



Changing the Norm, One Woman at a Time

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In the world we are living today where disparity, inequity and judgement can be found anywhere, women have surely found the way of showing us their potential and importance. Most people would agree that whatever a woman sets her mind to she will eventually get it, and this because they tend to be more intense and passionate about the things they focus on.

That being said we still hear on a daily basis about jobs or key positions in a company where they don't accept female personnel in charge. A lot of countries are seeing an increase on the annual casualties due to femicide. There may be several factors that explain the relationships between female homicide and other violence against women, including socioeconomic and demographic factors, gender equality and the role of women in society.

Even though women have had a tough fight against men and society in general, they have proven to be as good as men, if not better, in work and play.

When we take a look at retina specialist the first name that has to stand out is that of Alice McPherson, MD. Dr. McPherson, was recognized as the first full-time female vitreoretinal specialist. Her achievements are countless but she takes much pride on the establishment of the "Retina Research Foundation" founded back in 1969. Taking a look at the modern era of vitreoretinal surgeons we definitely find a female rich environment where a lot of them are active key opinion leaders. The Berrocal sisters, Audina and

Maria, are a pair of exceptional retina specialists at the top of their game with Audina, in Bascom Palmer, leading the charge against pediatric retinal disorders in the US and Maria, in Puerto Rico, thriving through eye care in the diabetic population. If we look at Latin America, we most definitely have to talk about Dr. Maria Ana Martinez, who is leading the way on how we prevent blindness due to ROP.

In Europe, Dr. Barbara Parolini, an outstanding retinal surgeon who has dedicated her life to the treatment of myopic maculopathy and has given us from a new classification to innovative surgical approach to this disease. In Poland, Zofia Michalewska M.D., is known worldwide for her contributions on macular hole surgery mainly with the "inverted ILM flap technique" and some variations of the original technique. These are just some examples of women who are leading the way to optimum health care in vitreoretinal disorders.

Like I said before they have proven their importance when situations matter. In politics they are starting to take over chairs that 10 - 20 years ago would have only been occupied by men. The USA already has their first female vice-president, not to mention that more than 23% of congress are female. If we put the pandemic in perspective and how all the leaders have managed COVID-9 in their respective countries, by the end of 2020 it was highlighted that there was a tendency to encounter a less severe sanitary situation in countries that had a woman at the helm. This tendency was explained by some as a more "proactive and coordinated policy

response” to the health measures the World Health Organization, was enforcing. Some of the countries that enjoy the fact of having a woman charge are Finland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Brussels and others.

The future looks bright for female grinders, with more women reaching higher grounds and a change in the way society perceive empowered women, I would have to say that everyday that goes by it has to be more exciting to be a woman.

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