



International Women's Day

Happy International Women's Day! Today we acknowledge the amazing women throughout the world who have been changemakers in different ways, often against all the odds.

This International Women's Day, the JBT team each chose a particular shero to celebrate. The result is a richly diverse and inspirational group of women from around the world who are also pioneers, leaders, changemakers and role models. Read on and be inspired by these extraordinary women!

Otto Gumaelius, Operations Manager, chose Professor Wangari Maathai:



Kenya is typically known for its fantastic safari destinations, rich biodiversity and of course, record-breaking athletes. However, Kenya for me is Professor Wangari Maathai – a fierce humanitarian and

pioneer of the Green Belt Movement. Launched in 1977, her grass-roots movement was ahead of its time in integrating sustainable development with women’s empowerment. Professor Maathai recognised that poor families struggling to meet their own needs often have to strip their own environments of resources, and when those resources disappear, families have an even harder time at making a living - and even fewer chances at a better future. As a result, Professor Maathai launched the Green Belt Movement, promoting action on climate change to enable community regeneration and foster equal opportunities and empowerment of women. To date, the Green Belt Movement has planted over 51 million trees across Kenya – and its vision has spread to many other countries around the world.

After being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, becoming the first African woman to do so, Professor Maathai’s profile and that of the Green Belt Movement were raised worldwide and she was appointed Goodwill Ambassador for the Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem, the world’s “second lung” after the Amazon Rainforest.

Professor Maathai sadly passed away in 2011, but the Green Belt Movement continues to expand its horizons in its community development work encompassing environmental conservation, democracy, community empowerment and conflict resolution, as she had so envisioned.

Loren Hall, Operations Executive, chose Jeong Kwan:



South Korea renowned for its ancient history, modern technology and of course, kimchi. However, South Korea for me is Jeong Kwan (born 1957) - a Buddhist nun and philosopher chef of Korean cuisine. She lives in the Chunjinam Hermitage at the Baegyangsa temple in South Korea. Jeong Kwan does not own a restaurant and has no formal culinary training, yet is revered around the world for her cooking. First and foremost, she is a Zen Buddhist nun and her garden reflects the come-what-may equanimity of her spiritual practice. Kwan believes that the ultimate cooking — the cooking

that is best for our bodies and most delicious on our palates — comes from this intimate connection with fruits and vegetables, herbs and beans, mushrooms and grains. In her mind, there should be no distance between a cook and her ingredients. She sees rain and sunshine, soil and seeds, as her brigade de cuisine. She sums it up with a statement that is as radically simple as it is endlessly complex: “Let nature take care of it.”

She grew up on a farm and by the age of 7 she was making noodles by hand. The first time she set foot in a Buddhist temple she felt free, she says, and at the age of 17 she ran away from the farm. Two years later, she had officially joined an order of Zen nuns. Before long she realized that she was destined to “spread the dharma by communicating with sentient beings through the medium of food.” She has made influential insights into the field of Buddhist temple cooking methods focused on the future of sustainable eating practices. Her Buddhist cultural approach to eco-friendly eating practice has been shaped over centuries and handed down based on the foundation of Buddhist philosophy.

You can catch Jeong Kwan in action on Netflix’s food docu-series ‘Chef’s Table’, season 3, episode 1.

Emma Tracey, Marketing Manager, chose Professor Dame Sarah Gilbert and Dr Catherine Green OBE:



Two heroic women scientists who will go down in history for providing the world with a ray of light during the pandemic are Professor Dame Sarah Gilbert and Dr Catherine Green OBE. They were the lead scientists on the Covid vaccine, starting work in 2020 and receiving regulatory approval within the year.

Professor Dame Sarah Gilbert is Professor of Vaccinology at the University of Oxford and co-founder of Vaccitech. On 30 December 2020, the Oxford-AstraZenica COVID-19 vaccine she co-developed

with the Oxford Vaccine Group was approved for use in the UK. As of January 2022, more than 2.5 billion doses of the vaccine have been released to more than 170 countries worldwide.

Sarah Green OBE, English biologist who is an Associate Professor in Chromosome Dynamics at the Wellcome Centre for Human Genetics at the University of Oxford. During the COVID-19 Green was part of the Oxford team who developed the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

Both women collaborated to write 'Vaxxers', their account of the race against fighting the virus.

Jon Baines, Managing Director, chose Hedy Lamarr:



The last time I visited the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries was in March 2020 for their Women's Day event. That evening I was discussing with speaker Dr Jackie Bell (who was speaking on her Astronaut training) about Hedy Lamar, the Hollywood actress who became a technology pioneer.

Following a failed marriage to a controlling Austrian arms dealer, Hedy Lamarr fled to Paris and then London. Here she met Louis B. Mayer, moved to Hollywood and became an actress. While acting she pursued her interest in invention, which included an improved traffic stoplight. She also knew Howard Hughes and suggested he make his planes more streamlined based on her observations of fish and birds. During World War II, Lamarr decided she had to assist in the war effort. She learned that radio-controlled torpedoes, an emerging technology in naval war, could easily be jammed and set off course. With her friend, the composer George Antheil they invented a new radio guidance system for Allied torpedoes. This technology was then incorporated into Bluetooth, GPS and Wi-Fi. Her legacies are now part of our world, although she does not have the recognition she deserves.

Karen Glnnane, Marketing Director, chose Colleen Shirley Perry Smith, or 'Mum Shirl':



Colleen Shirley Perry Smith, or 'Mum Shirl', was born on November 22, 1921, in Erambie Mission, an Aboriginal community in New South Wales. Diagnosed with epilepsy at an early age, Shirl dedicated her life to community activism that resulted in social reform for Aboriginal Australians and other minority communities throughout the country.

After her brother Laurie was arrested, Shirl began visiting Sydney's Long Bay Correctional Complex to check on him and other Aboriginal inmates. When guards asked how she was related to the prisoners she wanted to visit, she'd say she was their "mum"—and a legend was born. Her work was not limited to prisons, however; Shirl was a founding member of the Aboriginal Children's Service, the Aboriginal Housing Company, the Aboriginal Medical Service, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, and the Aboriginal Legal Service.

Mum Shirl resided in Sydney for the majority of her life, often travelling to educate Australians on issues affecting Aboriginal communities. Revered for her humanitarian work, this captivating speaker was recognized as a National Living Treasure by Australia's National Trust in 1998. "Many people have told me they think I'm an exception," she wrote in her autobiography. "I'm not... There

are many fine Aboriginal people who, with half a chance, would be doing what I am now doing." Thanks to her, many more have.

Mum Shirl passed away in 1998. Her lifelong fight for social justice against all the odds is a huge inspiration.