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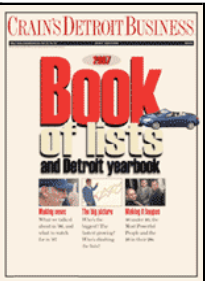
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Events

May 2007
S M T W T F S

Wednesday, May 30, 2007

CFO Winner: Martha Schultz

By Bowdeya Tweh

6:00 am, May 28, 2007

Nonprofit human service agencies
Martha Schultz, 62

CFO

Focus: HOPE

Detroit

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Focus: HOPE has been hit hard by the economic downturn in Southeast Michigan and the struggles in the domestic automotive industry. But Martha Schultz expects to break even this year, and possibly make a profit in the near future.

"I'm not the typical finance person," Schultz said. "I probably lead more with my heart than with numbers. You have to have compassion to keep it (Focus: HOPE) moving forward."

Schultz was promoted to CFO of Focus: HOPE in November 2002 and was greeted with a \$12 million budget shortfall for the fiscal year ending in September. Schultz and other managers decided to scale back the manufacturing operations and the business services along with it. More than 100 people were laid off as a result, but staffers found that other departments could be operated in a more efficient manner also.

Before last year, Focus: HOPE had been fighting red ink for the previous four years. The organization reduced its losses to \$6 million in 2003 and to less than \$3 million in 2006.

"Every time you reach a milestone ... that motivates you to go to next one," Schultz said.

Besides being a nonprofit that operates programs such as meal deliveries for seniors, children's day care and tutoring, Focus: HOPE also operated a tier-one auto parts supplying division giving on-the-job experience to its engineering students and supplemental income to the education program.

But manufacturing volume and revenue declines from its auto-supplier division forced the program to close in January 2006.

Schultz said the cutbacks didn't have an effect on the educational programs and the cost savings realized by staffing shifts and discontinuing the supplier program helped keep the organization afloat. Efficiency standards for operating a lean organization set by the **International Standards Organization** were implemented starting in 2002 as a part of the reorganization. Schultz said Focus: HOPE has realized a savings of at least \$1 million since it was rolled out.

"I think we function much better now than when we were more flush," Schultz said.

Schultz has worked with nonprofits or volunteered with other programs such as the **University of Detroit Mercy**, **Meals on Wheels**, **Community Choice Credit Union** and the **Sisters of Mercy**. She joined Focus: HOPE in 2000 as controller. She is also a mother of three and a grandmother of four.

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