

# On her way to the top with determination, style

By Heidi Hildert  
special writer

At 33, Joan Mayer is the youngest of 13 vice presidents of Winkelman's. But far from being satisfied with her rapid rise in the corporate world, she doesn't believe she's reached her full potential within the firm.

"I think there's more I can do," said the Avon Township resident. "I expect to be a senior vice president and general merchandising manager. That's my goal."

She may well reach it. In her 11 years with Winkelman's, she earned six promotions. Modest about her achievements, she says that she doesn't feel that she's reached her present position at an unusually young age.

Most people she encounters respect her and realize that she wouldn't have gained so much without the ability to earn her achievements. "There isn't anything I know of I'd rather be doing," she said.

Originally, she was sure there were other fields for her. After graduating from Union High School in Cheesing, Mich., she intended to be an engineer. After her first semester at Western Michigan University she changed her major to home economics and clothing

and textiles because it sounded more exciting than the exacting world of engineering.

ALWAYS interested in fashion, she "wanted the creativity as well as (being able to work with) numbers."

Although a fashion-merchandising program eventually developed at WMU, it was still in its early stages when Mayer was a student studying retailing with a minor in advertising. During her last semester she won an internship with the Pollen Corp. in New York.

It was an opportunity that prompted her to work to convince the faculty of the value of similar experiences for other students. She has returned to WMU to speak about the internship program and careers in fashion.

After earning her bachelor's degree in 1973 Mayer was in the enviable position of mulling over three job offers, including bids from firms in Chicago and New York. She chose Winkelman's over the others because it would allow her to stay closer to home.

Shortly after her college graduation, the 22-year-old Mayer began her career as an assistant manager in store operations with an annual salary of

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— Joan Mayer  
Winkelman's vice president

\$7,200. Within 10 months, she was promoted to assistant buyer in sportswear and transferred to Winkelman's Detroit headquarters.

BUT THAT wasn't the end of her quick start. In October 1975, she was promoted to sportswear buyer of coordinates and swimwear. The following May she was appointed junior dress buyer. In February 1976 she took charge of buying all dresses.

In December 1980, at age 33, she became the youngest merchandising manager in Winkelman's history.

By the time she was 32, Mayer had risen to vice president and merchandising manager of the ready-to-wear division. Her duties include merchandising, directing the buying staff of the coat, suit and dress division and planning business, promotional and marketing duties.

Hardly a deskbound member of management, she travels a great deal. Last year, she spent a total of 26 weeks ferreting out trends in stores, color agencies and fabric mills in New York, Ohio, Chicago and California. Twice a year she visits Europe and the Orient.

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her the opportunity to work with "all different kinds of people, from all different walks of life (who are) all business people and knowledgeable, hard working people. Anyone in this business is dedicated," she said.

Her own dedication and success receives support at home from her husband, Dennis, a forward program

planner in Chevrolet's Central Office Parkway Division.

Both work in the city and decided almost seven years ago to move to Avon Township because they wanted to get into an area in the Detroit suburbs that was like smaller-town living and still accessible to everything in Detroit but with property and trees away from the big buildings of the city, she said.

## Academics offered in summer school

New Morning School in Plymouth will offer an academic summer school from Monday, July 9, through Monday, July 30.

Students in grades one through five will meet 8-10 a.m., and students in grades five through eight will meet from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Students will focus on specific tasks and skills needed to improve reading, writing, math and study skills. There

will be individualized assessment and planning.

A state-certified teacher will teach the class assisted by a teacher's aide. Class size will be limited to 10 children.

Early registration is suggested by calling Elaine Yagala, director, at 436-3331. The class fee is \$95 per session or \$170 for both sessions. A partial payment of \$30 is required to register.

The school is located at 14501 Haggerty, just north of Schoolcraft.

## Club calls mothers of twins

Farmington Area Mothers of Twins Club meets the third Thursday evening of each month. Members take turns hosting the group in their homes. Membership is open to all women

who have had a multiple birth. Information about the workings of the club and the site for the next meeting is available from DeeDee Adams, 477-9025.

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