermark Living. "Having a diverse culture of power players with a variety of identities and outlooks ensures well-rounded thought and a culture of innovation."



4. Watermark Living

Playing off the popularity of its original Octopus side table, Watermark Living introduces a new larger option. The tentacles have magnets that hold the glass in place. watermark-living.com
Showroom: 205 S. Main St.