



SECRETS TO A GOOD LIFE

Women at Work

These military wives champion Rosie the Riveter's spirit in their accessories line

BY BETSY CRIBB

R.RIVETER cofounder Cameron Cruse says it started with a quarter-life crisis. “We found ourselves, like many military spouses do, out in the middle of nowhere without many job opportunities,” says Cruse (above right), who lives in Southern Pines, North Carolina. “We realized that it was within our power to change that—not only for ourselves but also for others.” For many, notes cofounder Lisa Bradley (above left), life in the military means relocating every few years, and it’s often difficult to find work that will move with them. So Bradley and Cruse founded R.Riveter (rriveter.com), a handbag and home-goods brand that offers meaningful employment for military spouses. It works as a virtual assembly line: “Riveters” across the

country are sent raw materials to cut and sew into pieces of the handbags; then they send those elements to be assembled into finished products at facilities in North Carolina and Florida. Each piece of every handbag is stamped with an employee’s Riveter number, so customers can look up the numbers and know the people who made their bags. “When we watched our husbands go off to work, we felt incredibly proud of what they were doing for our country,” says Bradley, whose husband transitioned from the military in 2012. “We were along with them in these sacrifices every time we restarted our lives, but we wanted to provide a platform where military spouses could know that they’re serving their country too.”

FAMILY MATTERS

Have a Safe Thanksgiving

How to navigate the holiday during a global pandemic

RECOGNIZE THE RISK

▶ “Person-to-person interaction causes most COVID-19 transmissions,” says Dr. Ellen Eaton, an infectious-disease specialist at The University of Alabama at Birmingham. “To us, the holidays mean gathering and sharing a meal, but those are among the highest-risk interactions, as they do not involve the at minimum 6-foot distance.” This year, she advises pivoting away from larger get-togethers. Instead, identify the smaller groups that are most important to you, and build your celebrations around those.

GET CREATIVE

▶ Once you’ve decided on those groups (preferably five people or fewer), think outside the box with your activities. “This would be a great time to do something nontraditional,” suggests Eaton. Consider hosting the Thanksgiving meal on your patio or gathering in the yard to make floral arrangements for high-risk family members who are safest at home. She says to wear your masks and be sure to pay attention to local public health mandates.

BE STRAIGHTFORWARD

▶ For family members who don’t understand why you can’t gather, it might be time for tough love, says Eaton: “Encourage people to consider, ‘Will this traditional family meal be worth it if someone ends up in the hospital or we all have to quarantine for 14 days?’ ” **SL**