

2017 Woman of Distinction: **Kaaren Grabianowski**

A graduate of MSU, Mankato, Kaaren Grabianowski has called Mankato home for over 25 years. She owns Events & Expos, works at the Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota and also Blinds & More. Kaaren has spent much of her career working in and volunteering for non-profit organizations, including Greater Mankato Growth, City Center Partnership, Visit Mankato, Miracle League of North Mankato, One Bright Star, Greater Mankato Area United Way, Twin Rivers Center for the Arts, YWCA Mankato and many community events. Her passion for the YWCA was instrumental in helping the organization transition out of the Cray mansion and in developing new programming, including Human Race Radio and Walking in Two Worlds.

In recent years, Kaaren has used her talents for helping the Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota build a permanent home and managing their fundraising events. She also focuses on marketing, private events and a new team-building program for companies.

In Kaaren’s nomination, Michelle Schooff writes: “Kaaren is a role model for women and girls; exemplifying leadership qualities, compassion and a heart for this community that is bigger than most people could imagine.”