

# A WEARABLE CAUSE

Kay McDonald creates purpose-driven jewelry with Charity Charms

BY ELIZABETH LIBERATORE / PHOTO BY MARK MORGAN



**For purpose-driven jewelry,** Kay McDonald is your gal. After a long tenure in fashion merchandising, first as a retail buyer then a vice president of product development, she founded Regalia, an accessory business, in 1989. Little did she know that Regalia would pave the way for an impactful fashion enterprise.

"While I owned Regalia, we did events that benefited nonprofits through the sale of our jewelry line. It dawned on me that I could create a custom line of jewelry for charities at a wholesale price and they could sell [my jewelry] at their events and venues, keeping 100 percent of the profits," she says.

McDonald launched Charity Charms, meaningful-meets-fashionable jewelry that defines nonprofits' brands while helping them raise awareness and funds.

"Charms have the power to tell a story, connect people in a significant way and build a legacy of love," McDonald explains.

The company creates a custom charm from an organization's logo, which can adorn Charity Charms' gamut of accessories, like bracelets or keyrings. All materials are ethically and environmentally sourced from recycled pewter and sterling silver.

"It warms my heart to see women all over the world wearing charms for the charities they support."

From nonprofits to businesses to schools, Charity Charms' clientele is expansive and always growing. Some of the charming customers include Florence Crittenton, ChildHelp, Ronald McDonald House and The Salvation Army.

McDonald's empire turns 15 this year. To celebrate, she revamped the company's website to include testimonials and inspired examples and ideas. Embracelets, a sterling silver bangle, was also introduced to the product line. And in the coming months, McDonald will unveil her first book, *Charms as a Food for Good*.

So exactly how many charms does this charm-maker have? Over one million, which includes all of the ones she's made for clients, charms inherited from her grandmother and charms from her travels as a fashion maven.

"The conversations I have with people that need help, the connections I make with people so passionate about what they do and the impact I feel from people dedicated to making a difference...that's what brings meaning and fulfillment to my work," she says.