

SERVICE AND SUCCESS

For Pat Popa, community service and business success go hand-in-hand

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In Business Correspondent

When Pat Popa took over as head of Popa Heating & Cooling just over a decade ago, she had a plan.

Little did she know that her plan was unconventional in the industry – one that had experienced little success.

“When I took over the business, I rebranded the company and changed our business model from new construction to service and add-on replacement,” she said. “Only a very tiny percentage of companies in this industry successfully make that transition – like 1%.”

Fortunately, she said, she didn’t realize that she was supposed to fail.

“I didn’t get the memo,” Popa said.

Founded in 1968, Popa Heating & Cooling has long been a staple in Northwest Indiana. Popa’s husband, Nick, founded the company when he ventured out on his own after running the sheet metal shop for Carl Pettit Builders for several years. He started Popa Sheet Metal, which eventually became known as Popa Heating & Cooling.

In 1986, Pat Popa joined the Highland-based company, and in 2010, became CEO.

As a woman in a male-dominated industry, Popa faced a unique challenge right out of the gate. “I was fortunate to have some great mentors who encouraged me and helped me succeed,” she said.



Pat Popa

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