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FEATURED

10 Madison-area leaders give us their New Year's resolutions for 2018

CHRIS RICKERT crickert@madison.com Dec 31, 2017



Gary Molz
GARY MOLZ



Michael Johnson
STATE JOURNAL ARCHIVES



Mike Koval
JOHN HART, STATE JOURNAL ARCHIVES

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Jennifer Cheatham
CAPITAL TIMES ARCHIVES

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Joe Parisi
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Among the resolutions for 2018: Eliminate homelessness among Madison-area students.

AMBER ARNOLD, STATE JOURNAL

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With 2018 almost here, the Wisconsin State Journal went looking for New Year's resolutions.

The newspaper wasn't looking for who wanted to lose 10 pounds, go vegan, take up bird-watching or finally learn to speak French.

It was interested in community improvement — specifically, what some of those who seek to lead and shape the Madison area are committed to doing in the New Year to help make it a better place to live.

What follows is a snapshot of some of those resolutions. Spoiler alert: Many of these call on the rest of us to do our part if they're to result in lasting and meaningful change. Consider it an addendum to your own list.

My new year's resolution is to promote careers in the trades and emphasize it's not just a man's world out here. Not every person is wired to sit at a computer or desk all day. It is rewarding to work with your hands and a noble and respectable way to provide for your family.

— **Jennifer Acker**, vice president and member of Acker Builders and Acker Realty, president of the Madison Area Builders Association Board of Directors

We must ensure Greater Madison remains an inclusive place where anyone can share in our region's prosperity, and that starts with improving equity in our business community. By supporting the growth of new business ownership and more and better job opportunities among women and people of color, we can build an advanced economy that works for everyone.

— **Gary Molz**, co-owner and COO of EZ Office Products, chairman of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors



Professionally, I look forward to bringing more incredible, world-class music to Madison, particularly as we open our new venue, The Sylvee, in the fall. Personally, and more importantly, I resolve to support candidates who will resist President Trump. The soul of our democracy is at stake, and it's imperative we flip the House and, hopefully, the Senate.

— **Tag Evers**, founder of True Endeavors

A lot of people are (understandably) bummed about the state of affairs at the state and federal levels of government. But remember, we're Dane County. When we focus on the art of the possible, we can and do make a big difference locally. I resolve to continue our work at the local level to achieve cleaner air, cleaner lakes and a community in which all people have access to the opportunity to thrive and succeed. We can accomplish a lot right here when we work together toward our common goals. So hang in there, and keep hope alive.

— **Joe Parisi**, Dane County executive

My resolution is to finish writing a new strategic framework this year, in collaboration with the Board of Education and our community, that will guide the Madison School District toward transformational change in the coming years — one that promotes belonging, voice and academic excellence for every child and embraces a focus on the success of African-American youth.

— **Jennifer Cheatham**, Madison School District superintendent

Community policing is at its best when there are authentic and trusting partnerships made with a plethora of groups, including not-for-profits, our business community, other governmental agencies, neighborhood advocates and, of course, constituents. It is my hope that our efforts to continue to work hand-in-hand with others will result in comprehensive initiatives to continue strategies that have elements of prevention, intervention and the suppression of gun violence.

Additionally, I would like to continue to expand and provide greater wrap-around services for restorative justice programs.

— **Mike Koval**, Madison police chief

Jenny Acker
JENNY ACKER



Tag Evers
TAG EVERS

In 2018 I would like to see additional municipalities in Dane County invest in community-policing strategies that involve collaborative prevention strategies between the community and the police. I would also like to see more municipalities in Dane County invest additional resources in their operating budgets to support programming for low-income children in resource-deprived communities. Boys & Girls Clubs will continue to advocate for these issues and will continue to create partnerships and resources for first-generation college students, ensuring that 95 percent of our local teens graduate from high school and are prepared for college, a career or both.

— **Michael Johnson**, president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Dane County

As a Rotarian, I truly believe in and try to live up to our motto of “Service Above Self.” In 2018, I resolve to continue to be a joyous servant in my community.



Henry Sanders Jr.
Jason Stephany

— **Donna Hurd**, director of administration for the Madison office of Perkins Coie LLP, president of the Rotary Club of Madison

My 2018 New Year’s resolution for this community is unity. I do not mean unity for the sake of it, but unity of purpose to focus on real issues, those with real impacts to help make real transformation in some of our most pressing issues.

My prayer for the Christian community is to work together not as one church, but all churches coming together to address the many needs in our community. For example, the Madison area had around 1,400 homeless children last year. If we came together we could change that alone in the next five years.

Real unity does not mean we all share the same opinion or points of view. It would mean folks of different backgrounds, different denominations and diverging theological points of view finally aligning on what are the needs in our community and collectively starting to address them.

We all know Dane County is one of America's best places to live, work and raise a family — by most measures, that is. On this cusp of another year, all of us in this community should align on one startling and disturbing truth — racial disparity is real and growing. If we truly want to address these racial disparities, we can no longer afford to have fragmented approaches. Local government thinks one thing, the business community thinks another. Funders focus in one direction, while the nonprofit community focuses on another.

My resolution is to finally come together to see the scope, pain and the real danger signs racial disparity means for our future, while recognizing the word “unity” anchors the word “community.” We are one community. I hope in 2018 we start acting like it.

— **Henry Sanders Jr.**, CEO and publisher of Madison365

In 2018 I will provide our coaches with the tools necessary to grow professionally as educators of our student-athletes through our initiatives to educate coaches beyond the X's and O's in the areas of training, mental health, nutrition, adolescent development and fostering leadership.

(We just launched a bi-monthly Madison School District Saturday breakfast club professional development series with 10 sessions coming up beginning in January to address this.)

In 2018 I will find better and more efficient ways to grow our greater community using athletics as a way to engage our broader community in Madison to celebrate the successes and benchmarks present in our high school athletics, and to support the financial needs to maintain great programming at the high school and increase connections at feeder levels.

In 2018 I will work to ensure all our students are able to take advantage of the opportunity education-based athletics provides.

— **Jeremy Schlitz**, Madison Memorial High School director of athletics and operations, Madison School District athletic director

MORE INFORMATION



Donna Hurd
ROTARY CLUB OF MADISON