

## **Twenty years of 'standing on the edge'**

By Mary Huss

In one of the many "just had to share this" emails that came my way, I learned that this week is National Girlfriend Week -- a time for women to celebrate the things we do for each other.

Another momentous occasion this week involves one of our favorite "girlfriends" in the Bay Area -- Eunice Azzani, managing director at Korn/Ferry International, and major contributor to careers, community and causes.

On Thursday night, Eunice celebrated her 20-year anniversary with Korn/Ferry at a bash in her honor at the company's new offices at the Citigroup Building in San Francisco. Eunice has touched an enormous number of lives and careers in those 20 years.

Those close to Eunice -- and there are many -- have heard her describe herself in many ways. She's proudly calls herself a head farmer, a California-Improved Texan and a Pushy Broad. (Also, according to the party invite, a member of Future Homemakers of America).

She is a woman with a mission, and stays ever-true to it. Her mission is and has been to change the world, and to place women and people of color at every decision-making table. If she hasn't changed the world entirely, she's certainly shaken it up -- and it is a very different place because of her.

If there were a chart detailing the many outstanding women and minority professionals whom Eunice has placed into prominent positions, it would paint the picture of how she has helped shape the leadership of both nonprofits and corporations in the Bay Area.

"Through my work at Korn/Ferry, I help great people get to good organizations and do great things," she has said. "For me, short of performing life-saving surgery, I can't think of anything more important to contribute to the world than that."

Eunice is outspoken, courageous, and never shy about offering a contrarian view. Her mantra: "If you're not standing on the edge, you're taking up too much space." It's an honor to be a member of her famed "Pushy Broad Squad" (open to all who wish to be so designated).

Eunice is ever generous about giving away her services, time and wise counsel. She does five pro bono searches a year (which ends up being six or seven). She has held leadership positions on dozens of boards and is a passionate advocate for any organization she

serves. She has mentored countless women (and men) in this community, and has helped seed many in the field of executive search.

Among my associates, if someone has a career challenge, change or crisis, the first word of advice is: "Call Eunice." Rarely do I sit on a board or committee where her name does not come up -- either as a potential honoree, speaker, board candidate, chair, adviser or source of information. If a need arises, "Ask Eunice."

For a woman who has given so much to so many, Eunice is not about taking credit. She prefers to defer the limelight to others. But to those who give comes abundance -- and people simply want to honor her.

Eunice will be honored by **Women's Initiative for Self Employment** at that organization's annual Founders Award Gala on June 1 at the Hotel Nikko in San Francisco -- one of many well-deserved honors bestowed on her over the years. A team of her close friends and admirers -- Wendy Paskin Jordan, Paula Collins, Paula Downey and Carrie Schwab-Pomerantz (Pushy Broads all) are heading up the effort to make this a celebration worthy of Eunice.

One of Eunice's most-prized acknowledgments is a letter from Richard Ferry, her firm's founder, when she received the Eleanor Reynolds Award from the Association for Executive Search Consultants for combining excellence in search with commitment to volunteerism. It read, "Eunice, you are the heart and soul of what we stand for and you have been a model and mentor to people."

Ditto, say we in San Francisco. Congratulations to you, Eunice. Thank you for 20 remarkable years of making a difference in the Bay Area.

*Mary Huss, publisher of the San Francisco Business Times, can be reached at [mhuss@bizjournals.com](mailto:mhuss@bizjournals.com).*