



BUSINESS OWNER, VOLUNTEER

MEET **BRENDA THAYER EISENSCHENK**, FSHS CLASS OF 1988,
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENTREPRENEUR AND COMMUNITY LEADER.

Brenda Thayer Eisenschenk

Generosity is the core value that motivates Brenda Thayer Eisenschenk. "Giving back and being engaged in the community we live, work, and play in are so important not only for myself, but also for those in my company. These core values were instilled in me while growing up in Faribault through my family, the school, church, work, and 4-H."

Brenda began serving others early in life becoming the top Girl Scout cookie salesperson, teaching Sunday School, serving on the board of Faribault Area Food Shelf, restoring the Poor Farm Cemetery, and chairing the Community Pride project. For her efforts, she was named the Jaycee Women of Today 'Outstanding Young Adult.' These days, Brenda continues to devote a great deal of time and energy to community service, charitable projects, and humanitarian activities. She was recently honored as the Woman in Business Champion by the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce. They labeled her "a woman of many hats" for her leadership in numerous community organizations and activities that benefit from her involvement.

Growing up the youngest daughter of a local educator and a head nurse, it might be expected that Brenda would enter a similar field. When she expressed her interest in taking a job in sales, her father was surprised and distressed. "Noooooo," Dave Thayer warned based on his summer job selling pots and pans as a student. "Don't go into sales!" But once Brenda got started, she loved it. She started selling copiers, moved on to other sales jobs, and eventually landed at a telecommunications company selling high-speed internet, cable television, and telephone services. After a stint in advertising, Brenda made the plunge to reconnect with her passion for telecommunications, and in 2007, she launched her own company, IntelCONNECT, a telecommunications consulting business.

Though her company started as a one-person operation in her home, the business has grown, and she now has multiple employees, an office, and a warehouse. IntelCONNECT consults with clients in 49 states, many in Minnesota, including Faribault. Her staff believes her growth has been in part due to her desire to see others succeed. One associate stated, "Brenda's confidence inspires others. Because she's confident, you say, 'I can do this.' You see it in her work and you see it in her volunteer activities." Because Brenda fosters teamwork, leadership training, and comradery, her business has had zero turnover in employees.

This former top Girl Scout cookie salesperson still works for the benefit of women, helping them succeed both in her company and in her community. In her business, she offers flexible hours, a philosophy of "family comes first", and an emphasis on volunteering for charitable and humanitarian causes which is done during business hours on paid time. She also has become a mentor for local business leaders, hosting weekly Lunch and Learn seminars to help them stay current on technology trends.

Brenda has passed on her core value of generosity to her children. Both her son and daughter began volunteering early in life with Brenda. At ages 3 and 5, they rang the Salvation Army bell right beside their mother and collected record amounts of contributions. Now grown, both continue to be active in charitable activities.

Brenda Thayer Eisenschenk, president/CEO, mother, entrepreneur, volunteer, life-long Girl Scout, and community leader, wears an exhausting number of hats, but her positive attitude and generous heart make life better for the people around her. Brenda jokes, "I work half days. It just depends on which 12 hours they are!"