

# Leaders Innovators

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**LIZABETH ARDISANA:** Principal Owner and CEO of Detroit-based ASG Renaissance, a technical and communication services firm with five offices in the U.S. and Canada. Ardisana is responsible for day-to-day operations and financial management. She also manages the company's consulting and marketing services units, which provide a wide range of services in engineering program management, strategic and operational transformation, diversity supplier development, and integrated marketing communications. She has over 25 years of automotive industry experience and began at Ford Motor Co. as an engineer. She quickly advanced to positions in vehicle development, product planning, and marketing. Leaving Ford, she briefly co-owned and managed a Ford truck dealership before forming ASG Renaissance. Ardisana also has an extensive background developing strategies, identifying market opportunities for environmental products, working with industry and government groups to develop and facilitate market plans, and developing national and international alternative fuel vehicle marketing and sales programs for Ford, Chrysler, and Nissan North America. She has served on the President's Task Force for Implementation of Alternative Vehicles. Additionally, she worked with the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Agency for International Development in promoting and facilitating Clean Cities International programs in Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Mexico. She has evaluated infrastructure and plans for the development of natural gas vehicles, developed codes and standards for natural gas fueling and vehicle conversions, and facilitated public and private plans to implement these programs. Ardisana serves on numerous boards, including the Skillman Foundation, Citizen's Bank, Oakwood Hospital, the Detroit Regional Chamber, and Focus: HOPE. She is also president and founder of the Hispanic Auto Suppliers Alliance and chairs the Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Most recently, she was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Ardisana has received numerous awards, including being named a "Michiganian of the Year" by the *Detroit News* and one of Metro Detroit's "Most Influential Women" by *Crain's Detroit Business*. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas, an MBA from the University of Detroit Mercy, and a master's in mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan.

**WHERE BORN:** "Right outside of Chicago."

**MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSONS:** "Lots of people but the most influential group is my family. I wouldn't have a career, capabilities, or anything without an absolutely phenomenal family. They are the core of who I am."

**LAST BOOK READ:** "I'm now reading, *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest* by Stieg Larsson. It's fun, escapism."

**WORDS THAT DESCRIBE ME:** "Focused, hard working, direct, and straight forward."

**WHERE MY FIELD/INDUSTRY IS HEADED:** "We do a lot of work in public affairs to marketing to innovation. Today, we're working in environmental technology - alternative fuels and vehicles, growing from new and different innovations to commercialization. We're going from technology that's low volume, new, and different, to something that customers will be driving hundreds of thousands miles in, in the next 10-15 years. The speed that it is evolving is really amazing."

**FAVORITE TECHNOLOGICAL GADGET:** "I bought my husband an iPad for Christmas and now he has to get it away from me. We drive across the country

every January from Michigan to Arizona. iPad, 3G, WiFi, email, read, Web, no matter where you are.”

**FAVORITE PLACE:** “I love my home in Michigan and my home in Arizona.”

**FAVORITE HOBBIES:** “Travel. I love going to historical places.”

**FAVORITE FOOD:** “Anything hot and spicy.”

**MY HIDDEN TALENT:** “I don't have one - what I am is what you see.”

**HOW I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED:** “About 10 years ago, I was diagnosed with cancer so I've thought about this. I want to be someone who made a difference: that I treated everyone well and made a difference in their lives.”



**At the annual awards reception on Thursday, April 28, 2011, one Leader & Innovator from the previous 12 months will be selected as the Grant Thornton Leader & Innovator of the Year.**