



Wendy C. Drucker
Giving Service to Others

By Pauline Yearwood

Wendy C. Drucker, the co-CEO of Drucker & Falk LLC, property management and real estate investment services company, chose one of the smallest offices in the building's Newport News, Va., headquarters as her own.

That's because it once belonged to her grandfather. As she directs the management, supervision and construction of apartment communities, she is surrounded by pictures and mementos of him. It is typical of her high-powered but human-scale approach. "I'm steeped in tradition. It's very meaningful to me," she says.

Part of that tradition involves giving service to others. From a young age, she accompanied her mother in working on "every big nonprofit project that took place on the peninsula where we lived," both Jewish and non-Jewish. Now she is repeating that pattern with her own children, nine-year-old twins Evan and Nicole, who have become involved along with their mother in raising significant money for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life for cancer research and in trying to better the lives of the "lost boys" of Sudan, a number of whom live in the family's hometown.

Drucker has deep roots in Newport News—in fact, six-generation roots: Her great-great-great-great-grandfather was the first rabbi in the area. As for Drucker, she graduated from Wheaton College in Norton, Mass., with a degree in experimental psychology and pursued other interests for several years, then finally joined the firm her grandfather, Louis Drucker, founded in 1938. Although he is no longer alive, he had the satisfaction of knowing that one grandchild out of seven went into the business he loved.

Today, Drucker says her professional life is "75 percent nonprofit, 25 percent company. And at this stage it's really fantastic to be able to do that. The basic principle of giving back to others that Judaism teaches us is what really motivates me." Husband Michael Piercy helps as well by being the children's primary caretaker, which "lets me do what I do."

What she does goes way beyond fund raising, although she is highly skilled at that. (She was one of the top individual fund-raisers for the Relay for Life in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005.) "I facilitate," she says. "I connect people together. If someone has a need, almost always I know someone who can service his or her need."

The same principles guide her on the job. "You really satisfy a need for people by providing them with quality housing," she says. "It's creative, like putting a jigsaw puzzle together. When [an apartment community] gets built and people are living there, you look at it and you think, wow!" She has also been at the forefront of her company's outreach to residents in low-income communities, during which participants can get health screenings, visit a bookmobile or meet local police and fire officials.

Her secret? "I get up at 4:30 every morning and go to the gym. That's my only private time during the day—from 4:30 to 6:30."

It seems to be working.

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