

PHILADELPHIA BUSINESS JOURNAL

JEAN R. RUTTENBERG
THE CENTER FOR
AUTISM
CEO FILE

'Invest in people, not things.'



CURT HUDSON

Jean R. Ruttenberg enjoys her backyard lakefront deck in Rydal.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Jean R. Ruttenberg
Title: Executive director
Company, city: The Center for Autism, Philadelphia
Type of company: Nonprofit autism treatment and evaluation center.
Number of employees: 50
Annual budget last fiscal year: \$3.8 million
Recent project: Developing and implementing plans to relocate our headquarters and build satellite locations throughout Philadelphia.
Education: Arcadia University, MA in special education; Villanova University, MA in education/elementary counseling.
First job: Entering accounts receivable for a family friend when I was 13.
Little-known fact about you: I like insects.
Home: Rydal.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Essential business philosophy: Know where you are, where you want to be and how to get there.
Best way to keep a competitive edge: Keep your ears open, ask questions and surround yourself with a great team.
Yardstick of success: Making myself happy — I'm my toughest critic.

Goal yet to be achieved: Expanding the Center's programs to meet the need for services for adults with autism and their families.

JUDGMENT CALLS

Best decision: Marrying my husband.
Worst decision: Giving up playing the violin.
Toughest decision: Leaving my position as mental health director for the Philadelphia School District to come to the Center for Autism (also one of my best decisions).
Mentor: Sally Puryear, a former colleague who told me what I needed to hear and helped me grow.

TRUE CONFESSIONS

Word that best describes you: Optimist.
Like best about your job: Knowing that the Center has helped create better outcomes for a child and family.
Like least about your job: Working with technology.
The most important lesson you've learned: Invest in people, not things.
Life motto: Pass what you know onto others.
Greatest fear: Losing a loved one.
Person most interested in meeting and why: Margaret Mead — she was a great thinker and was able to do so much given the

controversy surrounding her and the pressure to conform.

Company you respect most and why: Starbucks — for its commitment to environmental responsibility in all facets of the organization.
First choice for a new career: Teaching at a university.
Greatest extravagance: Three-week vacation in Italy.

ET CETERA

Award/honor most proud of: In 2000, the Center was given the Significant Achievement Award by the American Psychiatric Association for developing a comprehensive program that treats autistic children.
Most influential book: "Man's Search for Meaning," by Viktor E. Frankl.
Favorite movie: "Enchanted April," directed by Mike Newell.
Favorite restaurant: Estia, Philadelphia.
Favorite vacation spot: Italy.
Favorite room in the house and why: The deck (even though it's not inside) because it overlooks a lake and is the best place to collect my thoughts.
Favorite way to spend free time: With friends and family.
Automobile you drive: Infiniti Q45. ■■■