

In Memory of our Founder
Ellie McCabe
1934-2021

Ellie did this interview in October as part of our Impact 100 Women of Distinction series. She was an inspiration to all who knew her and have benefited from her loving kindness. She will be missed.

Let's get to know our founder, Ellie McCabe, as she talks about her life's philosophy, her love of cooking, and her superpower.

Let's start with some easy questions. Where did you grow up? I grew up in Bridgeport, CT, and attended Bassick High School and the University of Bridgeport.

Tell us about your family? I came to Vero in 1971 with my mother to help her find a home to winter in after my father died. She bought a home in John's Island. After a few vacations, my first husband and I decided to purchase an apartment there as well and later built a house. I started living in Vero Beach full-time in 1983. My husband Bob was living in Boca Raton in 1984. Like me, he had just gone through a divorce. A mutual friend set us up on a blind date. We were married nine months later...just like a pregnancy, but no baby! I had three children from my first marriage, and he had two from his. Together we have nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Tell us about your career? I have been a wife, mother, and professional volunteer. I learned about philanthropy and volunteering at my father's knee. I was taught to value my gifts and to give back whenever I could. I have always tried to live my life that way.

What are your favorite hobbies? Crossword puzzles, Words With Friends, reading. I used to cook and entertain frequently, which often went hand in hand with volunteering.

What's a fun fact about you not many people know? My girlfriend and I took a Christmas cooking class at Martha Stewart's house before she was famous. I used her Bûche de Noel recipe for many years to come.

If you could invite one person, living or deceased, to dinner, who would it be and why? Julia Child because I love her sense of humor and how she makes fun of herself when she makes a mistake.

Where's your favorite vacation spot? Paris, France

What's the last book you read? A Slow Fire Burning by Paula Hawkins

What three words best describe you: Kind, thoughtful (I hope), and compulsive

What one food can you not live without? Pickled Herring (I'm a Swede)

You helped found Impact 100, tell us about this. I helped found an initiative called Women and Philanthropy to help educate women about how they could be intentional and thoughtful with their giving. After a few years, we wanted to do more than educate. Someone read an article about the women who started the first Impact 100 in Cincinnati. Several of us joined forces to start a similar effort here.

You've been a member of Impact 100 since the very first year! Do you have any advice for new members? Make Impact 100 work for your lifestyle. If you can volunteer that's great, but just being a part of the effort as a member is worthwhile.

What is your superpower? I'm a great list maker.

