

A full-page photograph of four women standing on a rooftop against a clear blue sky. From left to right: a woman in teal medical scrubs with 'Registered Nurse' and 'CEDARS-SINAI' on the chest; a woman in U.S. Marine camouflage with 'NASHAWAT' and 'U.S. MARINES' on the chest; a woman in a dark blue police uniform with 'L. JUNG' and a badge; and a woman in a bright red suit. A large white circle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the title text.

# People **25** Women Changing *the* World

COMING TO THE RESCUE, SPEAKING OUT,  
SHATTERING BARRIERS—THESE REAL-LIFE  
SUPERHEROES HELP OTHERS SOAR





## **GAL GADOT & FIRST RESPONDERS**

### **Wonder Women**

It's fitting that in a year when women marched, spoke out and fought for change, Gal Gadot stormed screens as the world's first female superhero. Her sword-swinging strength was a rallying call for women and girls, but Gadot says that's only half the story. "I think you can't only empower the women, you have to educate the men too," says the Israeli-born star, 32. "For boys to go to the movies and see that women can be amazing and badass and strong and inspiring—I think that's very, very important."

Gadot has a special appreciation for the first responders she met on the day of the *People* shoot, having served in the Israeli army for two years as a combat trainer. "They are the true heroes," she says. "They're the wonder women." Air Force Capt. Staci Rouse loves the comic-book icon's message "to be the best you can be for the world around you." Adds ER nurse Kelly Lynch

**Women to the rescue! From left:** Kelly Lynch, ER nurse at Cedars-Sinai in L.A.; Marine pilot Major Khadijah M. Nashagh; Southern California firefighter Lovie Jung; Gadot; Dr. Liza Kearn, ER pediatrician at Children's Hospital of L.A.; and Air Force Capt. Staci Rouse. Inset: Gadot as Wonder Woman.





"It is such a huge privilege," says Gadot (with Nashagh, left, and Rouse) of military service.

## PINK & CARYL STERN Fighting for the World's Kids

**Pink** "I care about kids," says the multiplatinum Grammy winner, 38, and mom to Willow, 6, and Jameson, 11 months, of the driving force behind her partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund. "UNICEF has helped more children around the world than anyone else, and in a humanitarian crisis, they're there. [UNICEF USA President & CEO] Caryl is tireless—she is 50 humans inside of one body. She's no BS, and yet her mission comes from love.... When I think about a mom not being able to feed a kid or make them feel safe, it breaks my heart. I subscribe to the idea that these kids are all of our kids. I want us all to help each other." **Caryl Stern** "I wish we'd look at children by their age, not define them by their borders," says Stern, 60. "Children do not get to pick where they're born. They surely would not pick poverty or conflict if they did." Fighting for the future of 50 million refugee kids, she's inspired by her mom, 84, who escaped Nazi-occupied Austria at 6 years old, sailing to New York in the care of a woman she never saw again. "One woman saved her life," says Stern, "and she said that we could be that person for someone else."

### CONTINUED

of seeing Gadot's character resonate across the world: "It's a great time to take charge of your future and know you're no longer held back by your gender."

Next up, Gadot has two more Wonder Woman projects: *Justice League*, out Nov. 17, and a sequel slated for 2019. But that's just the beginning. "There are so many more things I'd like to achieve," she says. "I want to have more children. [She has daughters Alma, 6, and Maya, 7 months, with husband Yaron Versanor.] You can start having impact on your immediate environment. Be kind, listen, have goodwill. It has a ripple effect. I'll start there."



A UNICEF ambassador, Pink visited Haiti with Stern in 2015 to aid with hunger relief.



"No matter age or circumstance, everyone has the ability to effect change in their communities," says Hampton.

## NATALIE HAMPTON Making School Lunchtime Better by Connecting Teens

For Natalie Hampton, 17, lunchtime at her middle school was terrifying. "I was sitting alone every day being physically attacked and verbally bullied," she says. After switching to a new school in ninth grade and quickly making friends, Hampton decided to help anyone who might be similarly struggling by designing the app Sit with Us, which helps connect students who are looking for others to share a table at lunch. The innovative idea is now being used by more than 100,000 people in eight different countries—and Hampton is thrilled. "I'm proud I was able to take a negative experience and turn it into something to help others," she says.

