

Get to know one of the 2019 NEWH ICONs of Industry

From humble beginnings on a farm in Nebraska, Sandy Banks has catapulted herself into a wildly successful career in hospitality. Raised with a DIY spirit and strong work ethic, she learned to sew and make her own clothes at the age of six, embarking on a lifelong love affair with fabric and its transformative power. Unable to find clothes she liked in stores, Sandy designed and made her own wardrobe, strongly influenced by favorite designers Pucci, Paco Rabanne, Mary Quant and Rudi Gernreich. She discovered an early outlet for her passion as the art director for her high school theater troupe, making costumes, building sets, and collaborating on designs that brought stories to life. Sandy majored in Art and studied architectural drawing in college but always followed her curiosity to seek out a creative education beyond the classroom. As a fabric store manager in Los Angeles, she expanded her love and knowledge of textiles, working with film studio costumers and museum textile restoration experts in addition to apparel and interior designers. It was this job that gave Sandy the creative, business and people skills that would prepare her for the next chapter in her career.



SANDY BANKS
Western Sales Manager
P/Kaufmann Contract



Sandy joined P/Kaufmann, Inc. in 1983, playing a key role in the formation of the company's Contract division, both as one of the first sales representatives and as an invaluable consultant on initial product and color lines. There she found a kindred spirit in Curtis Breedlove, an early mentor and current President of P/Kaufmann Contract, with whom she shared a background in art and design that influenced PKC's aesthetic and sales strategy. Sandy has been awarded PKC's Salesperson of the Year numerous times during the past 30 years. In 2010, she was promoted to Western Sales Manager, where she has consistently grown her business in key West Coast, Las Vegas and Hawaiian markets. Sandy has maintained and expanded a loyal base of clients and brands by championing her customers' design vision and bottom line; by asking the right questions and giving honest answers; by conducting business with integrity, passion and style.

Sandy's reputation as a champion for her clients is well deserved, but her legacy as a champion for women in the hospitality industry may be even more enduring. Starting her career as a working mother in the early 1980's, she pushed back against prevailing corporate expectations, finding inspiration in a growing network of women who, like herself, sought to forge their own path and redefine success in the world of business. Sandy joined NEWH in 1984 as one of its early members and currently serves on its International Board of Directors. Along with mentoring new P/Kaufmann Contract sales representatives, Sandy has been instrumental in developing NEWH's mentoring and scholarship programs; nurturing the best and brightest of hospitality's next generation as a way to pay forward all of the support and guidance she has received.

Family, creative pursuits and causes close to her heart fill Sandy's personal life. She counts daughter Amber—an educator and mentor to women in her own right—as her greatest achievement. Sandy still sews her own clothes and collects art and textiles during her extensive travels. The inspiration she derives from other cultures enhances her personal and professional design aesthetic and informs her worldview. Through her support of organizations including Wildlife Waystation, Earth Justice and the ACLU, Sandy expresses her passion for animal welfare, the environment and social justice.



Each year NEWH gives out its most prestigious award, the **ICON of Industry**. The award celebrates the leaders of the manufacturing side of hospitality, those who have uniquely impacted the industry through their innovative work, consistently dedicated their time and efforts to community or industry outreach through education and/or corporate giving, and been doing business in hospitality for more than 30 years. In addition, a \$7,500 annual scholarship is awarded to an exemplary student in the recipient's honor. The scholarship recipient's travel and lodging to the award gala is paid by NEWH, Inc.