

Meet our most **INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN**

We were inundated with entries for the Good Housekeeping/Olsen Inspirational Woman of the Year Award. Now we need your help to select the winner from the three amazing women who have made our shortlist



'These three women are truly inspiring and they demonstrate just how much you can achieve, often against great adversity, with determination and focus.'

Celebrity judge, Debra Veal, who was awarded an MBE for rowing the Atlantic single handed.

When we asked you to nominate women for our Good Housekeeping/Olsen Inspirational Woman of the Year 2004 Award, we knew there would be some remarkable candidates – but the response was truly overwhelming.

Whether they've been fighting back from illness, raising money for others or are simply inspiring because of their personality, the names poured in. Our judges found choosing the finalists almost impossible, but we hope you'll agree that these three women fulfil the Good Housekeeping/Olsen ideal of celebrating ordinary women who've achieved extraordinary goals.

Now it's up to you to choose the winner from our finalists, all of whom will be treated to £500-worth of Olsen's stylish and wearable clothes, a makeover, an overnight stay at London's Savoy Hotel and an invitation to a Good Housekeeping fashion event.

The outright winner will receive an additional £2000 for her chosen cause, plus a Mark Warner holiday worth £3000. The winner will be announced at a special event in September and she'll feature in the December issue.

'I'm doing this not just for my son but also to help all other children with Lowe syndrome'

LORRAINE THOMAS, London

Four years ago Lorraine Thomas's only child, Oscar, was diagnosed with Lowe syndrome, an incurable, degenerative disease affecting the eyes, brain, kidney, bones and muscle. He was then almost six, had suffered years of illness and operations, and the doctors predicted he wouldn't survive past the age of seven. When Lorraine realised there was no support group or research in the UK, she launched The Lowe Syndrome Trust and has since campaigned tirelessly to raise money and awareness.

'I did everything I could think of. I put a letter through Jonathan Ross's letter box and he has been a fantastic support. I've pestered celebrities, I've written to Tony Blair, met Government representatives, organised balls, worked with schools to raise money – anything to find a cure. It's become my whole life'. So far, Lorraine has raised over £200,000, which has helped fund world-class research but she needs to raise £50,000 each year to help children like Oscar, who is now 10.

Lorraine was nominated by her friend, Catherine McNaught, who says, 'Lorraine's never-ending energy is an inspiration to us all.'

To vote for Lorraine, visit www.inspirationalwomen.co.uk or call 0901 380 0181*

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LORRAINE WEARS Sleeveless linen blouse, £35, and linen skirt, £39, both Olsen. All other items, stylist's own

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JILL MILLER, Somerset

When Jill Miller was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1993, she was terrified and decided right then that if she survived she would offer emotional support to other cancer sufferers in her area.

Used to overcoming obstacles, Jill left school at 15 with no qualifications but has since written two books and has been a pioneer of therapy through creative writing within both men's and women's prisons. After her diagnosis, Jill launched Positive Action on Cancer (PAC), a charity offering free professional counselling to anyone over the age of 14, who is directly or indirectly affected by cancer.

'The medical emphasis is on putting people's bodies back together – what we do is support the emotional side. I get lovely letters saying, "You've saved my sanity." I just couldn't bear the thought of other women being as terrified as I was and not having anywhere to turn.' In addition to the counselling, Jill has also co-founded a theatre company whose performances help health-care professionals to understand and deal with the emotional strains facing people affected by cancer.

Jill was nominated by Inez Smith, who says: 'It's easy to start a charity, but Jill's dogged determination sustains and expands PAC.'

To vote for Jill, visit www.inspirationalwomen.co.uk, or call 0901 380 0183*

'I just couldn't bear the thought of other women being as terrified as I was'

JILL WEARS Linen jacket, £125; linen trousers, £75, T-shirt, £23: all Olsen. All other items, stylist's own.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE WORK THESE INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN DO

To find out more about The Lowe Syndrome Trust or to make a donation, call 020 8458 6791, visit www.lowetrust.com or write to the Lowe Syndrome Trust, 77 West Heath Road, London NW3 7TH.

For more information about PACE or to make a donation, call 01296 392739, visit www.pacecentre.co.uk or write to The Pace Centre, Philip Green House, Coventon Road, Aylesbury HP19 9JL.

To find out more about PAC or to make a donation, call 01373 455255, visit www.pacproject.co.uk or write to PAC Project, 2a Market Place, Frome, Somerset BA11 1AG.

For a copy of the Mark Warner holidays brochure, visit www.markwarner.co.uk. To book, call 0870 770 4222.

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