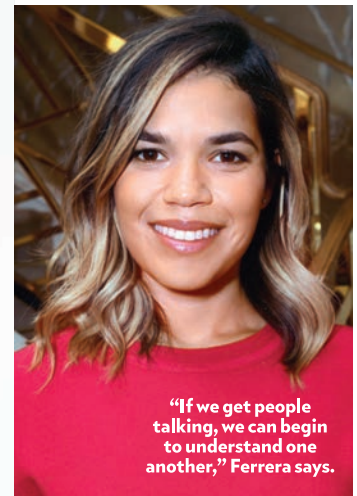


JANE GOODALL

## A Legend Inspires the Next Generation

"I'm gradually starting to realize this impact is bigger than I ever could have dreamed," famed primatologist Jane Goodall says of dedicating her life to the study of social and family interactions of wild chimpanzees. Through Goodall's groundbreaking work, she has proved that animals share feelings and emotions similar to those of humans. "When you're brought into this life, you're given certain gifts, and you have to use them," Goodall says of her "strong constitution" (at 83, she still travels 300 days a year) and her strengths as a communicator. Today she is using those gifts to help educate younger generations about conservation and compassion through her program Roots & Shoots. "Its main message is that every single one of us makes a difference." Roots & Shoots started in 12 countries and has already expanded to more than 98—and it isn't done growing. "I want it to go everywhere."

"We have to have hope—and we have to work harder to safeguard the future," says Goodall.



"If we get people talking, we can begin to understand one another," Ferrera says.



AMERICA FERRERA

## A Voice for the Voiceless

As a social activist and supporter of Hillary Clinton, America Ferrera says she was "feeling really despondent" after the 2016 presidential election. So the *Superstore* star, 33, teamed up with her husband, actor-director Ryan Piers Williams, and actor Wilmer Valderrama to create Harness, an advocacy organization that aims to shift current narratives about social issues by bringing leaders in communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Muslims together with Hollywood creators to help tell their stories. "So often we talk about people and not to people," she says. "That's just not enough."



JANELLE MONAE

## Unifying Women

After her impassioned speech at the 2017 Women's March, the singer and actress, 31, has kept the momentum going with her organization Fem the Future, which seeks to unite professional women to uplift the next generation. "It's a grassroots movement about making sure that those in a position of power are actively including more women who can compete at a high level," says Monáe, who as head of Wondaland Records finds and employs female music producers and engineers. "It's really important to me to support my peers."



"I believe women hold so much power," says Monáe (at the march on Jan. 21).

(FERRERA) EMMA MCINTYRE/GETTY IMAGES; (MONAE) DERREL R. TODD

Photograph by MEI TAO





"We're seeing this avalanche of women and men feeling comfortable to say 'me too,'" says Carlson. "It gives me great optimism."

## ← GRETCHEN CARLSON Combating Sexual Harassment

"It's the 'be fierce' movement," the former *Fox & Friends* host says of the message she shares in her new book about fighting sexual harassment. Her 2016 lawsuit against former Fox News CEO Roger Ailes led to his resignation and emboldened women in other industries to share their own stories. Carlson, 51, emphasizes that men who are aware of harassment must make it known "that they're not going to tolerate it on behalf of women."

### WOMEN SPEAKING OUT

Carlson is far from alone in the movement against sexual harassment and assault. From actress Rose McGowan to gymnast Rachael Denhollander, "it takes dozens of people speaking up to actually have people listen," says business executive Ellen Pao, who was involved in a gender-discrimination case. "Seeing other people working together to push for change is really rewarding."



"We're strong," McGowan said at the Women's Convention on Oct. 27.

## → IRENE NKOSI Eradicating HIV/AIDS

Irene Nkosi was in her teens when she learned she was HIV positive during her second pregnancy. In her home country of South Africa, more than 5 million people are estimated to have HIV/AIDS, the largest number of infections in the world. In her conservative culture, Nkosi faced ostracism, but a nurse told her about Mothers2Mothers—a group that helps HIV-positive pregnant mothers prevent their babies from contracting the disease. "Mothers2Mothers saved my life," says Nkosi, 32, who now counsels others facing the same hurdles and stigma. "We are not only educating the positive women, we also educate the HIV-negative women to stay negative," she says.



"I am going to walk with them in this journey until they are empowered," says Nkosi (teaching in 2016).





TRACEE ELLIS ROSS

## Redefining Beauty

As a kid, Tracee Ellis Ross hated her hair. “I didn’t see textured hair like mine in media, so I didn’t think it was beautiful,” says the Emmy nominee, 45. “I spent years trying to beat it into submission—to get it to be silky and straight. But as soon as I started to nurse my hair back to health, I started to nurse my soul back to health too.” Now, through her portrayal of Dr. Rainbow Johnson, a mother of five on *black-ish*, her size-inclusive JCPenney collection and empowering speeches at events like Beautycon, Ross hopes to spread the message that “beauty is about being comfortable in your own skin.”



