

Athena award recognizes professionalism.

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'You've come a long way.

You've come a long way, Baby

People at the Oakland County Chamber of Commerce might well be using that phrase of late, refer-ring to the organization's Athena Award, the annual prize commemo-rating professional excellence among women.

The Athena Award — whose name comes from Greek mythology — is a relatively new development in Oakland County, said Nancy L. Ragadale, a member of the chamber and spokeswoman for the Athena Award Committee.

But support is strong and growing, Ragsdale sald, much like the role of business women in the economy of Oakland County. "We have about two dozen candi-dates — including at least three men

Pald in full at time of purchase.

— and we have more than a week" before the close of nominations, said Hagsdale, account representative in marketing at Manpower Temporary Services Inc.

Men may be nominated who have been particularly supportive of women in business.

The chamber will present its third Athena on Jan. 31 during its annual dinner at the Troy Marriott Hotel.

Previous winners are Noreen Kealing, executive director of the Pontiac Area Lighthouse, and Grace E. Smith, former director of comments of the Comment of the Comm ing professional education at Walsh College.

THE FIRST EVER Athena Award was presented in Lansing in 1982, as the Regional Chamber of Commerce in the capital city looked for some way to recognize outstanding business women and the emerging role of women in the community.

The award has since become part of a national program, with Athena – the daughter of Zeus – symbolizing the virtues of courage, wisdom and strength, all qualities needed by today's business woman. The emergence of women in Oakland County might well be symbolized in Parnela M. Berklich, the first woman in the chamber's 80-year history to serve as chalizman of the chamber's board of directors.

THE CHAMBER doesn't keep statistics on the number of women among its 1,000 members, said Berk-lich, who has been active in it for about five years. "But the number is growing," she

Berklich, area manager for the automotive division of Manpower Temporary Services, said she is con-vinced Oakland County will reflect the trend projected on a national ba-

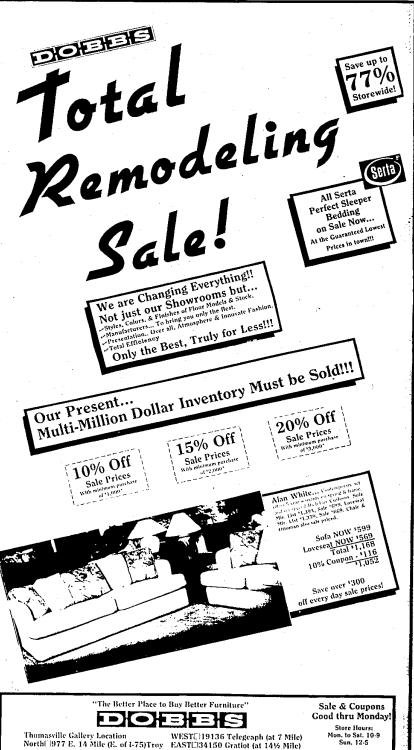
sis on the number of women en-trepreneurs.

THAT TREND calls for women to own 50 percent of all businesses by the year 2000, Berklich said, with the chamber's membership changing ac-

the year 2000, Better San, William 12 to the chamber's membership changing accordingly.

The Athena Award is one way the chamber is recognizing that change. The deadline for nominating a man or woman for the Athena Award is Friday, Nov. 16. Early forms can be obtained through the chamber, at 683-4187 or 844-1238.

This year's selection committee is Kenneth Grabant, resident comptroller of the General Motor 500-1800, the control of the General Motor 100-1800, the control of the General Motor 100-1800, the Control of the General Motor 100-1800, the General Motor 100-180, and General Motor 100-180. The General Motor 100-180, and Jeffrey Barry, president of Walsh College.



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