

Young Career Woman chosen

By Julie Brown
staff writer

Amy Courter's career with Valassis Inserts has been rewarding. "The thing I enjoy the most is the people I get to work with," said Courter, director of Management Information Systems for Valassis Inserts in Livonia.

She appreciates the level of teamwork at the company. "Every day, there's something like that that makes it pleasurable to work here."

Courter was recently named the state's 1991 Young Career Woman by the Michigan Federation of Business and Professional Women. She was selected as the Canton Business and Professional Women's honoree earlier this year, and was then chosen to represent BPW's District IX at the state competition in May at the Novi Hilton.

Courter, 29, a resident of Farmington Hills, was one of 10 district-level honorees at the state convention. Professional achievement and community involvement were taken into consideration by the judges.

"It was again very honored."

COURTER SPENT that weekend with the other honorees and was impressed with their credentials and contributions.

"We were all in this somewhat stressful situation. It was amazing to meet all the different people."

"I learned a lot through the whole Young Careerist program. This has been an outstanding experience for me."

At Valassis Inserts, Courter and her colleagues automate systems for the entire company from the Livonia headquarters. They work on long-range information systems planning and write software for a variety of functions.

Valassis Inserts distributes full-color coupon supplements in Sunday newspapers throughout the U.S. Valassis also buys black and white

advertising space and has other products.

Courter's been in her current position since the summer of 1990 and prior to that was a manager for Management Information Systems at Valassis. She's been with the company for about six years and previously worked for the Digital Equipment Corp. as a software specialist.

She graduated from Swartz Creek High School in Swartz Creek, Mich., near Flint. Courter earned a bachelor's degree with a psychology major and a computer science minor from Kalamazoo College.

COURTER'S PLEASED that she has a diverse education including a background in liberal arts. She talked about that during the speech she gave at the BPW state convention in Novi.

She talked about the importance of teamwork and of competing by focusing on what you do well and letting results speak for themselves. Courter discussed the role of positive thinking in reaching goals.

"It was a really good opportunity for me. It's been great."

Her company and colleagues have supported her throughout the Young Career Woman program. Valassis officials took out a congratulatory ad in the state convention program.

"It was a total surprise to me, a nice surprise. That's really helped me. That boosted my confidence."

HER COMPANY wants to send her to the national convention, to be held later this summer in Niagara Falls, N.Y. State honorees from throughout the U.S. are recognized at that program.

"That would be a lot of fun," said Courter, who recently became a member of the Canton Business and Professional Women.

Her community activities also include involvement in the Civil Air Patrol, a volunteer auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Courter plans to



BILL BRESSLER/staff photographer

Amy Courter now holds the 1991 title of Young Career Woman, given to her by the Michigan Federation of Business and Professional Women. She is a resident of Farmington Hills and member of the Canton chapter of the national organization.

work on a master of science in administration degree through a Central Michigan University program in Southfield.

Courter encourages young women just starting their careers to aim high.

"The first thing I'd say is to volunteer for opportunities, to learn from and overcome your weaknesses."

It's important to compete with yourself, to develop your own set of work ethics and to proceed optimistically, she said.

Refugee Coalition was biggest winner

The Detroit-Windsor Refugee Coalition was the biggest winner in a fun-filled weekend sponsored by Ray Interiors, a Drexel Heritage Showcase store in downtown Farmington.

Early this month the coalition received nearly \$1,000 in its share of all sales made at Ray Interiors during the "Country Diary," Drexel's newest furniture collection introduction.

The coalition assists indigent refugees in the Detroit area who are denied asylum in the United States. If deported back to their own country

they would face persecution and/or death.

Besides viewing "Country Diary," which consists of many European adaptations and reproductions, guests had refreshments, watched Detroit figurative artist Lin Baum and listened to romantic Latin American songs, played by the Los Caracamas trio.

A drawing also took place. The winner, Carolyn Williams of Warner Street in Farmington, received a free night's stay for two at the Atchison House, a bed and breakfast inn in Northville.

Professor takes Excellence Award

Lawrence Gage of Farmington Hills was awarded the 1991 College Faculty Excellence Award at the International Conference on Teaching Excellence in Austin, Tex.

The conference, sponsored by the University of Texas and the League for Innovation in the Community College, attracted 2,000 educators from around the world. Each year outstanding community college faculty are nominated by their college presidents in recognition of their contributions as faculty members.

Gage is a professor in the counseling department at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College where he has been a member of the faculty since 1967. In 1990, he received the OCC Outstanding Faculty Member award.

He developed the college's support program for students with learning disabilities in 1982 and is a recognized authority on postsecondary services for students with learning disorders.

He is a member of the American Psychological Association, Psi Chi,



Dr. Lawrence Gage

the National Honorary Society in Psychology, and is a Certified Social Worker and Licensed Professional Counselor. He received his bachelor and doctoral degrees at Wayne State University; his master's degree at Southern Illinois University, and was a graduate fellow in counseling psychology at Ohio State University.

Silver Scouts

Thirteen Farmington area girls have received the Girl Scout Silver Award, the highest award that can be obtained by the 11-14 year old Cadettes. Posing for their picture in back row from left are Suzanne Porter, Natalie Koczara, Amy Klier, Jessica Guilford and Monica Ford. In the middle row are Julie Haight, Colleen Hoy, Melanie Fischer and Erin Kenny. In front are Elaine Wolff, Barbara Chwalik and Jamie Donoghue.



Teen Center is open

Farmington Youth Assistance's Summer Teen Center is open now until Aug. 8 in Wm. Grace Elementary School, 29040 Shawwassee. The center will be open from 3-9 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Wednesdays will be reserved for day field trips to such places as Cranbrook, Red Oaks Wave Pool, and a Tiger Baseball Game.

The program is available to all teens living in the Farmington Public School District between the ages of 12-16. Students must be a current member of the Farmington Teen Center which costs \$2 for the summer. There may be small additional charges for the field trips.

The Teen Center is staffed by a director and several college age staffers. For additional information call the FYA office at 489-3434 or Cindy Papp, chairwoman, at 626-0752.

FYA is sponsored by the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, the Farmington Public School District and the Oakland County Probate Court.

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Jazz series tickets on sale

Chuck Robette opens The Community Center's summer jazz concert series Wednesday, Aug. 7. All of the concerts in the three-part series begin at 7 p.m. on the grounds of the center, on Farmington Road north of 10 Mile.

Ray Kamalay & His Red Hot Peppers take the amphitheater stage Aug. 14 and The Steve Wood Trio performs Aug. 28.

Tickets are on sale now for \$10 per person for a single performance

or \$25 per person for all three concerts

For all evening performances in the center's amphitheater this summer, the gates will open at 6 p.m. for pinickers who are attending the event

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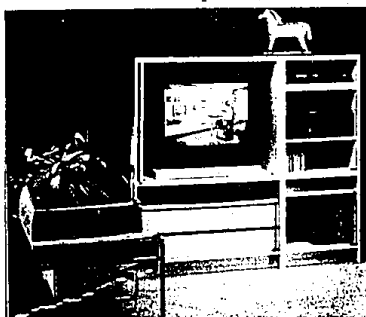


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