“Conversations about hair can seem trivial,” says Ross. “But really they’re about the authentic self.”



KATHY BATES

## Crusading for a Cure

Lying in the hospital after her double mastectomy in 2012, Kathy Bates “felt weird pains” in her arms and hands.

After her arms swelled up, the Oscar winner and breast cancer survivor, 69, was diagnosed with lymphedema, which is caused by a blockage in the lymph nodes and can lead to deadly sepsis.

Bates was shocked to learn that 10 million Americans suffer from lymphatic issues, but many doctors aren’t required to learn much about the subject. “I was so pissed off,” says the *Disjointed* star, who is now the face of the Lymphatic Education & Research Network. “People need to be able to get treatment before they have to lose a limb—or their lives.”



Bates (center) with actress Pat Crowley (left) and Dr. Emily Iker at a LE&RN walk in L.A. in 2016.

CELINE GOUNDER

## Bringing Health Care to All

Celine Gounder was studying engineering when she realized she wanted to pursue a very different path. “Something clicked for me, the idea of working with underserved populations but leveraging science to do that in the form of medicine,” says the N.Y.C.-based epidemiologist, 40, who now hosts a podcast called *In Sickness and in Health*. “There’s a lot that can be done to make our health system better if we share stories,” says Gounder. After volunteering to fight Ebola in New Guinea, she’s traveling the U.S. on an “ill-health tour” to highlight pressing issues including opioid addiction, poverty and human trafficking. “These problems take a long time to solve. But when just one person says, ‘I never thought of it this way,’ that makes a big difference.”



“I’ve been really impressed by what people are willing to tell me about their own experiences, because they feel like that story will help somebody else,” says Gounder (near Gallup, N.Mex., in October).

HAIR & MAKEUP: KATIE DOLITTLE/STENOBA; (BATES) SHIGGY/ICHTHONYA/GO SHIGGY/GO; (ROSS) GENARO MOLINA/LOS ANGELES TIMES/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

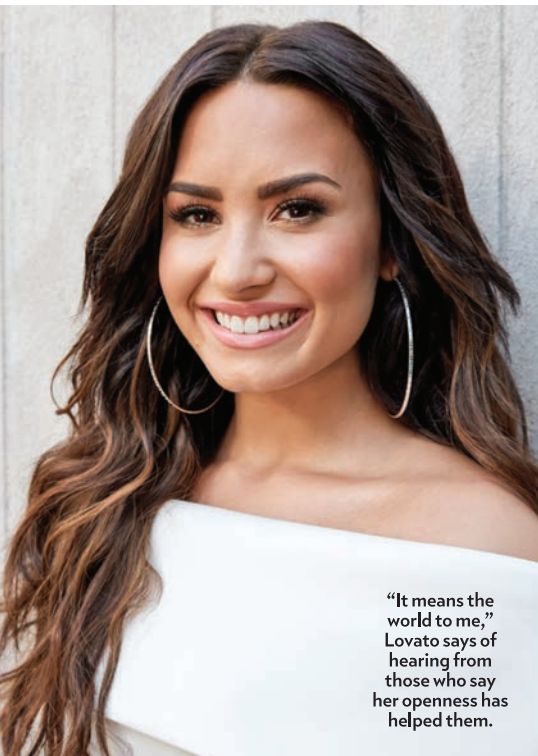




DEMI LOVATO

## Mental Health Awareness

Discussions of mental health “can be very taboo, and I want to take that away,” says Demi Lovato, who has shared her own struggles with bipolar disorder and eating disorders. Teaming with Global Citizen and Save the Children, Lovato is promoting their Healing and Education Through the Arts (HEART) program in Iraq for kids affected by war and conflict. “I’m really looking forward to hopefully changing lives over there,” says the singer-songwriter, 25. In opening up about her personal battles, “I do feel the impact, because I’ve had fans come up to me and say that I’ve saved their lives.”



“It means the world to me,” Lovato says of hearing from those who say her openness has helped them.



