

Cindy Myer

MOVING FORWARD AND GIVING BACK



ARTICLE KRIS PEPPER | PHOTOGRAPHY JEAN TERMAN

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RIDGEWOOD MOVING SERVICES OWNER CINDY MYER HAS A BUSINESS CARD THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED UNIQUE IN HER LINE OF WORK: IT FEATURES A CARTOON CHARACTER OF HER SMILING AND WAVING. Turns out it's the perfect representation of her positive attitude, openness and unending promise to provide the best service to her clients as well as create a workplace culture that emphasizes giving back. And the road to where she is now as a successful woman business owner in a male-dominated field has been both nontraditional and not always easy.

Growing up in Ridgewood, Cindy married fellow Ridgewood High School graduate Rob Myer in 1985. Soon after, he went to work for Ridgewood Moving Services, and Cindy took a more glamorous route, using her fashion degree to work with retailers like Alexander's, Saks Fifth Avenue and Popular Club. When Rob and Cindy bought Ridgewood Moving in 1987, Cindy continued working in the fashion industry until the first of their two daughters was born in 1988 after which she stepped away from her career to stay at home. In her free time, she used her boundless energy to volunteer for community service projects as well as the girls' schools, the Ridgewood Board of Education, the Girl Scouts and the Ridgewood Woman's Club.

"Volunteering opened my eyes to the many great nonprofits in our area and was foundational in providing me the building blocks to later run a business, especially learning essential attributes like teamwork and leadership," she says.

Her world changed suddenly in 2005 when Rob passed away unexpectedly at the age of 48, leaving Cindy with a family business and two daughters, ages 14 and 16. While processing the shock and grief alongside her children, Cindy felt a compelling obligation to carry

on the business—not only for their employees but to be a role model for her girls.

"I felt a sense of pride and commitment to carry on Ridgewood Moving for the community we served and the employees; some who were family and some who felt like family," Cindy says. "But I also wanted to set an example for my daughters by giving them a sense of security that we were going to be OK. My message to them was that we can curl up in a ball and feel sorry for ourselves or, as saddened as we were, we can choose to move forward."

In the beginning, things were bumpy; having the boss's wife run things wasn't well-received, and add to that the stress of moving to a new warehouse in Mahwah. She eventually received support from an unexpected place: her competitors, who had worked with her husband and respected him. She also was helped by the New Jersey Warehousemen and Movers Association (eventually becoming its first woman board president in 2006), and now she is proud that Ridgewood Movers is certified as a Women's Business Enterprise.

Early on, giving back to the community was a cornerstone of Cindy's life and her business.

"A culture of giving within an organization creates an impact and makes a difference," she says.

Cindy and Ridgewood Movers support Move for Success, which provides gently used professional clothing for lower-income college students; Move for Hunger, which collects non-perishable food for distribution to those in need; and Making It Home, where donated home furnishings are given to veterans, people with disabilities and homeless families. For Cindy, the pairing is simple and perfect.

"Nonprofits are a great fit for the moving business," she says. "We have the labor, vehicles and resources to assist, so really, why wouldn't we do it?"