

4 Under 40 Winners

Charlottesville-area women strive to make a difference in our community



Dr. Dolly Garnecki, Barbara Heritage, Brooke Jenkins and Erica Lloyd

According to the White House Council on Women and Girls, women now make up nearly 50 percent of our workforce. Thirty percent of the small business owners are women and almost 40 percent are the breadwinners for their families. Women are an integral part of the U.S. economy.

The volunteer rate declined by 0.3 percent for the year ending September 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “however women continued to volunteer at a higher rate than men across all age groups, education levels and other major demographic characteristics,” according to the report.

The winners of Charlottesville Woman magazine’s Third Annual 4 Under 40 Awards are no different. They’ve made their marks in academics, with youth, in banking, in health care and in service to the community. Thinking of others is something that this year’s winners—Dr. Dolly Garnecki, Barbara Heritage, Brooke Jenkins and Erica Lloyd—do every day.

Barbara Heritage

“Barbara Heritage’s professional success is grounded in, and motivated by, her desire to leave the world a better place than she found it. She is passionate about the books she studies, but never loses sight of the people—students, faculty, curators, booksellers, collectors, academics—who form a community around these books.”

—Donna Sy

Barbara Heritage, 33, is the Assistant Director and Curator of Collections with the Rare Book School, housed at Alderman Library at the University of Virginia, as well as a graduate student with the university, essentially holding down two full-time jobs. The Rare Book School is an independent, non-profit institute that provides continuing-education opportunities for students of all disciplines and levels to study the history of written, printed and born-digital materials with lead-

ing scholars and professionals in a field.

“My father has a small collection of rare books that fascinated me from an early age. As soon as I received my driver’s license, I began exploring the used and second-hand bookstores and antique stores in Northern Virginia,” Heritage says. “I was intuitively drawn to books and antiques, and to the people who sold them. I learned that books have lives, too, just like people. I loved their bindings and dust jackets, their marks of use,



ownership, and reading, and evidence of their former prices and sale in the marketplace.”

Heritage moved to Charlottesville in 1997 to attend U.Va., where she studied as an

Echols Scholar in the Department of English. While still an undergraduate, Heritage worked under Scott Fennessey at Blue Whale Used and Rare Books on the Downtown Mall (he also nominated her for the award—one of several). Fennessey introduced her to Terry Belanger, founding director of Rare Book School and another nominator, which she calls “a life-changing opportunity for me.”

“The first time I stepped foot in Rare Book School I was coming with Fennessey to a reception hosted by the Bibliography Association of U.Va.,” Heritage recalls. “As I was walking through the door, I walked into a room and it was filled with copies of ‘Jane Eyre.’ The drinks and food were in another room, but I never made it there. I was spellbound. I had just read ‘Jane Eyre’ for the first time.”

It wasn’t only the story that fascinated Heritage, stopping her dead in her tracks. “I had worked in the book trade here in Charlottesville and was getting my master’s degree in the English department but I had never thought about collecting multiple copies of the same book. It just didn’t occur to me,” she says. “All of these different covers, different blurbs on the back and I realized, I just saw it in an instant, wow, this is a way to study literature and study books at the same time.”

Heritage began working at Rare Book School in 2002 and was co-curator of a “Jane Eyre” exhibition in the Rotunda in 2005.

“I showed in that exhibition the different components of the story. One case was just full of covers and all of these different images. No

Jane was the same,” she says. “There was a case full of illustrations from the different books, a case on the films, children’s books of ‘Jane Eyre.’ There were hundreds of objects. It was really showing the life of the book, almost like a biography of the book, showing it in all its different manifestations—how ‘Jane Eyre’ became a classic and what it means to be a best seller.”

At Rare Book School, she co-wrote a grant funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a new fellowship program based in Charlottesville in the amount of \$896,000—the largest grant ever awarded to the school.

She is passionate about books. She’s a member of the American Printing History Association, the Bibliographic Society of America, the Bronte Society and more. “I’m an active supporter of the Virginia Arts of the Book Center in Charlottesville, a member of the Bibliographical Society of U.Va. and a regular participant in the Virginia Festival of the Book,” she notes. She also mentors those younger than she, especially women. “I would not be in this job if it had not been for Scott Fennessey. Many people have mentored me here in Charlottesville, and I think my nomination is proof of just how important the book community is here.”

In 2007, she decided to go back to school to get her doctorate. The university does not allow part-time students in the graduate school, but she didn’t want to give up her job at Rare Book School. It was a negotiation, but she’s made it work.

“It is a lot of work,” she agrees. “My husband was so good to me,

during those times particularly. He really believed in my work; he thought it was important that I do it.”

Finding time with her husband, Carsten Clark, is important to Heritage in finding balance. “My husband and I have a deep respect for each other’s feelings, professional work and pursuits, and we are very much partners in all that we do,” Heritage says. “My husband is extraordinarily supportive: he is my best friend and best critic. He tells me when I’m off balance and when I’m not my best self, and I do the same for him.”

She also considers the words of two of her

mentors. “Terry Belanger has a great saying, ‘The mind is a delicate object; it should not be dropped.’ And the current Rare Book School Director (and nominator, Michael Suarez) likes to remind our staff that the word ‘curator’ comes from the Latin ‘curare,’ which means to care for. As rare book curator I’m the custodian of many rare objects that are important to the studies of many people but I cannot attend to them, or the faculty or students at our school, if I do not first care for myself.”

She notes she tries to get eight hours of sleep a night to help her focus on what she needs to do. “I feel a deep need to be tuned

in to my surroundings and my intuition is my best resource for creative problem-solving. If I start feeling as though I need to take a break, I take one or change tasks for a bit,” Heritage says. “I find that talking to other women about their careers is helpful: how they got where they are, how they knew when to move on to the next job, how they balance their time at home with their time at work. I also try to do the other things I love: reading, watching films, listening to music, going to art galleries or to the theatre or to musical performances. I would be lost without the arts. They help me recharge.”