Judi Sheppard Missett

Founder and chief executive officer of Jazzercise, Inc., Judi Sheppard Missett has turned her love of jazz dance into a worldwide dance exercise phenomenon. A fitness advocate and aerobic dance pioneer for more than 40 years, she continues to break new ground in the industry through innovative class formats, exciting customer/instructor conventions, and broad-reaching community service programs. In addition to serving as CEO of her international franchise business which oversees more than 7,800 franchisees and employs 260 personnel from its Carlsbad, Calif. headquarters, Judi continues to:

- choreograph new routines every 10 weeks for franchised instructors
- teach Jazzercise classes weekly
- star in Jazzercise home workout DVDs and "Jazz Cardio Strength Stretch," a half-hour workout program designed specifically for local Public Access cable stations
- spearhead activities to give back to the community
- travel extensively as a guest presenter for fitness events and philanthropic causes
- conduct media interviews and appearances

Judi's passion for bringing the joy of fitness to thousands of individuals has led to great success and numerous honors, among them:

- #13 placement on Entrepreneur Magazine's Franchise 500 (2012)
- #1 placement on the San Diego Business Journal's "Top 50 Women Owned Businesses in San Diego List" (2012)
- Lifetime Achievement Award from San Diego Business Journal (2012)
- #17 placement on AllBusiness.com's Top 300 Franchise AllStars (2011)
- President's Award from Women Presidents' Organization (WPO) which recognizes one member who has gone over and above in support of the organization and women entrepreneurs (2010)
- Named to Women Presidents' Organization (WPO) Board of Directors (2008)
- A member of the Stellar Women's Leadership Delegation to China (2008)
- Lifetime Achievement Award from the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (2007)
- Mary Lehman MacLachlan Award for Economic Empowerment from the Women Presidents' Organization (2007)
- Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce "Lifetime Achievement in Business Award" (2006)
- Induction into Enterprising Women magazine Hall of Fame (2006)
- Club Industry's Fitness Business Pro Magazine's "Lifetime Achievement Award" (2005)
- "Women Who Mean Business Award" from the *San Diego Business Journal* (2005,1995)
- "Leadership and Empowerment Award" from the National Foundation for Women Legislators (2003)
- Induction into the National Association for Sport & Physical Education (NASPE) Hall of Fame (2002)
- "Entrepreneur of the Year Award" from the National Foundation for Women Legislators (2001)
- Induction into the IDEA (International Association of Fitness Professionals) Hall of Fame (1992)
- IDEA "Lifetime Achievement Award" (1991)

A native of Iowa, Judi attended Northwestern University earning her Bachelor's degree in theater and radio/television in 1966. She worked as a professional dancer throughout college and after graduation. While teaching traditional jazz dance classes in Chicago, Judi turned her students away from the mirror and created a special "just for fun" class which marked the beginning of Jazzercise. In 1972, Judi and her family moved to Southern California. Five years later, she began training new instructors, which led to the rapid spread of Jazzercise around the globe.

Over the years, Jazzercise has acted upon Judi's philosophy of "giving back to the community." Judi and her legion of instructors have raised more than $27 million for a wide range of charities by leading special large-scale workout classes, performances at major sporting events, and local benefits. Jazzercise also created "Kids Get Fit," a free workout program designed to help school districts promote fitness as a way of life to children.

A passionate supporter of the arts, Judi developed an in-house Art Gallery and innovative art lease program at the Jazzercise, Inc. corporate office and hosts Art Receptions to help budding artists get exposure. In addition, Jazzercise worked with the International House of Blues Foundation (IHOBF) to sponsor a series of art workshops for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and disabled adults.

Jazzercise has spawned several other successful businesses, including JM DigitalWorks, an award-winning full-service, video and multimedia production company and Jazzercise Apparel, a multi-million dollar fitness mail-order catalog business.

The Jazzercise philosophy states: "We believe fitness is an important aspect of well-being and enhances the overall quality of people's lives; therefore, Jazzercise is committed to helping people understand and value the importance of health and fitness." Judi remains focused on this philosophy, and continues to forge ahead on the industry's cutting edge to promote fitness for all.

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