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COVER STORY

20 Women to Watch

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Fierce. Enterprising. Inventive. These Orange County women are changing our world, locally and beyond. From an entrepreneur who took her idea from inspiration to international sales to a policewoman who became O.C.'s first and only female police chief, this year's roster of 20 women to watch inspires.

Consider the young journalist and activist who went to school in Anaheim who made the cover of Time magazine last year. She now reports from the front lines on the turmoil in Egypt. Like every woman featured here, she has followed her passion and has been willing to gut out the hard times.



Gigi Ibrahim

Journalist/Activist, 'Gigi's Revolution'

The next time you see reports of the ongoing turmoil in Egypt, don't be surprised if you see Egyptian Gihan "Gigi" Ibrahim in the middle of the chaos talking into a cellphone or tweeting the latest news.

Ibrahim, a journalist and political activist living in Cairo, was a vocal organizer leading up to, and during, the 2011 Egyptian revolution. The former Anaheim resident became internationally known due to her media interviews and her Facebook and Twitter posts from Tahrir Square during the protests.

Ibrahim was featured on the Feb. 28, 2012, cover of TIME Magazine as a member of "The Generation Changing the World," and she's been a guest on "Frontline," the BBC, Al Jazeera and "The Daily Show." A documentary about her experiences and the views of other upper-middle-class Egyptians, called

"Gigi's Revolution," aired on PBS in February 2011.

Ibrahim was born in Long Beach to Egyptian parents who returned to Egypt when she was 1 year old. Her widowed father moved the family back to California when Ibrahim was 14. **She attended Cornelia Connelly School, a private all-girls Catholic high school in Anaheim,** and then Orange Coast College. In 2008, she transferred to the American University in Cairo, where she earned a political science degree in December 2010. She hopes to earn master's and Ph.D. degrees.

Ibrahim remains vigilant in her coverage of the unfolding events in Egypt, posting frontline updates on Twitter (@Gsquare86) and her blog. Additionally, she works as an editor for What Women Want, an Egyptian-based English-language lifestyles magazine, and continues to do freelance photography and produce videos, as well as write articles about the revolution.

"I consider myself a person with a bipolar identity of part free-spirit American and part angry Egyptian," Ibrahim says on her Facebook page.

"I am so honored and glad that my life led me to this, with all the ups and downs that we have experienced under this revolution," Ibrahim says. "I don't regret one thing, and I would relive it all over. I have faith in the power of the people, and this is my source of inspiration that makes me keep going until our victory in achieving bread, freedom and social equality." —Amy Bentley