

LAS VEGAS

WINTER 2012-13

WOMAN[®]

TO EDUCATE, ENTERTAIN & INSPIRE

**EAT
SHOP
GIVE**

YOUR ANNUAL
GUIDE TO DINING,
SHOPPING AND
GIVING BACK

TRAVEL

FOUR SEASONS RESORT
BORA BORA
ROSARITO BEACH HOTEL
ROSARITO MEXICO

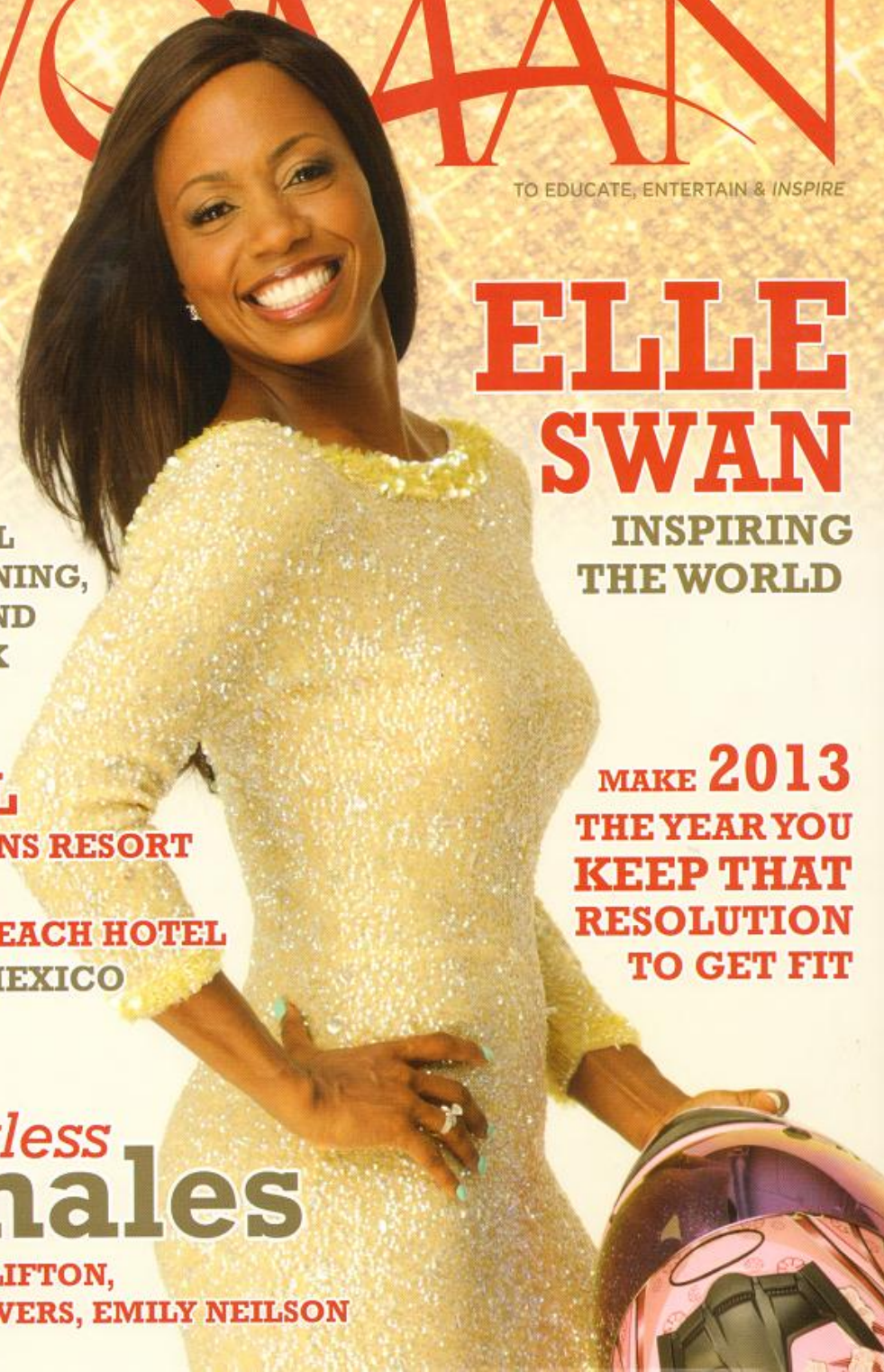
**ELLE
SWAN**

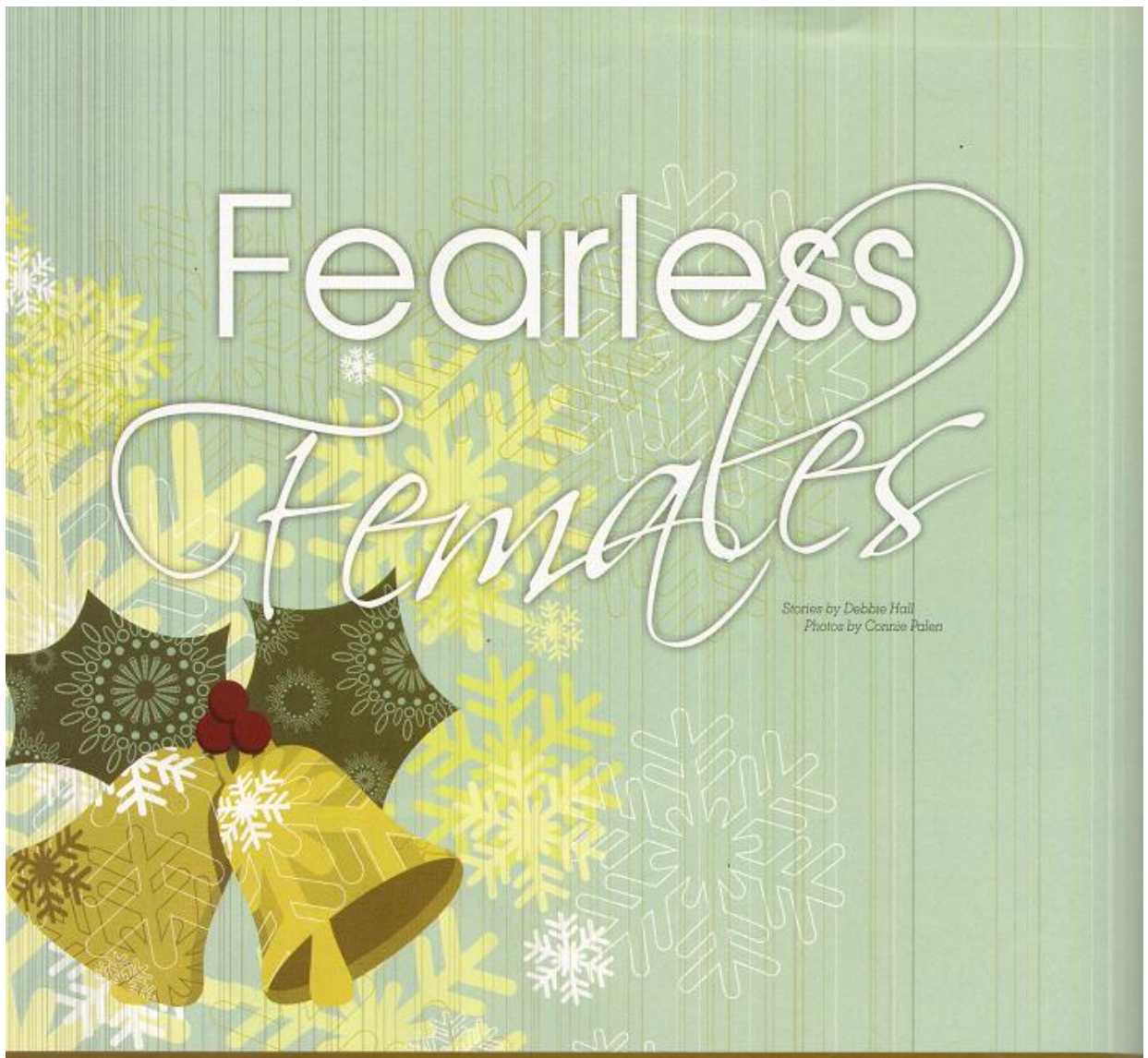
INSPIRING
THE WORLD

MAKE **2013**
THE YEAR YOU
KEEP THAT
RESOLUTION
TO GET FIT

Fearless
Females

CHRISTINA CLIFTON,
DR. JONI FLOWERS, EMILY NEILSON





Fearless Females

Stories by Debbie Hall
Photos by Corrine Palen



Christina Clifton



Dr. Joni Flowers



Emily Neilson

With the holiday season comes gratitude for our gifts and all of our Fearless Females are appreciative of the advice, opportunities and help in achieving their goals. Two of our Fearless Females have succeeded in male-dominated industries and one continued her education over the course of decades while starting her own nonprofit organization. All three demonstrate the power of perseverance, attitude and determination as well as giving thanks and encouragement to others.

Christina Clifton

Food and
philanthropy
are her
passions



As vice president of food and beverage for ARIA Resort & Casino at City Center, Christina Clifton is one of a few women in the male-dominated industry who has achieved the position of senior executive at a hotel and casino on the Las Vegas Strip. Serving her second term as chairwoman of the board for the Epicurean Charitable Foundation of Las Vegas, Clifton brings her passions for philanthropy and the culinary industry together. A member of ECF since 2006, she works diligently to provide promising young students the opportunity to pursue their educations in hospitality.