BRENE BROWN

## Empowering Women in Midlife

Brené Brown has a knack for distilling social research in a way that resonates for women, particularly those in midlife. “Give up on the beer-commercial image of friends,” says the bestselling author, whose 2012 TED Talk on embracing vulnerability has been viewed more than 30 million times. “If you’ve got one or two people who see you, you are the luckiest person in the world.” The Texan and mom of two, 51, also offers practical advice for navigating family dynamics in polarized times. “I listen and I stay curious and I approach people with generosity,” says Brown, who counts Oprah Winfrey as a fan. “Generosity, curiosity, civility and boundaries is my combination. It takes balls of steel.”



“True belonging is having the courage to stand alone,” says Brown. “I couldn’t do that until after my early 40s.”



AVA DUVERNAVY

## Evening the Playing Field

When Ava DuVernay was little, her mom gave her sage advice: “If you try, and it doesn’t work out, you’re not a failure, you’re a risk taker.” Today the publicist turned Oscar-nominated director, 45, helps others take the leap through Array Now, which finds and funds films by women and people of color. She’s also the first black female director to head up a \$100 million film, *A Wrinkle in Time*. “I want to lead by example,” says DuVernay, who employs all-female directors for her hit OWN Network drama *Queen Sugar*. “I refuse to believe the status quo.”

(CHASTAIN) HAIR: AHN CO TRAN; MAKEUP: KATE LEE; STYLIST: ELIZABETH STEWART/THE WALL GROUP; TOP: GUCCI; (LOVATO) HAIR: CESAR RAMIREZ; MAKEUP: JILL POWELL; (DUVERNAVY) SET DESIGN: WOODEN LADDER; (MOCK) BENJO ARWAS/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES; (ALBA) DANI BRUBAKER/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES; (BROWN) MAILE WILSON





Chastain (photographed with rescue animals and volunteers on Oct. 14) also works with fashion brands to create cruelty-free products.

↑  
**JESSICA CHASTAIN**

## Advocating for Animals

Jessica Chastain doesn't want people to pity her three-legged rescue dog Chaplin when they see him out on a walk. "He's so excited to be going down the pavement, hopping along with the most joy you could ever see," says the actress and Humane Society of the United States volunteer. The Oscar nominee, 40, has supported the group through its partnership with 200 school districts to bring plant-based menus into cafeterias. Chastain, who has "adopted every animal I've ever had," is an outspoken advocate on social media who encourages other women to make their voices heard. "We're in a time now where if there's something that's important to you, you can speak up on your own platform."



"Anything other than inclusive is exclusionary," says DuVernay of male-dominated Hollywood sets.



"I want people to recognize that who we say we are is real," says Mock.

←  
**JANET MOCK**

## Protecting LGBTQ Kids

Before coming out as a transgender in her late teens, Janet Mock felt ashamed of who she was. "I struggled with speaking my truth," says the TV host and *New York Times* bestselling author, 34. "But when I did, I became a part of a community." Now she is working with organizations like the BreakOut! Youth Project in New Orleans and the Sylvia Rivera Law Project in New York City to "ensure that trans people and LGBTQ youth are protected, that they have the resources that they need, and that they have someone they can turn to in times of crisis. Right now I think our job is to gather together to tell different kinds of stories and to ensure that we are including the most marginalized in our communities."



"It's not easy to run something and to grind every day," says Alba, but her kids give her focus. "I'm super grateful."

↑  
**JESSICA ALBA**

## Ruling the Boardroom

Her company's global mission began as a more personal one for Jessica Alba. "My kids have the same allergies as I do," says the mother of two, 36—she's expecting her third baby this winter—who once went to the ER after a reaction to a hair product. In 2012 she founded the Honest Company, which has grown into a billion-dollar business empire of nontoxic household, baby and beauty products from an original line of just 17 products. "My goal is to make a positive impact," she says. And when it comes to naysayers, "they've always motivated me to persevere. I surround myself with people who are much smarter than me, and I learn. I'm a sponge."

Photographs by (CHASTAIN) AMANDA MARSALIS; (LOVATO) KAT BORCHART; (DUVERNAY) KOURY ANGELO





"It's empowering to take a situation that makes you feel powerless and find your voice in it," Shriver says.

MARIA SHRIVER

## Leading the Fight Against Alzheimer's

When Maria Shriver's father, Sargent Shriver, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2003, the news was devastating. "It's mind-blowing to sit across from your parent and have them say, 'Who are you?'" Working on multiple education and advocacy fronts—from producing HBO's *Alzheimer's Project* series to testifying in Congress—Shriver, 62, helped uncover a groundbreaking fact: For every brain that develops the disease (1 every 66 seconds in the U.S.), two-thirds belong to women. "No one knows why," says Shriver, who founded the Women's Alzheimer's Movement, a global alliance committed to understanding why women are at a higher risk—and to finding a cure. "My endgame is for every woman to know she's vulnerable, to raise money for research and to wipe this mother out."

