

THE SENSATIONAL SIX

The Madison YWCA presents its **Women of Distinction** awards May 31, and this year's list is impressive. Thanks to them and to the YWCA for its tireless efforts to "empower women and eliminate racism." **BY ABBY WUCHERER**

1 Margo Melli has been described as a trailblazer, dynamo, and even "energizer bunny" by her friends and coworkers, and for this eighty-one year old lawyer, that's no exaggeration. In a field formerly dominated by men, she was the UW-Madison's first female tenure track law professor and later became the first female law school dean. She has made such a difference in the fields of family and juvenile law that the Legal Association of Women gives an award in her name yearly to a Wisconsin individual who makes significant contributions toward women.

2 Mai Zong Vue's work with the Hmong community has helped bridge cultural gaps, especially through her work with the Refugee Family Strengthening Program, which helps develop and maintain local services for victims of domestic violence. She is also an artist, using her singing talents to create and perform songs that address the lives of young Hmong women. Her work with refugees of all backgrounds has helped to empower countless women and provide many families with the resources and health care they need to survive.

3 Gloria Ladson-Billings is a professor at the UW School of Education and the Kellner Family Chair in Urban Education. She is the author of eight books on multi-cultural educational techniques, including the renowned *The Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. As an unpaid consultant for the Madison Metropolitan School District, her approach to education focuses on the ability of every student, regardless of socioeconomic background, to achieve.

4 Eve Galanter is a familiar face in Wisconsin politics, and she played many roles in the political process, from candidate to consultant. Now her formidable career includes successful work in media and public relations. As president of TEMPO she has worked to promote its ideals and goals,



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recently through a program called Experts on Call, which plans to create a database of women available to give media interviews, especially in areas where women have traditionally been underrepresented.

5 Anne Ross has championed the rights of women and minorities as a lawyer at Foley and Lardner LLP for more than two decades, often through pro bono work within the community. She's donated thousands of dollars' worth of her time to the Aldo Leopold Foundation, which promotes the care of natural resources and ethical relationships between people and land. It's a cause that Ross, a fly fisher, horseback rider, kayaker, and camper, is particularly passionate about.

6 Rita Kehl is a pioneer in early childhood education, and it isn't rare to find adults who still speak fondly of their year in her kindergarten classroom. She has helped the Madison Metropolitan School District jumpstart a preschool language and literacy program for the district. The program, part of the "Safe Schools Healthy Students" federal funding initiative, has been off of federal funds for three years, but thanks to Kehl, funding and resources continue to help expand the size and scope of the program.

TEACH THEM WELL

His Holiness **Tenzin Gyatso**, the fourteenth **Dalai Lama**, will return to Madison May 2-4. He will present a series of four "experiential teachings" at the Alliant Energy Center, May 2-4. Also on May 4, he will give a talk at the Kohl Center at 2:30 p.m. His visit is to build awareness of Deer Park Buddhist Center, which is in the process of building a new temple. Visit deerparkcenter.org

