

The Beauty of Giving

An Interview with Deborah Krulewitch,
Senior Vice President-Corporate Administration, The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.

EDITORS' NOTE Deborah Krulewitch joined The Estée Lauder Companies in 1988 after serving for two years as Project Director for the restoration of the Grand Army Plaza/Pulitzer Fountain Partnership as part of the Central Park Conservancy. Prior to this, she was the Executive Director for the Restoration of Gracie Mansion from 1984 until 1986, reporting to New York City's Mayor Edward Koch. Active in community affairs, Krulewitch



Deborah Krulewitch

is the Director Emerita for Publicolor. She is also on the Board of Directors and serves as Secretary of The Breast Cancer Research Foundation. She is a board member of The Gracie Mansion Conservancy; serves as Chairman Emerita of the Historic House Trust of New York City; and was Vice-Chair of the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC under Mayor Bloomberg. She is on the Executive Committee at The Coalition for the Homeless' First Step Program. Krulewitch holds a Master's Degree from New York University's Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work and worked in the field for 12 years prior to her role at Gracie Mansion.

COMPANY BRIEF The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. (elcompanies.com) is one of the world's leading manufacturers and marketers of quality skin care, makeup, fragrance, and hair care products. The company's products are sold in over 150 countries and territories under more than 25 brand names.

What makes this company so special?

If you visit here, you know what makes it so special. There is a lot of longevity here.

First, it was a family-incubated business started by Mrs. Estée Lauder. Her son, Leonard, took her ideas and was able to capitalize on the groundwork she had laid, and take it to department stores and expand internationally. He is a brilliant marketer and set a high bar for product development and safety as the company pursued its passion for wanting to make every woman feel beautiful.

The values that stem from the family started this company, and those same values still guide the way the company treats

its employees – this has made the difference.

How does the company determine where to focus its philanthropic efforts?

Guided by our family values, we invest our philanthropic dollars in communities where we live, work, and have a presence.

Leonard Lauder initially hired me to be the fundraiser to restore Grand Army Plaza.

I told him that if we were successful, I wanted to work at Estée Lauder. After we raised the money for the restoration, he called and offered me a job handling corporate contributions.

I came in already knowing that Evelyn and Leonard Lauder were generous; before there was even a Central Park Conservancy, they had funded three Central Park playgrounds through a public/private partnership with New York City. These playgrounds still exist. They were the first playgrounds that had been supported by private citizens, and this public/private partnership now exists throughout the city.

In taking over the company's philanthropic contributions, I began managing requests from everybody in the city. My goal was to manage the funds in a way that matched the family's values and those of our company. Today, we have a corporate contributions committee, comprised of senior leaders from across our company.

In 1992, Evelyn Lauder founded the company's Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, which is devoted to defeating breast cancer through education and medical research. She had discovered there was little money for breast cancer research at the time, and there were many brilliant researchers without adequate funding. Through our employees and many of our brands, The BCA Campaign has raised more than \$53 million to date and is now active in more than 70 countries.

We are also very dedicated to women's education and empowerment, and have been involved in many programs in New York City, including The Young Women's Leadership Schools, Coalition for the Homeless, and Publicolor. We also support young girls in Vietnam who lack the financial means to obtain an education; through The Asia Foundation,

we established The Estée Lauder Scholars Program and have financially supported 204 students through secondary school.

Many of our brands also have their own philanthropic commitments. For example, since founding the M.A.C. AIDS Fund in 1994, M.A.C. Cosmetics has raised more than \$325 million to confront the HIV/AIDS epidemic. M.A.C. AIDS Fund is now the largest corporate foundation and second largest private donor in the U.S. for HIV/AIDS causes.

How critical is it that your workforce mirrors your diverse client base?

Inclusion and diversity have always been part of our DNA, particularly with brands like M.A.C., which appeals to everyone around the world with its credo "All Ages, All Races, All Sexes."

Our diverse portfolio of brands brings us different ideas about what consumers want, so we're able to be sensitive to everybody's beauty needs and cultural nuances.

We also recently started employee resource groups (ERG), with one of the goals being to empower our diverse workforce to get to know each other and work together. They're also interested in professional development and in giving back to the communities they represent. These groups have been critical to continuing our heritage of inclusion and diversity.

What makes New York City so special?

So many diverse people have come to New York and built better lives, and raised families by working hard. These experiences have molded this city into one that supports this most unique group of people who live here. Immigrants continue to arrive on a daily basis, not to mention millions of tourists each year.

There is also a great spirit here of helping others and providing opportunities for people to be successful, although it can be very difficult. For example, there are 55,000 people who are homeless right now in New York City. There is a major housing shortage, and there are individual problems in various neighborhoods.

But there is so much energy and creativity from people who really want to help that it always remains encouraging. I'm proud that this spirit of giving remains so strong in our company and in our people. ●