→ KAREN SPENCER

## Building Connections for Vulnerable Children

Karen Spencer's lightbulb moment came when she was taking parenting classes with her first baby: What if there were a way to apply the same emphasis on connection to the world's most vulnerable kids? So began Whole Child International, which teaches caregivers and government officials in developing countries how to create a more loving and nurturing environment for the children in their care. By making simple changes to emphasize connective relationships, WCI has seen huge health gains, including a 47 percent increase in children's heights and a 37 percent increase in weight with no changes to diet. "Simply by ensuring that children have a quality primary-care relationship, they will grow stronger," says Spencer, 45, a mom of three who is married to Princess Diana's brother Charles Spencer. "My goal is to see supportive relationships at the center of all child care. We need to invest in building love and connection—and when we do, the world we live in will change for the better."



"The impact is huge," Spencer (in El Salvador in June 2016) says of making small but significant changes.



Heffernan (left) and Harrington dreamed up Grown and Flown during PTA meetings and volunteer projects.



LISA HEFFERNAN & MARY DELL HARRINGTON

## Guiding Parents Through the College Years

When Lisa Heffernan burst into tears in the middle of the produce aisle after her son went away to college, she knew she wasn't alone. Through their *Grown and Flown* website, Heffernan and fellow mom Mary Dell Harrington built an online community of more than 200,000 parents with older children. "These are the times when kids are making some of the most consequential decisions in their lives, and there was very little support," says Heffernan, 58. Today group members share advice and tangible help like college scholarship donations. "We had no idea that it would blossom in the way it has, and that it would also lead to people getting together in real life and making a difference in each other's lives," says Harrington, 62.

HAIR & MAKEUP (SHRIVER): KATRINA CAPLAN/EMMA WILLIS; (HEFFERNAN & HARRINGTON) CATRINE WHITE; (SPENCER) SCOTT CHAMBERLIN/WHOLE CHILD INTERNATIONAL





Aduba visited Uganda to see HI's work firsthand in 2016.

## UZO ADUBA Feeding Families

Uzo Aduba knew she was in for something special at her first Heifer International event. "It was the only red carpet I'd ever been to that had goats and chickens," says the *Orange Is the New Black* star, 36. So Aduba decided to join forces with the organization, which aims to end world hunger by helping families gain self-reliance. "It's the next step from teaching a man to fish," Aduba says of Heifer's practice of gifting families a calf as an income source and then asking that family to pay it forward by gifting their heifer's first calf to another family in need. "It's incredible to see how much their lives change."



Watch the full episode of *25 Women Changing the World*, available now on PeopleTV. Go to [peopletv.com](http://peopletv.com), or download the PeopleTV app on your favorite mobile or connected TV device.



"It's a systemic problem, and I can't turn anyone away," says Quinn, "because I'm in a position to help."

## ZOE QUINN Tackling Online Hate

The anonymous death and rape threats long ago stopped scaring video-game developer Zoë Quinn. "I'm used to it now," says Quinn, 30, whose life was nearly destroyed after an ex-boyfriend's angry blog post sparked a massive cyberbullying campaign against her in August 2014 that became known as #GamerGate. "Their plan," she recalls, "was to get me to kill myself if they didn't do it first." Quinn not only survived, but today she helps others like her fight back against online harassment with her Crash Override Network website. "Ultimately what my harassers wanted was for me to go away," she says, "but I'm not interested in doing that."



"Football is everything to me," says Rapoport. "It's my career, it's how I met the majority of my friends, and it's how I met my wife."

## SAM RAPOPORT Transforming America's Most Popular Game

The former quarterback got her start with the National Football League by making a Hail Mary pass to the hiring committee. "I sent a football with my résumé and wrote, 'What other quarterback could accurately deliver a football 386 miles?'" Rapoport, 36, recalls. As the NFL's director of football development, she is responsible for increasing opportunities for women in football operations. "I would love for girls growing up to believe that if they love the sport as much as I do, that they could be a part of it," she says. Among the breakthroughs under her direction: The Buffalo Bills hired two female coaches, and the Minnesota Vikings added two female scouts. "Our goal is to normalize females on the sidelines," she says. "That's when we'll know that we've started to achieve something." ●

(ADUBA) LACEY WEST/HEIFER INTERNATIONAL; (RAPOPORT) ERIC ESPINO