

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY



Brenda Suits Involves Queens in Habitat for Humanity

Unless you're ready to frame a house or help put on a roof, don't let Brenda Suits (*pictured on the right with a saw*) know you can swing a hammer, or she will put you to work. Part of Brenda's job – and a great deal of her passion – is Habitat for Humanity.

Brenda is a senior vice president and business manager in the Bank of America Foundation, part of corporate marketing and communications at Bank of America. The Foundation is the primary channel through which the bank invests philanthropically in the communities where it does business. It also happens to be one of the largest corporate foundations in the United States. Brenda's responsibilities include the financial management and operational processes for the Foundation as well as its associate programs.

Brenda, who received her EMBA from the McColl Graduate School of Business in 2000, has been with the Foundation for two years, after spending many years with the risk management and audit functions of the company.

Originally, Brenda signed with the Foundation to help design and implement the McColl Habitat for Humanity Project, a five-year project that will build 120 homes across the United States. Another 100 homes will be built in Central and South America.

"This is a project to honor Mr. McColl," says Brenda. "In honor of his retirement, Bank of America decided to launch a multi-year project with Habitat for Humanity, which is one of his favorite non-profit organizations."

"Last year alone we built ten houses here in Charlotte, in one month, to kick off this project," Brenda says. "Queens was one of our key builders (*pictured above raising the first wall of the house*) on one of those ten houses, and three others were built by Bank of America associates. We wanted it to be a community event, involving people from all corners of the city." Brenda says that 22 more houses were built across the country and that there were close to 7,000 people involved in the last year. Plans call for building 25 more homes in the United States during 2003 and launching the projects in Central and South America.

Besides receiving her EMBA from the McColl School, Brenda is also chair of the Graduate Business Alumni Association and has incorporated her Queens connection with her involvement in Habitat. Brenda says that her



time spent in the EMBA program was "a tremendous experience," and that is why she wants to stay engaged with the school.

"The Queens family built the three-bedroom, two-bath house start to finish last year," Brenda says. "I call it the 'Queens family' because it was current students, alumni of the undergraduate and graduate programs, staff, faculty, family and friends. Pamela Lewis, Billy Wireman and Hugh McColl were all part of the paint crew. To have that crew working on a house is pretty phenomenal! It was a wonderful coming together of Queens."

Of her work with the Bank of America Foundation and Habitat for Humanity, Brenda says, "This is work that our associates feel good about. People can relate to what a home means to a family and really get excited about helping someone reach that goal!"

Leaders In Action™ Lecture Series

Leadership development is a cornerstone of the McColl Graduate School of Business. The Leaders in Action™ Lecture Series (LIA) provided by the McColl School offers the opportunity to learn from successful and dynamic leaders from all levels – local to national – in both the business and nonprofit worlds. These distinguished executives share the evolution of their careers, difficulties they have encountered and their own views on leadership. A lively question and answer session follows the presentations.

Student interaction with the speakers is an exciting component of the LIA. Students are given the opportunity to talk with the speakers, not only during a private reception with the Professional MBA Leadership Development class, held before the presentation, but also during a private dinner with students from the Executive MBA program, following the presentation.

Past speakers have represented Royal & SunAlliance; Foundation for the Carolinas; Belmont Abbey College; Mecklenburg County Superior Court; Muzak, LLC; Lowe's Companies, Inc.; Nucor Corporation; C. D. Spangler Construction Company; Boy Scouts of America; Wachovia Corporation; and Tupperware Corporation.

Leaders In Action™ Lecture Series are held once a month in Accenture Auditorium, John H. Sykes Learning Center, on the campus of Queens. If you would like to attend one of the sessions below, RSVP to LIA@queens.edu.

Upcoming 2003 LIA Speakers

September 25: Ken Thompson,
Chairman, President & CEO, Wachovia
Corporation

October 15: Bernard Kasriel,
CEO, Lafarge Corporation

November 11: Pat Mitchell,
President & CEO, PBS

December 11: The Reverend
Dr. Thomas Currie,
Dean, Union-PSCE at Charlotte



(L-R): Dr. Richard Goode, Diane Rehm and Dr. Charles Hadley pose for a quick picture after Diane Rehm's appearance on campus as part of the Learning Society.

Diane Rehm Lights Up Dana Auditorium

On Thursday, March 27th, Diane Rehm, host and executive producer of *The Diane Rehm Show*, spoke as a guest of the Learning Society of Queens in Dana Auditorium. Gail Brinn Wilkins, co-president of the Learning Society with her husband Howard Freese, gave an introduction reflecting on Ms. Rehm's contributions to the Charlotte community. Ms. Wilkins welcomed her both to Queens and Charlotte as an honored guest.

