

# Women provide different perspective to business

BY CASSANDRA KYLE, THE STARPHOENIX NOVEMBER 26, 2009

Monica Kreuger knows all about the challenges of balancing family life with a career.

Although it's no easy task to build a home and climb the corporate ladder at the same time, Kreuger, president of Global Infobrokers Inc. and vice-president of the Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Saskatoon Club, supports the advancement of women's careers.

On Tuesday, the BPW chapter is hosting its silent auction and supper to raise money for an education bursary given to a mature woman returning to school to better both her work and family life. It's a program Kreuger believes has made a real difference in the community since it started more than 60 years ago.

StarPhoenix business reporter Cassandra Kyle asked Kreuger five questions about women in the workforce in Saskatoon.

SP: What do professional and business women add to Saskatoon's business culture?

MK: I think we certainly add another perspective. I think that generally businesses today, especially new businesses that are coming out, are very socially conscious.

I'm not saying men-owned businesses aren't, but I think that women do take a look at their role and the bigger part we play in society and we tend to be much more socially networked anyway, and that seems to be the trend now is to be socially networked -- it's kind of something we just do naturally.

So I think we bring another perspective, I think we bring a different way of management, in many cases, and a different way to balance out the way business is done in a society, so I think that's our biggest contribution.

SP: Saskatoon appears to have a high percentage of female entrepreneurs. Is this true?

MK: I don't know in real numbers, I would have to go do the looking, but I do know there's more and more women starting businesses as an option and I think part of that is probably the flexibility of owning your own business.

We still have to have the children, that's physically what our bodies do, so we have to have some flexibility in our work life to keep working and have a family and so owning a business has that option that's a much more flexible way to do it.

SP: Does the city need more professional and business women?

MK: Why not! I think we need more professional businesswomen all the time. I think until we have a balanced economy where we do have equal numbers that we need to keep reaching out.

I think people need to keep pursuing whatever their dream is and whether they're men or women, I think we need to do that. I think we have more of a capability of doing that today because the services and the environment that is here in Saskatoon is really diverse and rich, and if you want to start a business today or you want to grow a business today there's actually a lot of places to go to help you do that.

SP: What does BPW offer to the female business community?

MK: I think if you ask most people who belong to Business and Professional Women, I think they're there because this organization has an overall social purpose. Our purpose is to create a better playing field and more equal playing field for women in business, but not just here in Saskatoon. It's an international network, and so the work we do here can impact the role that women have in countries across the world.

We have an influence at a local level, national level, international level, so when women come together like that in a group like BPW, we have the ability to really make a difference and I think that's why people join BPW.

SP: Will the number of female professionals and entrepreneurs continue to grow in Saskatoon?

MK: Oh, I think so, and for the reasons I mentioned before. We're developing everyone here -- all the services are developing to reach out and entrepreneurship is a popular topic now. Even 15 years ago people would say 'entrepreneur-what?' and now it's a common theme.

There is lots of pushing to develop youth entrepreneurship, there's an entrepreneurship council that is part of Enterprise Saskatchewan, there's a focus on, "How do we network all the services?" and, "How do we build an even more thriving entrepreneurial community here?" Because really, that's what Saskatchewan is based on.

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