

American Destiny: A True Story of Family, Roots, and the Journey Between Two Worlds

Meet the Authors:

Marcella Luiso Flanagan

Marcella Luiso Flanagan is the author of *American Destiny: A True Story of Family, Roots, and the Journey Between Two Worlds*, co-written with her niece, Phyllis Clare Orlowski. A pioneering figure for women in business, Marcella built a distinguished career as a fashion designer and manufacturing executive beginning in the 1960s.

In 1977, she became the founding executive director of the New York Association of Women Business Owners, where she played a key role in advancing opportunities for women in commerce and leadership. She was also instrumental in organizing New York City's first "Salute to Women in Business Week," helping to elevate the visibility and influence of women across industries.

Now in her 90s, Marcella has turned to storytelling, reflecting on a life shaped by resilience, identity, and cultural heritage. *American Destiny* preserves her family's return to postwar Italy in 1948 and the experiences that informed her understanding of home, belonging, and the enduring ties between generations.

Phyllis Clare Orlowski

Phyllis Clare Orlowski is a retired educator, advocate, and writer who collaborated with her aunt, Marcella Luiso Flanagan, to bring *American Destiny* to life. A former high school Spanish teacher and varsity tennis coach, Phyllis has long been committed to education and advocacy, including work supporting individuals with dyslexia and promoting access to literacy. Fluent in multiple languages and deeply engaged in cultural understanding and family advocacy, she served as both a steward and creative partner in shaping her aunt's memoir, helping preserve a story of heritage, belonging, and resilience for a new generation of readers.

She resides in upstate New York, is the mother of three sons, and enjoys oil painting and traveling—especially visits with relatives in Italy.