



Hollywood: Her Story August 2026 ENewsletter Back to School!

School has already started in some parts of the country, and all the students will be back by September. Movies, especially coming-of-age movies, often highlight students in or just graduated from school. Women have been involved in many aspects of these movies, as you would expect.



The 1973 movie *American Graffiti*, nominated for five Oscars, was a coming-of-age story about four young male high school graduates on the evening before two of them leave to attend college. **Gloria Katz** shared an Oscar nomination for Best Writing, Story and Screenplay Based on Factual Material or Material Not Previously Published or Produced. Katz worked with George Lucas as a screenwriter or script consultant for films including *American Graffiti*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, *Howard the Duck*, and *Star Wars*, although her work was often uncredited. **Verna Fields** and **Marcia Lucas** shared an Oscar nomination for Best Film Editing for *American Graffiti*. A film editor and film industry executive, **Fields'** first Oscar nomination was for *American Graffiti*. She won the Best Film Editing Oscar for her work on the 1975 movie *Jaws*. Known as "Mother Cutter" she said, "I'm enormously proud of a lot of pictures I've done. By God, I saved the picture, and I've been given credit for it." Regarding *Jaws*, she said, "I was the liaison with the studio for Steven [Spielberg]. When there was thought of ditching the picture because the shark wasn't working, I told them, 'Keep doing it, even if you need to use miniatures.'" Fields was hired by Universal as a Vice President in 1976, one of the first women to serve as an executive in the entertainment industry. She remained in that position until her death from cancer in 1982 at age 64. This was film editor **Marcia Lucas'** first Oscar nomination. She was also nominated in 1978 in the Best Film Editing category for *Star Wars*. She met director George Lucas while he was attending film school, and they were married from 1969 to 1983.



The 1980 movie *Fame* chronicles four years of the lives of students attending The High School of Performing Arts in New York City. In her breakout role, **Irene Cara** portrayed one of the students and she also recorded the title song. Cara was nominated for the 1984 Best Music, Original Song Oscar for the song *Flashdance*. . . *What a Feeling* from the movie *Flashdance* in which she acted and sang. *Fame* was nominated for six Oscars. One went to **Lesley Gore who** shared an Oscar nomination for Best Music, Original Song for *Out Here on My Own*. A singer and songwriter, Gore was signed by Quincy Jones when she was a teenager and sang hits including *It's My Party*, *Judy's Turn to Cry*, and *You Don't Own Me*. She acted on stage in summer stock and continued singing throughout her career. **Kristi Zea** was the costume designer for *Fame*. Zea has worked as a production designer, costume designer, and producer for almost four decades. She has been nominated for two Oscars – for Best Picture in 1998 for *As Good as it Gets* and for Best Art Direction in 2009 for *Revolutionary Road*.

The 1985 movie *The Breakfast Club* tells the story of five high school students who share detention on a Saturday. **Dede Allen** served as the film's editor. Allen edited for fifty years during which time she was nominated for three Oscars – *Dog Day Afternoon* (1976), *Reds* (1982), and *Wonder Boys* (2001). Allen was one of the first film editors to negotiate a cut of the film's profits. Three of her films were selected for the Motion Picture Editors Guild's 75 best edited films of all time: *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, and *Reds*. Allen was a member of the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.



Women in front of and behind the camera make the movies that we all welcome into our hearts and homes. Women across all the areas of moviemaking from actress to animator, editor to stuntwoman, costume designer to screenwriter, producer to director have contributed to the success of the movie industry since its founding in the 1890s. Help us celebrate these women who are written into movie history in *Hollywood: Her Story*.

Jill S. Tietjen and Barbara Bridges

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