

Rachel  
McADAMS  
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# suburban life



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five-star  
physicians,  
and more

Led by Karen Minsky, Bucks County-based **Dionis Goat Milk Skincare** has cultivated a nationwide following devoted to its lineup of goat-milk-based products for bath and body.

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# A True Original



Karen Minsky, shown on her Bucks County farm with some friends, describes goat milk as “an exceptionally unique ingredient in skin care” for its ability to support healthy-looking skin.

When asked about a surprising fact she has learned in her working with goats as president of Dionis Goat Milk Skincare, Karen Minsky is quick to reply: “Goats are the happiest and most content animals.”

She cites a legendary story about the company’s founder, Kate Crosby, who brought a goat to a pivotal business meeting in the early 1980s.

A goat farmer in the highlands of Virginia, Crosby began making goat-milk-based soaps for her friends and family. The overwhelmingly positive response convinced Crosby to expand her home-based operation into a business called Dionis Goat’s Milk Soap, a name that invoked her favorite childhood beach in Nantucket. After achieving success locally, Crosby realized she had a special product that deserved a larger platform. So, she took one of her favorite spokes-animals and headed to the nearest Cracker Barrel.

“She just walked into that store with a goat under her arm, asking whether they were interested in her products,” says Minsky. They loved Crosby and the goat, and a relationship began; by 1997, Dionis soaps were being sold in Cracker Barrel stores nationwide. Minsky adds, “They couldn’t resist Kate’s determination, or the goats.”

## Local Products with Wide Reach

The distribution of Dionis’ goat-milk-based body lotions, hand creams, lip balms, and other bath-and-body products has expanded to almost 6,000 retailers nationwide, including Ulta Beauty, Macy’s and, of course, Cracker Barrel. Even with such a wide footprint, Dionis has deep local roots. As much as 90 percent of products are made at its factory in Warrenton, thanks largely to the time and talents of more than 150 employees.

Dionis remains a family-owned enterprise. When Dionis began expanding its production, Crosby connected with a local Bucks County family, the Ott’s. “Like me, they fell in love with Dionis,” says Minsky. When Crosby decided to retire, the Ott’s were happy to step in. “They couldn’t imagine the company being sold to just anyone else,” Minsky says.

Minsky feels privileged to have picked up where Crosby left off. With significant experience in sourcing, product development, and sales and marketing for consumer goods, Minsky initially interviewed for a position at Dionis in 2016 to oversee its supply chain and product development. She remembers being impressed with the company’s product line and operations, but she wasn’t completely sure if Dionis was the best fit for her.

“Then, on my way home, I decided to try the hand cream I was given,” says Minsky. “I fell immediately in love with the brand and knew instantly I had to be a part of it.”

Bucks County has since become Minsky’s adopted hometown. A New York native, she moved to southeast Pennsylvania in search of an excellent school district for her sons.

by **MELISSA D. SULLIVAN** | photos by **ALISON DUNLAP**

LED BY KAREN MINSKY, BUCKS COUNTY-BASED **DIONIS GOAT MILK SKINCARE** HAS CULTIVATED A NATIONWIDE FOLLOWING DEVOTED TO ITS LINEUP OF GOAT-MILK-BASED PRODUCTS FOR BATH AND BODY.

She quickly “fell in love” with Bucks County’s farmland and people. “Now I can’t imagine living anywhere else,” she adds.

### The Benefits of Goat Milk

Now president of Dionis, Minsky has made the company’s continued success her complete focus. Luckily, Dionis products are an easy sell.

“Goat milk is an exceptionally unique ingredient in skin care, full of vitamins and

minerals to help support healthy-looking skin,” says Minsky. “[Humans] share the same pH as goats, which helps to balance skin’s microbiome, making our products ideal for dry and sensitive skin.”

While Dionis makes more than 150 products, Minsky admits that the hand creams remain a personal favorite, with such fragrances as lavender blossom, creamy coconut and oats, and vanilla bean. Dionis also offers fragrance-free soaps and lotions and treat-

ment-based products such as body serum with collagen and lotion with retinol.

Regardless of the product, Dionis is committed to using only the highest-quality ingredients and earning its place as a “clean” beauty company. All its skin and body solutions are made with grade-A whole goat milk and never contain parabens, sulfates, or phthalates. Dionis also prides itself on being a cruelty-free brand, and maintains certification from cosmetic consumer watchdog Leaping Bunny.

“The beauty industry is a huge pool of brands that are constantly flaunting pretty packaging and big promises, but they don’t always deliver,” Minsky says. “I’m proud to be running an authentic brand that isn’t just selling a product but is committed to its values and the needs of our customers. My personal commitment is that no matter how big we get, that commitment to our customers will never change.”

### Strong Female Leadership

As a business leader, Minsky is grateful to be following in Crosby’s footsteps.

“Kate was a strong female building a brand, and she wouldn’t take no for an answer, or be discouraged by hard work,” says Minsky, pointing out that this was at a time when female-led companies were few and far between.

Minsky has found inspiration in such challenges.

“In my career I have worked with many female leaders who were strong and driven to get to the finish line first,” says Minsky. “Unfortunately, they were not always given the same respect as their fellow male leaders, but they never let that stop them. My inspiration comes from all of them.

“It’s not easy being the only female leader in the room,” she continues. “But more of us are joining, and we need to pave the way.” She urges young women to trust their own instincts, even if they face external opposition. “I do this daily,” she adds.

Forty years after Kate Crosby walked into a Cracker Barrel with a goat under her arm, Minsky looks forward to building on Dionis’ legacy with focus, authenticity, and determination.

“Dionis has become a part of who I am, and I still feel Kate’s passion and vision in what we do every day,” she says. “My plan is to continue and offer quality goat-milk-based products that make all of our customers feel like the GOAT, or ‘greatest of all time,’ until we’ve reached them all.” ■

“Dionis has become a part of who I am, and I still feel Kate Crosby’s passion and vision in what we do every day.” —KAREN MINSKY



Its deep local roots aside, Dionis’ goat-milk-based body lotions, hand creams, lip balms, and other bath-and-body products are available at nearly 6,000 retailers nationwide.

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**WOMEN**  
TO WATCH

➔ For more information about **Dionis Goat Milk Skincare**, including a store locator, visit [dionisgmskincare.com](http://dionisgmskincare.com).