



## WOMEN TO WATCH

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*PHOTOGRAPHED BY HILLARY SCHAVE*

*Shot on location at the downtown Rubin's Furniture and Azena Photography studios*

### LEADING CHANGE IN 2018

BRAVA CELEBRATES THE POSITIVE IMPACT  
18 REMARKABLE WOMEN WILL  
MAKE IN THE YEAR AHEAD.

DISRUPT THE STATUS QUO. Liberate women. Raise voices. Find solutions. Eliminate stigmas. Unite neighbors. Ensure equity. Inspire voters. Remove barriers. Champion needs. Safeguard rights. Fight for justice. Dream big. Take risks. Make a difference. **And that's just some of what this year's enterprising Women to Watch will accomplish in 2018.**



## AMY RECOB

### PUTTING KIDS' HEALTH FIRST

**"I'M ALL ABOUT** supporting kids in healthcare initiatives," exclaims Meriter Foundation senior development director and BugaBees creator Amy Recob. "Because it's hard to see children struggle, especially knowing when they have the right support, they learn to be self-reliant and discover strength they didn't know they had."

In her day job, Recob champions such outcomes by raising funds for Meriter Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and birth center, in addition to its Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Hospital—the only youth inpatient facility in Wisconsin. But off the clock, she pursues improved health outcomes for kids through writing and

promoting her BugaBees series. The award-winning picture books depict the ups and downs of having a food allergy through relatable scenarios such as the importance of remembering Epi pens and reading food labels. Later this year, her colorful characters will be expanded into additional resources such as interactive storybook apps, games and a third book.

"Food allergies can carry serious emotional consequences as well as physical ones. As both a wellness professional and a food allergy mom, I have appreciated the positive and affirming messages of the BugaBees books. Amy's outreach initiatives through our local schools and clinics have been really wonderful for kids and families

in our community," says UnityPoint Health-Meriter health psychologist Gretchen Diem.

Recob's own experience raising a daughter allergic to peanuts and tree nuts is what inspired her to create a practical and positive resource for other children, parents and teachers. And being a mother also led to Recob's other 2018 passion project—serving as the National Charity League's vice president of philanthropy. She states, "I will be leading the Madison chapter in cultivating and managing relationships in the Dane County area to provide volunteer services through this mother/daughter membership-based organization."

—Rachel Werner