

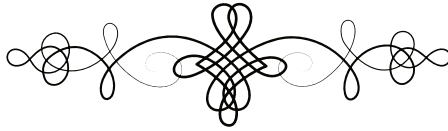
# GLAMOURgals

Help us end elder loneliness



*Rachel Doyle, founder and CEO of GlamourGals*

# GLAMOURGALS: INSPIRING BEAUTY, CHANGING LIVES



## **Tell us what you do!**

I am the founder and CEO of GlamourGals, a non-profit that inspires and organizes teen volunteers to provide ongoing companionship and complimentary beauty makeovers to women living in senior homes.

## **What inspired you to create GlamourGals?**

After my grandmother's passing, I wanted to honor her memory with something special. A GlamourGals makeover provides an opportunity for a young person to connect with an older generation, exchanging compliments, stories and advice. The bonus is that seniors get to enjoy freshly painted nails or a touch of color on their lips and cheeks after a beauty makeover.

## **How do you define your leadership style, and how has it evolved?**

My leadership style is focused, creative and inviting. My role as a leader has changed over the years: first, as a student asking others to join; then as chapter leader; later as a leader managing many chapters; and, now even staff. Through these transitions, I have always stayed true to my style.

**Can you share a specific moment or experience that encapsulates the impact GlamourGals has had on the lives of those it serves, and how it reinforces your commitment to the cause?**

For 24 years I've seen how the touch of a hand, a light embrace, or a conversation can brighten someone's day and make them feel valued at a GlamourGals makeover.

My personal experience with a senior named Faye demonstrates our impact best.

Faye sat quietly as I greeted her. Her hands were clasped, and she didn't move so much as a slight nod. I double-checked with the activities coordinator: "Does Faye want a makeover today?" She nodded yes.

For about an hour I smiled and chirped about school, embraced her, applied rouge on her cheeks, dabbed lipstick on her lips and complimented her smooth skin. Faye didn't smile once.

I left the makeover feeling like a failure; it was the first time a woman had not even smiled back at me. That evening, I received a call from the activities coordinator. I got nervous. I thought I might be in trouble. As we were discussing the makeover, the conversation turned to Faye. The coordinator informed me that Faye was the reason for her call.

She shared, "Faye had been severely depressed, and had stopped eating. It was after your makeover that she finally picked up her fork."

The will to live is powerful and the idea that as a teen I had a role in impacting that will is special, and I will never forget it.

**In building and growing GlamourGals, what challenges did you face, and how did your leadership skills help you navigate through those obstacles?**

Entrepreneurship brings daily and long-term challenges—sourcing resources, and finding the right people. Each solution reveals new obstacles. Success lies in navigating these challenges with the right attitude and approach. It may not be the planned outcome, but continuous forward movement signifies success for any business owner or manager.

**Leadership involves making tough decisions. Can you share an example of a challenging decision you had to make as the founder of GlamourGals and how it influenced the organization?**

I faced a challenging situation when I established my advisory council in college. A senior member displayed a disrespectful attitude before our first meeting, prompting me to swiftly “accept his resignation”. Despite the bold move, it proved to be the right decision, allowing the rest of the council to have a productive and important meeting the next day, undeterred by negativity.

**As GlamourGals continues to evolve, how do you ensure that the organization stays true to its core values and mission while adapting to changing circumstances?**

Our goal is to positively impact seniors’ lives and nurture leadership skills in volunteers. As we grow and evolve, it’s crucial to keep these principles in focus. Open communication within our organization encourages constructive feedback from volunteers and supporters. This input helps us adapt without compromising our mission, allowing us to address the changing needs of seniors and the communities we serve.

**What advice do you have for someone who is passionate about a cause and wants to make a positive impact?**

Don’t wait to start. As a 16-year-old, all I had was hard work and determination and the belief that I could build something out of an “idea” to create change.



*Rachel Doyle at a 2023 GlamourGals Power Brunch with author Madison Zhan.*



*Madison Zhan, founder/chapter president of Stuyvesant GlamourGals at the 2023 Glammy Awards.*





*Making seniors feel loved and appreciated is at the heart of GlamourGals' mission. Chapter President Madison Zhan and Vice President Hwarin Zoh with a senior at 305 West End Assisted Living.*