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Community. Family. Life.

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Katie Winters,
fifth grade teacher,
Cherrington Elementary

Inspiration to Action

Kathy Boston's vision creates award-winning business

By Marie Pesut

Photos courtesy of *Just Women Magazine*

When Kathy Boston was running through Sharon Woods Metro Park three years ago, training for the Race for the Cure, the Westerville resident had a vision. Boston, a registered nurse for 23 years, wished she could find a get-well card that expressed her deep admiration for those suffering from serious illness. Frustrated by the selection of cards available, Boston decided to start her own company, called Kathy's Care Cards.



Kathy Boston and members of her staff at Kathy's Care Cards discuss ideas for new cards.

Boston was initially inspired by fellow nurses who were battling cancer. "They were my heroes," she says. "They would go to their treatments and they would come back and give care to their patients even though they were patients themselves. I just wanted to have something that told them how much I admired them."

The cards she came up with target everyone and do not just address physical illness. Boston created a line specifically for kids called Kathy's Kids Cards that feature artwork from children. Some cards are humorous while others are more serious, but Boston's intent is that they all are able to create dialogue between the giver and the recipient.

"I wanted to create something that was usable by a lot of different people and health care issues affect all of us," Boston says. "And it does not just have to be health care issues – it can be addiction, depression, it can be the loss of a dog, a divorce. We all struggle with things in our life."

In addition to her line of cards, Boston has developed a jewelry line and a calendar that depicts local men who have loved ones who have dealt with cancer.

"These guys are our neighbors. They are everyone within the community," Boston says. "I wanted to show that men are sometimes the forgotten caregivers and I wanted to show how much they impact the lives of others."

She also developed The Heart of Nursing Foundation, a public foundation

managed through the Columbus Medical Association and partnered with the Ohio Nurses Association, which provides scholarships and grants to individuals pursuing a nursing career.

This February, the U.S. Small Business Administration honored Boston as the 2007 Women in Business Champion of the Year.

When Boston found out she was receiving the award, she was shocked. "I was dumbfounded I was nominated because the company is not about Kathy, the company is about the community," she says. "It is a purpose-driven company and our purpose is to touch people at their most difficult time. (The award)



represents that we are a business that is making a difference and that is more than anything I could ever want."

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Columbus division received numerous letters detailing Boston's dedication to her business and foundation, says Doug Sweazy, a public information officer for the division. Boston was chosen for the nomination-based award due to her generosity and tireless commitment to education, healthcare and women's business pursuits, he says.

Boston promotes women in business and employs several at Kathy's Care Cards – from her sales representatives to her marketing director. "As a woman-owned company, what we are doing is unique," she says. "We encourage women to take care of their health."

"I did not start the business because I wanted to be a businesswoman," Boston says. "I have a passion to help others and because of that, I have turned the passion into a business."

Boston credits the community for who she is today. "Westerville has given me a new start on my life," Boston says. "I am truly blessed that I picked the community."

Kathy's Care Cards can be found online at www.kathyscarecards.com, at CVS stores in Westerville and in more than 100 locations from California to Connecticut. A portion of all product proceeds benefits The Heart of Nursing Foundation. •

Marie Pesut is a contributing writer for Westerville Magazine.