

WFFC Midwest Honors Dolores Avezzano

In 1977, when Dolores Avezzano began her career, there wasn't an organization like Women in Flavor and Fragrance Commerce's (WFFC) Cincinnati Chapter that could help women to grow and become leaders.

"There wasn't a lot of room in there for women," she tells *P&F* Magazine. "Since then, doors have opened and I don't think it's quite as hard to move up the corporate ladder or even to become leaders in the industry. You have to put in the hard work."

Avezzano was recently honored as the Cincinnati chapter's 2014 Woman of the Year. (In 2001, she was named the Woman of the Year by the national chapter.) During a ceremony in Cincinnati, numerous friends and colleagues paid tribute to Avezzano's volunteerism and hard work.

Having held positions with an Institute for Supply Management precursor, PepsiCo and Cargill, Avezzano has contributed to the founding and growth of WFFC and its Cincinnati and Chicago chapters, and has served with the Chemical Sources Association.

"The thing I like to do is find people that I see a spark in and work with them," says Avezzano. "And one of the things I said to Carrie [Carrie Jaeger (Wild Flavors Inc.)] in that first ever meeting [of the Cincinnati chapter] was, 'I think that you'll one day be the president of this organization and that you'll be amazing at it.' She said that she was so surprised that I took her under my wing and encouraged her."

Avezzano adds, "There's no human resources [at WFFC] that can say you're not at the right level or haven't had the experience to do this. If you feel like you have [the ability] and the people who are nominating you have it, then you have it."

She continues, "We all work together as a team on the board and support one another."

This "paying it forward" philosophy was first engendered in Avezzano as a new employee at PepsiCo, where senior-level women in the organization offered mentorship. In return, they expected her to do the same for others.

"Volunteering is good for your health and it's empowering and inspirational, and you learn how to network," she says.

The mother of three and grandmother of six says, "I have a bulldog attitude. When you have that kind of mentality, you have to cut your losses on the sale side. Not giving up is a good thing. I try not to ever give up. Being comfortable with yourself is important."



Attending the event were, from left: Inke Sexton (Givaudan), Megan Scholle (Givaudan), Sarah Forbis (Alfrebro/Wild) and Melissa Pfennig (Wixon).



Honoree Dolores Avezzano.

She concludes, "Success breeds success ... One of the most important things in getting ahead is picking the right jobs. A lot of times people short-change themselves, and they jump on it. I've picked good companies and they picked me."

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