

FLORINE MARK



Inspiring, innovative, empowering and business-savvy are just a few of the words

often used to describe Florine Mark, President and CEO of The WW Group, Inc., based in Farmington Hills, Michigan. For more than 30 years, Florine has used her knowledge, influence, energy and resources to help people help themselves.

Florine is the leading U.S. franchise holder of Weight Watchers International. The WW Group, Inc., an internationally recognized weight loss enterprise, had its humble beginnings as a family business created by Florine from the ground up. Her relatives were the first members, while Florine's mother worked the telephones.

Success and growth quickly followed as Florine consistently acquired franchises throughout the Midwest, East Coast, Canada and Mexico. Some of these franchises were sold in 2003 in a lucrative deal to Weight Watchers International, but Florine retained all operations in her home state of Michigan, as well as in Northern Ontario, Canada.

A multi-faceted entrepreneur with a special eye toward empowering women, Florine employs a large number of women from various age groups and backgrounds in her Michigan and Canadian operations.

Her name is certainly synonymous with weight loss, but her work extends much farther than that. From her contributions to health and nutrition, women and cultural concerns, business and entrepreneurship, and charitable and community revitalization, Florine has left her mark regionally and on a national level.

She serves as an advisor, advocate and board member on approximately 35 committees and civic organizations, including The American Heart Association, Detroit Institute for Children, Business Leaders for Michigan, C200, Belle Isle Women's Committee and the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan, and the Governor's Council on Fitness. She has also served on the boards of Seeds of Peace and the chair of the Detroit Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

Affiliated with some of the nation's most prestigious institutions, Florine serves on The Women's Leadership Board at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy's School of Government where she works to globally advance women in leadership and public policy, and create solutions for public problems. Even more, Florine has ranked high in Crain's Detroit Business Magazine Fittest CEO contest since 2003.

Florine's empowering message on weight loss, self-esteem and self-growth put her in great demand as a speaker at business and health conferences, board meetings, medical facilities and educational institutions across the country. She hosts her own weekly morning radio show, "Remarkable Women," on Magic 105.1 FM in Metro Detroit. She also is seen each week across the state on the highly popular "Ask Florine" segment on ABC's local television station, WXYZ's *Action News*.

Most recently, Florine fulfilled a life-long dream by seeing her first book published. "Talk to the Mirror" is compelling and eye-opening. In it, Florine speaks from the heart about what it takes to triumph in all areas of life including family, career and relationships.

One cannot have such an active and fulfilling life without recognition. Florine's career has been filled with numerous accolades. In 2004, she became the first woman to be inducted in the National Management Associations Hall of Fame. Florine was also honored in 2003 with the *Entrepreneurial Visionary Award* from the Women's Business Center in Washington, D.C. Crain's Detroit Business named her one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Detroit in 2002, and she received the Euro-American Woman's Council Artemis Award in Greece in 2000. Especially memorable for Florine was being honored in Monaco as one of STAR Group's *50 Leading Female Entrepreneurs in the World* in 1999. She also sits on the Michigan Governor's council on Physical Fitness, and is an executive board member at Children's Hospital of Detroit.

Florine delved into the political world in February of 2008, when she was asked by Senator Hillary Rodham-Clinton to sit on a panel at the "Economic Solutions for America Summit" in Zainesville, Ohio. There, she was noted in media outlets all across the country for asking presidential hopeful Hillary Rodham-Clinton what she is going to do to help healthcare, weight control and disease prevention.

In April of 2008, Florine was chosen by Wayne State University's School of Business as *Michigan's Executive of the Year*. Her name is also has been bestowed upon the *Endowed chair of Entrepreneurship* at WSU. Mark was also chosen as one of a select few *Michiganians* of the year by the Detroit News for making living in the state a richer experience with her good work in community and the example she sets. That same year she was given the President's Award for Fitness from the Governor of Michigan.

Despite all the time she's given in motivational speeches, entrepreneurial activities and humanitarian pursuits, Florine acknowledges that her most precious moments are

devoted to her family to which she is utterly dedicated. She has five children, two stepchildren and 24 grandchildren.

However, this all has been but a chapter in the life of Florine. She plans to continue her outreach to those most in need and share her story with many others. Florine also will continue to inspire, educate and motivate people to making a lifelong commitment to happiness and a healthy lifestyle. But most of all – to be the very best they can be!