

## THE TWELVE WOMEN OF *DEFYING GRAVITY*

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Fulfilling a lifelong dream, **LINDA BACH** became a doctor at age 50. Elected president of her class, she graduated from medical school the same year her daughter graduated from college. She is now in private practice in Miami Shores, Florida



A shy housewife until widowed at age 52, **IRMA ELDER** today is the CEO of Elder Automotive Group, one of the ten-largest Hispanic-owned companies in the nation.



Pregnant at age 17 and marrying a man who turned out to be an abusive drug addict, **JEAN KELLEY** abandoned her dream of going to college and spent two years on welfare. At age 49, she earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration.



Formerly a stay-at-home mom, **JO FUCHS LUSCOMBE** was in her early 40's before she ventured into local politics. At age 48 she won a seat in the CT House of Representatives. Eight years later she became Republican Minority whip.



**PATRICIA SYMONDS** earned a high school diploma in her 40's and a Ph.D. in anthropology in her 50's. Now a professor at Brown University, she spent two years in her mid-50's living in a bamboo house studying the Hmong people of Thailand.



At age 71, **EVELYN GREGORY** fulfilled her childhood dream and became a flight attendant. She's been flying for US Air Express out of Charlotte, North Carolina for the past five years.



Tired of being a medical transcriptionist, **MARY ORLANDO** at age 62 bought the historic home she'd lived in as a child and turned it into a successful bed and breakfast.



**MAUREEN HORKAN** spent her 20's working at a series of low-rung jobs. Deciding she'd had enough, she embarked on a five-year quest to attend Smith College. Admitted at age 30, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and enrolled in law school. Today she is prosecutor in Florida.



At 46, single mother and breast cancer survivor **JEAN KAROTKIN** began to dream of publishing a book of photographs of other cancer survivors--even though she'd never taken a professional photograph before. Her book *Body & Soul* was published in July of 2004.



Widowed at age 48, **JANE WORK** earned a B.A. at 50 and a Ph.D. in psychology 7 years later. She opened up a private practice at age 63. At age 87, she still holds workshops.



After working 20 years at Michigan Blue Cross and facing dyslexia, homelessness and depression, **RAINELLE BURTON** published her first novel *The Root Worker* at age 52. She is currently a writer-in-residence at Wayne State University.



Kentucky native and single mom **WINI YUNKER** was devastated when the Peace Corps rejected her at age 26. She waited almost four decades before reapplying. At 65, she finally fulfilled her dream and left the States for a two-year assignment in Ukraine.