



***Glo Ghegan,
“Operational Entrepreneur”***

From Cookies to World Ventures

Glo Ghegan is a dynamo, plain and simple. She talks fast, thinks big, and has an exceptional ability to connect people and opportunities.

Case in point, she’s currently leading five different enterprises, completing her 29th year as a flight attendant for Delta, participating as a volunteer on medical missions to third world countries, contributing to various nonprofits, and brokering real estate properties worldwide.

Is she for real? You bet she is. She’s also one of the most humble women you’ll ever meet. It’s not unusual for Glo to quietly participate in a board meeting and never seek the spotlight. Often, the people who serve with her on boards don’t know about her accomplishments.

In 2002, Glo hosted a very successful fundraiser in her home for Possible Woman Foundation International. The proceeds of the fundraiser provided scholarships for deserving women from all walks of life. During the event, Glo remained in the background, never seeking acknowledgement of her critical role in the success of the evening.

Despite her apparent lack of ego, her leadership and entrepreneurial savvy are clear to all who know her and work with her.

Atlanta roots / Delta connection

Glo grew up in Buckhead and attended school in the Atlanta area. As a young girl, her passion was riding horses. At one time, she thought about becoming an Olympian. But being a well-rounded athlete, her interest soon turned to tennis – another sport she pursued with a passion.

Glo’s college years were spent at the University of Georgia where she received a degree in Marketing. While there, she played competitive tennis.

In addition to her athletic focus, Glo was very focused on her career goals. She knew exactly what she wanted to do, i.e., work for Atlanta's own Delta Airlines as a flight attendant. Interestingly, when she first applied for the inflight services' position, she encountered some turbulence, i.e., she was rejected. Finding that outcome difficult to accept, Glo pursued an explanation from the company. Fortunately, her determination paid off when Delta realized they had switched her test results with another applicant. Once that issue was resolved, Glo was hired immediately. Thus began what she describes as "a wonderful journey in a job I sincerely love."

Barely out of training, Glo made a significant impact on the way Delta scheduled flight attendants. While speaking to her vice president, she told him about her idea for improving the current system. He agreed with her and the change was implemented. Twenty-eight years later, her suggestion is still being used!

Just as her career was taking off, Glo met the man who would become her husband. Marriage brought moves and changes in her life, but it never separated her from Delta. Glo's interests did begin to expand, however, and she realized that she could pursue other interests and still continue with the airline. Among the ventures she pursued were importing cars, brokering real estate, and selling cookies.

The entrepreneurial spirit awakens

Among her many business ventures, Glo is perhaps most often associated with a company called Blooming Cookies. This is the company started by her best friend from college in 1984, which Glo joined in 1989. With her friend and partner as the visionary, Glo relished the role of what she calls the "operational entrepreneur."

Over the years, Blooming Cookies grew from infancy to a very successful enterprise, i.e., a multi-million dollar gift company. It was truly a labor of love. It was also a very creative idea that was skillfully marketed and had mass appeal to busy women. What better gift to send or receive than a pot of deliciously edible "blooming cookies!"

But alas, friendship and business don't always mix, and a time came when Glo decided to move on to pursue other opportunities. But, she continued working with Delta – contentedly flying around the world. While most of her flights were pure business, she also played on Delta's international tennis team. There's no mistaking Glo's love affair with Delta, after all she gets paid to do what she loves!

New challenges - new rewards

But not everything in Glo's life was perfect. In the late 80's, Glo went through a divorce. It was during this time that a friend in Pittsburgh told her about a medical mission that her husband, a plastic surgeon, had begun. Awakened by a dream in the middle of the night in which she saw herself as a part of this mission, Glo volunteered to go. Despite her lack of medical experience, Glo took the leap and went on her first medical mission to Africa in 1999. It would not be her last.

A year later, she was in Nepal. A year after that, she was in Brazil and scrubbed for twenty-eight surgeries. She was supposed to go to Vietnam in 2003, however the trip was postponed due to the instability of the region and the war in Iraq.

According to Glo, “There’s no way to describe the feeling you get when you see the need for help among the poor people of the world, particularly the children. Nepal was the worst I’ve ever seen. But seeing the results of a cleft palate that’s been fixed - a beaming smile restored to a child’s face - is worth whatever sacrifice that’s necessary to get you there.”

Will she be going on more medical missions in the future? “Absolutely!” said Glo. “Many, many more I suspect.”

In the meantime, she’s had a slight diversion. She’s now involved in the running of five separate but intricately linked businesses. Some of the businesses are real estate development, a management company, and a digital imaging company. With a new partner whom she respects immensely, Glo is off and running. Her energy and enthusiasm are nothing short of electrifying in the way she lights up when she talks about the potential that lies ahead.

Imagine if there was a way to get women off welfare, teach them new skills, help them get better paying jobs, find good housing that they can afford and be proud of, and transition them into tax paying citizens.

Breaking the cycle of poverty and enabling all women to become self-sufficient citizens – seems like a pretty worthy goal. This is exactly what Glo and her partner envision. The companies they are working with now are the catalyst for making the dream come true starting in Atlanta. Glo would like for this venture to be the most successful of any she’s ever started. The stakes are high, but the rewards are great.

Whatever happens, you can bet Glo will be going strong. When asked about the future, she said simply, “I will probably do some angel investments.” But, to the children in Africa, Nepal, and Brazil that she has helped regain their smiles, she’s already an angel. Keep flying Glo!! Go Pegasus!!

By Susan B. Hitchcock, Creator of the Age of SHEroes
From an interview in May, 2003