On stage in Dana Auditorium, Ms. Rehm radiated with warmth and elegance as she delivered her speech to a capacity crowd. Approximately 720 people attended the 7pm event. Following her speech, Ms. Rehm took time to answer questions, including one from a 12-year-old who asked about her childhood experience growing up in a traditional Arab-American household. She did not disappoint the youngster or the audience with a terse response but reflected with ease on both the highlights and adversities of her youth.

Her speech "Diane Rehm: Public and Private Worlds" encapsulated a broad range of topics from her childhood memoirs, to the incessant desire to continue her education, to her life as

a successful radio talk show host. She documented her career evolution from a volunteer at a small public radio station to her current business of owning and running her own talk show. *The Diane Rehm Show* is a daily two-hour talk show. Ms. Rehm also shared the challenges and fears of dealing with spasmodic dysphonia, a neurological disorder that causes vocal chords to contract and close.

Her other personal triumphs include overcoming challenges of completing her college education; maintaining a 45-year relationship with her husband; co-authoring her most recent book, *Towards Commitment: A Dialogue of Marriage*; preparing herself for the great variety of topics and guests during her talk show; and most impressively interviewing the leaders of our time.

The Learning Society of Queens is a group of leading Charlotteans whose membership fees provide the major funding for a national speaker series at Queens University of Charlotte. Founded in 1988 by President Emeritus Billy O. Wireman, the Learning Society provides the Queens students, faculty and staff and the Charlotte community with the opportunity to interact with experts on important contemporary issues and topics. For more information about the Learning Society, please email learningsociety@queens.edu or visit www.queens.edu/odyssey.



Krista Tillman Named 2002 Charlotte BusinessWoman Of The Year

On February 27, 2003, Krista Tillman, president of BellSouth's North Carolina operations, was awarded the 2002 Charlotte Businesswoman of the Year Award at a luncheon on the campus of Queens University of Charlotte.

Tillman was honored for civic, business and cultural contributions in Charlotte. She is a former high school teacher who began her career with BellSouth as an engineer. Tillman was selected from a group of five finalists that included Donna Armstrong, Coats, PLLC, North America; Beth Monaghan, Monaghan Group, PLLC; Paula Newsome, Advantage Vision Center; and Dana Rader, Dana Rader Golf School.

The Charlotte BusinessWoman of the Year Award is co-sponsored by Queens University of Charlotte and Wachovia. This is the seventeenth year the award has been given.

While at BellSouth, Tillman has served as director of public policy

planning at BellCore, operations vice president for Interconnection Services, and as president of Small Business Services, where she was responsible for customer operations for BellSouth's 1.1 million small business customers. Tillman serves as chairman of the North Carolina Business Committee for Education, chair of the Charlotte Center City Partners and co-chair of the Education First Commission.

The awards luncheon was preceded by a seminar featuring McColl Executive Leadership Institute faculty members and Sally Helgesen, leading expert on women's leadership and global management and author of *The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership* and *Thriving in 24/7: Six Strategies for Taming the New World of Work*. Karen Geiger led the opening session of the seminar with a discussion on "What Does Uncertainty Look Like?" Three concurrent sessions followed: "Leadership and the New Intelligence" led by Will Sparks; "Right vs. Right: The Dilemmas of Leadership" led by Cathy Anderson; and "Leading When No One Agrees" led by Karen Geiger. Geiger and Helgesen concluded the seminar with a discussion of "What Does it Take to Lead in Uncertain Times," a topic Helgesen expanded on during the luncheon keynote address.

FALL 2003 NOTE- WORTHY DATES

September 13: Queens University of Charlotte is hosting the 2003 Charlotte Metro American Heart Walk on September 13, 2003. This will be the second time this event will take place on Queens campus.

Last year over 3,000 people from the Charlotte area participated and over \$300,000 was raised for the American Heart Association (AHA).

The Queens Walk Team and countless members of the Queens community donated funds that totaled over \$7,000. Over 100 students participated by helping set up and tear down the event. Countless others helped with this event by volunteering their time to plan the walk and make sure the plan happened without problems.

This year, the AHA has set a goal to raise \$400,000 during this event and engage 5,000 participants. You can help reach these goals by joining the Queens Walk Team today or by making a donation online at: www.kintera.org/faf/home/.

September 25: Third Annual Witherspoon Lecture featuring John F. Haught, Healy distinguished professor of theology at Georgetown University and author of *God After Darwin* and *Deeper Than Darwin*; 7pm; Queens University of Charlotte – Accenture Auditorium in the John H. Sykes Learning Center.

October 22: First Annual Norris and Kathryn Preyer Lecture in the Liberal Arts featuring Dr. Anthony Weston professor of philosophy at Elon University; 7pm; Queens University of Charlotte – Accenture Auditorium in the John H. Sykes Learning Center.

October 30: Learning Society Lecture Series featuring Ambassador Edward Walker; 7pm; Queens University of Charlotte – Dana Auditorium.

For the latest calendar of events, visit www.queens.edu/odyssey.