

2017 Outstanding Women in Business

Stephanie Hertzberg, SmithGroupJJR

April 7, 2017

Born: New Jersey

Raised: Arizona

Career path: I graduated from Arizona State University with a bachelor's of arts in humanities and then moved to Boston for graduate school at Harvard University. After much contemplation, I ended up coming back before completing and going to work for an event design and production company. It was a small company so I was able to wear a lot of hats and work on a lot of great projects. After seven years, I moved to SmithGroupJJR in a business development capacity. At the firm, I have moved from associate to principal and now am involved on a national level on numerous initiatives and ad hoc committees.

Civic involvement includes: I have always being engaged in civic activities, but my first professional engagement came when I wrote resumes for men in transition at a shelter. This lead to an introduction at Fresh Start Women's Organization where I volunteered for numerous years. I am in leadership roles with ASU Women & Philanthropy and a board member at Maricopa Community College Foundation, as well as the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. Additionally, I participate with 19North, a grass-roots effort to revitalize 19th Avenue from Bethany Home to Dunlap.

Your aha moment: I served in a volunteer role as president of the SMPS Arizona Chapter in 2009. During that time a lot of people were losing their jobs in the construction industry, and the association was losing members at a rapid pace. I realized at that point it was not about initiatives for SMPS or strategic plans but really about building people up on your team and empowering them when they felt powerless. It was eye opening because it taught me that as a leader it is important to understand what the needs are of your team and make sure you help them achieve those.

Best advice you ever received: Don't be afraid to ask for what you want.

Advice for the next generation of women leaders: Surround yourself with people who support you and will help push you to reach your potential.

The most important mentor in your life: Mike Medici, president of SmithGroupJJR pushes me to my potential.

Your leadership philosophy: Empower the people on the team.

Your biggest career challenge: The ability to balance family and career has always been a big challenge for me.

Growing up you wanted to be: A fighter pilot. I had the amazing opportunity to meet a woman in our small town in New Hampshire who was one of the first fighter pilots. That meeting made me believe I could do anything and encouraged me to break barriers.

