



REQUIRED EXPERIENCE FOR HEALTHY CAREERS

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2008 HBA Woman of the Year

Comments: HBA Woman of the Year Award Luncheon May 7, 2009

Thank you.

Congratulations to you, Deborah, on this well-deserved honor.

When I was named the 2008 Woman of the Year, I received a lovely note from Carrie Cox, President of Global Pharmaceuticals at Schering-Plough and the 2001 Woman of the Year. She told me to have a wonderful time, to revel in the experience. She said it would be a very special year and she was right. And that's my wish for you, Deborah: To have a wonderful year!

I was at an offsite meeting when Cathy Kerzner, a past president of the HBA, called me to tell me the news. I floated back into the meeting room and whispered the news to my boss. She was thrilled, hugged me, then pulled back and said: "So, do you have duties with this?" I said: "You mean, like Miss America? My platform is world hunger and for my talent, I'll play the clarinet!"

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to visit several of the Chapters this year as part of my Miss America tour! I discovered such vitality and dedication – and great programs – throughout the US and Europe.

- San Antonio celebrated their second anniversary as an Affiliate; 1 in 7 people there is involved in the healthcare industry. Did you know that? I didn't. It's a very important Affiliate. Bill Sheldon, our first HBA Honorable Mentor, is their advisor.
- In Indianapolis, over 50 women and two men attended our meeting. The manager of the Indianapolis Hyatt, where they hold their meetings, is the first of two men who are members. He said the insights he gets from the meetings are invaluable both in his job and in his family life and these are insights that he gets nowhere else!

- At the European Leadership Conference in Zurich, there were more than 50 women and several men attending, all eager to “forget perceived wisdom” and listen to advice on “how to be a 21st century healthcare leader.”

So now let me say a few words about men: We love them. I’m married to one and he’s wonderful! Yes, we are still known as the Healthcare BusinessWOMEN’s Association, because our Advisory Board of women and men – our Honorable Mentor Alex Gorsky is on it --advises us to keep the name because there are still issues around women’s advancement.

Granted, in today’s environment, there are issues around men’s advancement, too, which is why we all need to support one another through development programs like the ones the HBA has been providing since its founding. Everyone can join the HBA and members can attend all meetings. The one limitation is that the Woman of the Year still has to be a woman.

I have had the great honor of being involved with the HBA for many years. As I said in my acceptance speech last year, I’ve been through a lot of change. I’ve been hired and I’ve been fired; upsized and downsized, and right-sized; I’ve been promoted and demoted; and I’ve been the acquirer and acquiree, the merger and mergee.

Throughout all of this, I’ve tried to keep a sense of balance and a sense of humor. One of the best ways to keep a sense of balance is to volunteer: it gives us validation, substantive work to do, a different perspective and the networking is great.

This is the 20th anniversary of the WOTY award. I have also had the distinct honor of knowing most of the WOTYs and what a stellar group! And perhaps the best news is that the more than 90 Rising Stars here represent the next generation of leaders in the industry. And God knows, we need them!

The Rising Star Award has been one of the HBA’s most successful innovations. It gives companies in all sectors of our industry the opportunity to showcase and celebrate rising and risen talent. However, we have not always leveraged the talent of the Rising Stars. This year, I will lead an initiative to reach out to our Rising Stars and to provide more opportunities for them to engage with our Women of the Year.

Now I have the pleasure of introducing our honored guest, the esteemed president of Takeda, Mr. Yasuchika Hasegawa.

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