



Joy Anzalone, guest speaker and trailblazer

Anzalone's Motto: Do Whatever it Takes

By: Cori Sykes

As a woman who worked her way to the top of the ranks at Burton Carol Management, LLC, Joy Anzalone knows a thing or two about blazing a trail and speaking to the 2017 Women's History Month theme "Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business".

As Mistress of Ceremony, Shirrell Brown kicked off the program in DFAS Cleveland by gifting all women a rose simply for attending.

Gregg Scruggs then supplied the audience's ears with The National Anthem and Sheila Echols introduced the speaker, encouraging everyone to "Say their name out loud" every chance you get, referencing all trailblazers.

Anzalone arrived on stage with a message to the audience that she wanted to "speak from the heart" and therefore, tell her story that began with her working as a housekeeper making only \$3.35 per hour at Burton Carol in 1982. Thirty-five years later she is now the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

Although she is looked upon as a trailblazer, she feels that it was her late mother that blazed the trail for her, as she was the first woman to take the then test drug, Tamoxifen, for cancer. "I both grew up in a family, plus have worked my entire adult life in an organization that believes anyone can do anything and the only limitations are ones you put on yourself."

Through an encouraging and honest viewpoint Anzalone told the audience that her motto is to "do whatever it takes whenever it takes." That was reflected in her speech as she spoke on times early in her career when she volunteered for jobs that no one else wanted and made a deal with management to work sixty hours per week and only get paid for forty.

That motto gained her recognition by the owner of the hotel in which she was working. Over time he became a second father, mentoring her along the way. She'll always remember what he told her, "If you don't want to make mistakes, stay home and stay in bed."

Anzalone took his inspirational words of wisdom and ran with them, realizing along the way that when she started working thirty-five years ago it was not a conscious choice, but a lucky one. She feels both fortunate, grateful and beyond blessed to have made the right choices.

For other women following in her footsteps she has this advice, "The best way to get ahead is to focus on the job that was given to you and do it to the very best of your ability."

When Anzalone's humorous speech was completed, the audience gave a well-deserved standing ovation.

“She started off making a little money and I connected with that because I started [at DFAS] as a GS-02. She became a success and that was motivating,” said Juanita Logan of Accounts Payable.

Sermonte Dickerson of Departmental Reporting agreed, “It was wonderful. She was very inspiring and real.”

Kim Brisset closed the program, reminding all in attendance to “blaze the trail for those behind you so they can find their path.”