



Karen DeJarnette

We have a special treat this month! One of our buggiest fans, Karen DeJarnette was awarded with [2016 Syracuse Woman of the Year](#) designation and we are happy to applaud a fellow card-maker for this recognition. We invited Karen for some fun conversation and are excited to feature her on this month's designer spotlight.

1. Can you tell us a bit more about yourself? What do you do for a living?

If you ask my mom, she would tell you I talk on the phone for a living! Last summer while my mom was visiting I started managing training programs for Fast Lane Consulting and Education Services, Inc. working from home for the first time in my life. I am connected to others all around the world via technology; sitting in front of my computer I 'talk' to students, instructors, and clients to help them develop and deliver technology-focused training programs.

That's my day job! I believe that through the power of philanthropy we can make a positive impact on the lives and futures of people in our communities, helping young and old find opportunities and pathways forward. In line with that belief, I am active in the community, engaged in several different organizations that focus on helping young people reach their full potential and empowering women and girls to reach their goals.

2. Let's talk about the craft side of your life. How did you start with crafting? Are you a cardmake, scrapbooker, or mixed-media artist?

Alas, I am a horrible drawer and painter. My mom enrolled me in an art class in grade school and my poor, poor bowl of apples....let's just say that my apple bowl painting never made the refrigerator door! I was in 4-H and learned to sew and knit, but it wasn't till MUCH later when I saw an episode on Carol Duval's television show featuring rubber stamping that introduced me to card making. With rubber stamps it didn't matter that I could not draw! Woo hoo! I fell in love with a craft that allowed me to bring my vision to life! [and helped me justify my purchases because I was making something to give to someone else!]

3. Do you have favorite crafting mediums you'd like to use when crafting? Why are they your favorite?

One of the first stamping techniques I learned was heat embossing. I fell in love with the ability to make an image look as though it was professionally printed. I was amazed at all of the techniques you could do when an image was heat embossed. I am a huge Distress Ink fan and have only recently embraced alcohol ink coloring that went beyond just filling in the lines with color and water coloring. One of the things I truly love about this craft is how it continuously expands what is possible with paper and ink. I can't wait to see what new techniques and products I "Need" in the future.

4. What kind of style do you prefer when crafting? And where do you find inspiration for your projects?

I guess you could say my style is 'shabby chic.' I love layers. Layers of color, layers of texture, layers of images. Why send a one layer card when you could add a background layer, some foam tape, and a little bling?

I am consistently inspired by the art I find in blog posts. I love to read the posts that help me understand the inspiration behind the images, and how the little details were made that take a stamped image from ink on paper to portable art. This craft is so thoughtful and caring. Artists are always linking to new people's art on Pinterest and Instagram providing a constant source of new ideas and new people to get to know. Women like Jennifer

McGuire, Nichole Heady, Ali Edwards and companies like yours help inspire us all to try new techniques and to share our craft. Marika Rahtu introduced me to layering ink with colored pencils or markers to create more realistic images. Yana Smakula's use of frames gives new dimension to images. Debby Hughes', Agnieszka Malyszek's, and Lydia Evans' use of color inspires creativity. Therese Calvird's use of alcohol ink helps me think beyond 'filling in the blanks.'

5. How did you become a fan of Altenew? What are some of your all-time favorite products from Altenew?

THAT is an easy answer, I became a fan of Altenew through one of my favorite artists (and all-time best stamping enablers), Jennifer McGuire. I follow her blog faithfully and saw a post where she talked about this amazing new company that came on the market. BUT it was [this post](#) that pushed me over the edge. So elegant, so rich looking! I HAD to make this card and to find out more!

I love flowers, and the ability to make such realistic flowers with stamps? OH MY! I spent hours(literally hours!) looking at the Altenew website, perusing your gallery of cards, searching for pins and posts, and agonizing over my first purchase...[Layered Lily](#) to make THIS card, THEN Vintage Flowers, Beautiful Day and Peony Bouquet. I was thrilled when you introduced dies for those stamps, just sayin'. And I am loving your new alcohol markers!

BUT I have to admit as much as I love the amazing images and the breadth and creativity of Altenew's product line, I LOVE the fact that you have women from around the world designing, blogging, and creating for you! It is so inspiring to see your design team's artistry and creativity and to hear new voices in this field! Thank you for expanding my network of creative artists.

6. Can you share a project using Altenew products with us?

This is a picture of a card I created in response to Altenew's March Inspiration photo....as well as Marika Rahtu's card shown [here](#), and this card by Betsy Veldman shown [here](#). I used a stencil to add texture as Betsy described to mimic the baskets the women in the inspiration photo carried (and as an homage to the new stencils you just released!). I loved the colors of the inspiration photo and the way Marika positioned her flowers around and through the frame in her card.



7. This is just for fun! If you can only choose 3 supplies to use for the rest of your life, what would they be?

Eh gah! This has to be the hardest question EVER! Really good scissors because you can always change the look of an image by cutting it just so! Foam Tape because EVERYTHING always looks better when you can make layers! My flower stamps (because there are at least some ferns and leaves in there for the infamous masculine cards.) ACK! I can't do three...just one more! Distress ink because you can stamp with it, paint with it, color with it!