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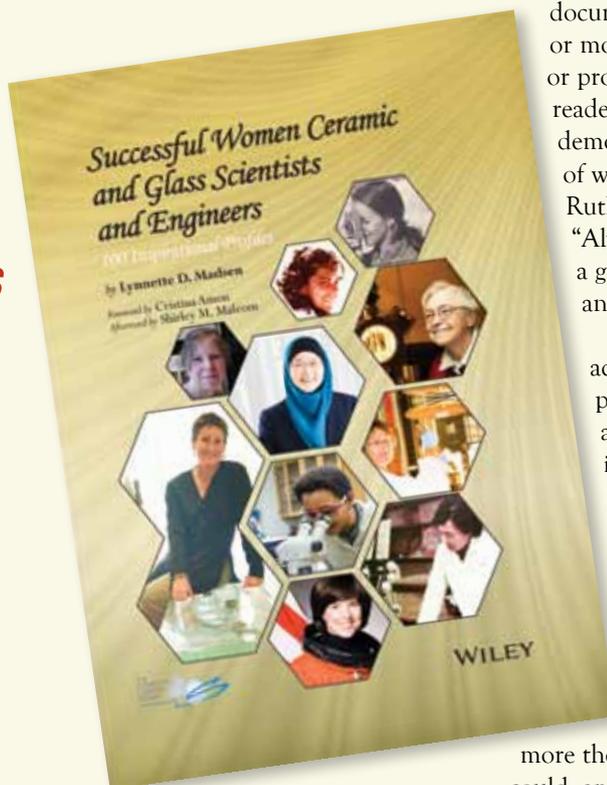
Successful Women Ceramic and Glass Scientists and Engineers: 100 Inspirational Profiles

by **Lynnette Madsen**

As I began reading *Successful Women Ceramic and Glass Scientists and Engineers*, I recognized how much I have been honored to have many of the profiled women as colleagues across my professional career. Many subjects of the one hundred profiles could dot a timeline mapping my experiences as a member of the ceramics community, and I relished the opportunity to learn, learn more, or relearn about all the women included in the book.

But I initially had not considered that the book topic—women in ceramics and glass—would also inspire me to think of all of the inspirational women I have known across other science and engineering fields as well. For me, that list includes many of the superb women who serve or have served The American Ceramic Society. Like many of the women in Madsen’s new book, they are often the first people I think of when I hear only their first names. I believe other readers will similarly recognize that we are blessed to have so many inspiring women in the ceramics and glass community, and, as is evident in much broader contexts as well, that celebrations of women and their contributions have been too rare. The words of wisdom shared by Doreen Edwards—“We need to make our own definitions of success”—apply to all.

As she notes in the introduction, Madsen overcame challenges inherent



in establishing any collection of profiles from a large group of individuals. But she also was challenged to choose just one hundred women to profile and determine how to organize the profiles and how to include appropriate representation from other areas of diversity, including race, ethnicity, and nationality. The book provides a listing of women based on various categories, including regions, career categories, and ethnicity. But the compilation also provokes thought about the (in)visibility of other aspects of diversity, including disability and sexuality, for many other colleagues—either from lack of representation, disclosure, or both.

Many women profiled in the book share private moments and information about themselves that might give some pause, but the personal moments add richness to the professional achievements. Photos shared with the profiles

document important achievements or moments in the women’s personal or professional lives that enrich the reader experience. The book clearly demonstrates that hearing the voices of women in our field is important. Ruth H.G.A. Kiminami states, “Always fight for your dreams with a great dose of optimism, perseverance, and kindness.”

The mixture of professional achievements, personal accomplishments, words of wisdom, and sobering commentaries is much richer than might be apparent to a reader paging through the book for the first time. Stories describing intentional and unintentional discrimination and slow progress toward truly inclusive workplaces likely will make the reader appreciate even more the successes of colleagues. Or it could, and should, also make the reader frustrated that progress has been so slow. But supportive spouses, clever approaches for overcoming inflexible workplace policies, and exceptional mentors and advocates are key elements in many of the stories.

When reading profiles of women I know, I found it important to ask myself if I knew all the achievements listed and if I had ever heard the women describe challenges they have overcome. In several cases, I felt like I was hearing the real voices of these successful women for the first time. As Marina Pascucci advises, “Try not to listen to naysayers—success is the best revenge.”

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