

# WOMEN AND GIS

Mapping Their Stories

Written by Esri Press



# Foreword

The release of this book could not come at a better time, a time that ranks among the most significant in terms of the sheer power and impact of women's voices.

The women's movement has sparked a cultural conversation, encouraging people to face their own beliefs and behavior, especially in the workplace.

More women are running for elected office than ever before, and from a variety of professions, from nursing, to geology, to naval aviation.

Lehua Kamalu became the first woman to serve as both captain and lead navigator of a Polynesian voyaging canoe, successfully guiding the *Hikianalia* over 2,800 nautical miles from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Half Moon Bay, California, in 23 days.

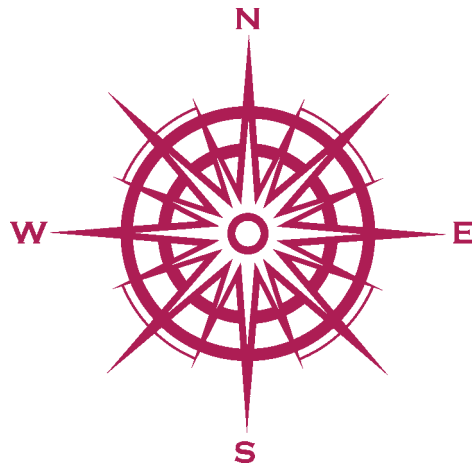
And perhaps to top it off, two women received science Nobel Prizes in 2018: Donna Strickland in physics—only the third female winner ever, and the first woman to win it in 55 years—and Frances Arnold in chemistry—only the fifth female winner after Ada Yonath in 2009.

As Donna noted upon receiving her prize, "We need to celebrate women physicists because they're out there. ... I'm honored to be one of those women."

So, too, is the case with GIS. We need to celebrate the women of GIS because they're also out there. And they're exceedingly proud and honored to be part of a field and a technology that is literally saving the world. And more women are coming into the field all the time, bringing with them powerful and positive voices, diverse perspectives, and surgical insights. They're exerting influence within the GIS industry, as well as in the worlds of academia, STEM education, government, the humanitarian nonprofit space, exploration, conservation, even the Catholic Church.

This book is a wonderful sampling of these prescient forces. These are the stories of innovators, leaders, explorers, teachers, mentors, doers (!), many of whom have been hidden figures for far too long. But no more. I hope that you are as blown away by these profiles as I am. The quotations from these women alone are an absolute treasure trove. And while these are stories for GIS veterans and newcomers alike, both women and men, may this book be especially inspiring for female newcomers to the world of GIS.

—Dawn J. Wright,  
Esri Chief Scientist





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