



PAM PAPPAS STANOCH

Many Twin Citians recognize her smiling face as the owner of a trendy Minneapolis boutique where shoppers can experience high-end European fashions, but what many people do not know is that Pam Pappas Stanoch wears many hats, and not just the ones in her shop.

Pam's lengthy career started in the teaching field as a French teacher. Though education was a passion, she continually found herself job hunting due to annual budget cuts. Being an innovative

thinker, Pam began to brainstorm ideas that would still utilize her love of teaching but allow her to explore other avenues of business. The result was a trip back to college to secure a degree in international relations along with a master's degree in the field of cross-cultural studies. Using her new-found cultural business savvy, Pam formed her first company, Window on the World, which she sold in 2002. One year later, she formed her current business, Athena Group International.

"Athena Group International is a consulting firm that strategically works with companies to



written by rebecca flansburg

photography by olive avenue photography

help them put together effective global teams,” Pam shared. “If a company is increasing their presence in any part of the world, we work with them to make sure that people are communicating with each other effectively and efficiently. We also work to make sure all parties involved have an understanding of both shared values and values that are different from their own. For example; if a company acquires a business in another country, and that company’s team is made up of multicultural individuals, we help all parties to better understand how to give and receive information. We also educate on how to better understand the learning process between different cultures and how to avoid stereotyping. Being a former educator allowed me to create an education-based model in order to achieve that, a model that is based on the way people are educated in their own country.”

Not only do all members of Pam’s team understand the language of business and leadership, they literally speak the languages of business leaders throughout the world. Athena Group International members are fluent in a variety of languages, including French, German, Spanish, Chinese and Portuguese, and their multiple locations can be found in New York, London, Minneapolis, Paris, Hong Kong and Denver. This team of nine global professionals boasts more than a century of shared experience in dealing with international business issues, including areas such as multi-cultural management, international human resources practices, leadership training, cross-cultural development and executive coaching. Pam’s work has allowed her to travel around the world; as much as 35 to 40 percent of her time is spent traveling.

Being a world traveler also has other ben-

efits. With a dream of opening a boutique in her heart, Pam created C’est Chic Boutique in 2010 as a way to provide a global shopping experience based on her fashion discoveries from other countries. Having been asked for years where her own personal fashion came from, Pam decided to bring her eye for European fashion and style “across the pond” to the U.S. Her boutique is filled not only with designers who provide creations that truly honor the female body, but also stunning accessories that are meant to be an intimate way for each woman to regain or revamp her personal style.

“At C’est Chic, we want to provide fashion and Euro-style for all women, and our clothes and accessories are from all over the world,” Pam declared. “We offer breathtaking dresses and outfits, but also a wide range of hats, gloves, scarves and other accessories that can enhance a woman’s existing wardrobe. We also have wonderful local designers who provide us with gorgeous jewelry and hand-painted scarves.”

Living a full and busy life is what keeps this busy entrepreneur and business woman motivated. “They say, ‘If you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life,’” Pam concluded with a smile. “I don’t know how I got so lucky, but I can honestly say that I’ve never worked a day in my life. My family has been so supportive of me over the years as well. My husband, Joe, is my biggest cheerleader, and my children, Nicole and Andrew, and my daughter-in-law, Audrey D’Assignies, have all been instrumental in all of my successes. I think the most rewarding part of both of my businesses is that I never really left teaching. I use my love of teaching at Athena Group to help global businesses work together, and within C’est Chic, I teach women how to look and feel beautiful. It’s so exciting for me to be a part of a transition phase in people’s lives. It could be a transition to a new country, or needing a stellar outfit to transition to a new job. For me, every day is like getting a new teaching assignment, and I wouldn’t change that for the world.” **HLM**

Find C’est Chic Boutique at 210 N. 2nd Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues North in Minneapolis; call 612-339-1600 or visit cestchicboutique.com to learn more. For information about Athena Group International, please visit athenagroupintl.com.