

LAWRENCE BUSINESS MAGAZINE

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Women of Impact



Cindy Yulich

Emprise Bank Market President - Lawrence

Like most community leaders who make positive impacts, Cindy Yulich measures her own success by the successes of the people around her, whether it be fellow employees or customers/clients. Another common trait held by most impactful leaders is that she worries less about perceptions of others about her and more about results or the positive differences she's making in the lives of those she serves. Leading with integrity in both her role as market president of Empire Bank and her work in the community is of utmost importance to Yulich. Bringing the community together around a common purpose of shared success is her vision.

IN HER OWN WORDS: YOUR MENTOR/ROLE MODEL

Many have impacted my life and career but three rise to the top: Jay Breidenthal, my first boss in banking at Security Bank of Kansas City. Jay taught me the art of taking care of customers. The second was Randy Weseman, former Superintendent of Lawrence Public Schools. Randy lived the concept of servant leadership, the importance of process and the difference between governance and management. Finally, Dave Adams retired President of Emprise Bank. Dave is one of the most empathetic and fair-minded people I know.

KNOW ABOUT YOU

Leading with integrity in both my job and my community work is important to me. The success of my fellow employees and customers is my mission.

MAKING AN IMPACT

This was never really a decision but rather evolved over time. At this point in my career, I'm focused on making a difference when I am presented with an opportunity to help improve a situation and less worried about how I may be perceived by others.

LIKE TO SEE CHANGE

I'd like to see the Lawrence community come together around a common purpose of shared success. We don't have to always agree but let's find the common ground where we do agree and begin the work of making progress toward our goals. △

Neighborhoods meetings to hear what people are concerned about, she's no longer on the board.

"I don't really have time for much else," beyond that, she concludes. "Extra' time goes to my kids."

Shipley doesn't believe she's one philosophical idea, however, explaining that she's trying to get to the middle and find the common ground. She knows being on the city commission is a position that follows you everywhere, and when she initially considered running, Shipley was confrontational with herself about whether that would annoy her.

"And it doesn't," she says. "I fully expect it. I encourage people when they're like, 'Oh, you don't wanna hear about this.' Yeah, I do. Go ahead. It's all right. It's what I'm out here for."

Things do sometimes get interesting for Shipley being Latina. Given her last name, there are the occasional commenters at city commission meetings who are unaware of her heritage.

"Public commenters were not aware of that little fact," Shipley says. "That, in fact, we have more representation on our board than is reflected in our actual city demographics, which is something you could be proud of, I guess, if you want to. But again, most people aren't aware of that, and I don't know how to play that up or down, so I just choose not to play it up or down, and just let it be what it is."

This reflects her experience in life, Shipley continues. People who don't know she's Latina will say something, and then she's in a familiar situation where she gets to tell them that she's Mexican. "And that'll be fun. Let's see how that goes. How are they gonna take that?"

On the other side of the spectrum, she acknowledges she's white-presenting and has had some people in her family says that doesn't count.

"You're not this, and you're not that, because I don't perceive you that way," Shipley explains of all of these situations, regardless of the person with whom she's interacting. "Which I think is very interesting, that what you are is really about what they perceive and nothing about how you feel."

Shipley tells a story of how there once was a commenter during discussions about Lawrence's sanctuary policy, which had to be changed because the state changed its laws.

"In that conversation, one of the commenters wanted to shame all the white people and—as ham-fisted as he possibly could be—only remarked on our last names," Shipley recalls. "And at the end, I was like, 'Who wants to tell him I'm Mexican?' Everyone volunteered." ▲



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