"Our industry is in need of developing talented individuals to continue carrying the creative process forward," said Clifton, "We have a great group of board members and hope to complement their skills by inviting newcomers to Las Vegas in the hospitality industry."

Clifton began her career with MGM Resorts in 2003 as the director of food and beverage at The Mirage. Before joining MGM Resorts, she spent 14 years with Four Seasons Hotel focused on food and beverage along with managing the hotel property. Clifton obtained extensive knowledge while working at several Four Seasons locations including Vancouver, B.C., San Francisco, Austin, Houston, Washington, D.C. and Scottsdale, Ariz.

Clifton explained, "My father is a mixologist, so I grew up around the restaurant business. He hoped that I would not go into the business. However, in my last semester at the University of Arizona, where I majored in music education, I took a job as a hostess at a fine dining restaurant in a hotel. The rush of the restaurant business felt so comfortable to me and I decided to stay on after I graduated. I volunteered to work in the kitchen, watched the bartenders, worked my way to becoming a cocktail server and eventually landed a server position, where I learned the art of tableside service. I was hooked from that point forward."

As for her commitment to ECF, Clifton works closely with the board of directors to remain focused on ECF's mission to align the hospitality industry's affiliation with the community through support of the local education system, related organizations, charities and associations.

"Whenever you can help any person achieve their goals to further their education and life experience, it is a fantastic feeling," said Clifton, "My involvement has helped me to conquer my own insecurities as well as strengthen and better develop my skills as a mentor."

As for any bumps on her path, Clifton explained, "Obstacles are not how I interpret challenges that I have encountered in my professional career. I have always been determined so I find a way around, through or over any challenge that lands in my path. Not all are overcome, but if I can transform a part of that challenge into a move forward, then I still feel that I have achieved something."

She advises other women entering her field, "First, you must have a passion for this industry or you won't be successful. Gain as much knowledge as you can in all facets of the business, and if you decide to join a company or own a company, it's important to always know your numbers."

Her biggest influences are a variety of individuals who are successful musicians, chefs and restaurateurs. Her parents and others who have the tenacity to make their vision come true inspire Clifton. This is one Fearless Female who inspires all of us to follow our dream.