

Kay Stanish

Age: 37 (on Oct. 1)

Occupation: Director of business development and global market development for Personal Care + Home Care at AptarGroup

Residence: Crystal Lake

Hometown: Sterling

Family: Husband Jeff; children Jeffery Stanish Jr., 12, and Joseph Stanish, 8

Education: Bachelor's degree in political science and Latin American studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Favorite McHenry County restaurant? So many to choose from, but I would say Public House. It is a regular destination for work lunches.

Favorite book? "Atlas Shrugged" by Ayn Rand. I named my dog Atlas because of it.

First job? I have worked since I was a teenager to earn my spending money (as my parents would call it) including cleaning a bank after school. I also worked through college to help offset the costs of books, etc. But my first job out of college was working downtown Chicago for Dearborn Publishing. I was the international sales coordinator.

One word that describes you? Enthusiastic

What is your job and what makes your good at it?

My job is to set the global, strategic direction of product innovation for key markets, such as hair care, deodorant and home care. I define future market trends in packaging in order to develop revolutionary products that have never been seen before in the market place. I predict what consumers will want three to five years into the future based on consumer behavior and their current problem states. I do this all around the world and work with some of the largest consumer packaged goods companies to bring new products to market. I am good at what I do because I tend to think big and I am a creative problem solver. I have a great ability to put people at ease. So whether I am speaking with a customer or interviewing a consumer, it ends up being like a conversation between old friends. That really assists me in being able to dig deep and extract needs or problems consumers want solved. Further, I have worked in a global environment almost my entire career. This allows me to find the wonder in all places around the world and I thoroughly enjoy working with such a diverse group of people. It is a nonstop learning experience for me.

What accomplishments and innovations are you most proud of this year?

Externally, I was invited to present about my innovations and the innovation process at the global Fabric and Home Care Headquarters of Procter & Gamble in Geneva, Switzerland. There I spoke to top management about how Aptar's innovation process is rooted in consumer behavior and that we spend quite a bit of time conducting consumer tests. I then showcased new product developments that occurred because of the knowledge I found. I was able to share trends that could shape new product launches in laundry and solidified our relationship as an innovative supplier to the largest CPG company in the world. Internally, I conduct-

ed massive consumer tests and interviews in order to understand consumer habits and behaviors when using deodorant. I was able to extract pain points and knowledge from consumers that has led to a brand new, never-before-seen deodorant product for a consumer group that is currently being underserved. This product has yet to hit the store shelves so that's all I can share at the moment.

How do you give back to the community, and what drives your service?

I am deeply involved with youth sports. For example, I coach youth bowling Saturday mornings at Crystal Bowl. I have been an avid bowler since I was four so I enjoy the ability to pass on some of my knowledge to kids that have an interest in the sport. But I have a deep passion for community service through Rotary. Rotary and I have a long history. Rotary International sponsored me my junior year in high school as an exchange student. I spent the year in Argentina. I really have Rotary to thank for the path that I am on with my career so about three years ago when I went looking for a way to give back, I found the Rotary Club of Crystal Lake Dawnbreakers. One couldn't ask for a better service club to belong to. When you hear the old cliché about "I want to make a difference," you don't have to roll your eyes. It actually happens with the Dawnbreakers. I see firsthand how the money raised for charity (about \$1.25 million so far) helps the people in my community and can make a difference. That is what drives me to be involved, knowing that I am helping make a difference and not just with the money but with my time, as well.

What is something you have never done but want to do some day?

I would like to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. What a way to feel like you're on top of the world.

What is the best career advice you have ever received?

From my parents: Don't be your own worst enemy. If you want to do it, you can do it. No one can stop you.

Which CEO would you most like to spend the day with and why?

I would love to spend the day with Howard Schultz of Starbucks. He is a walking example of how you can take your thoughts or ideas and make them a reality. He is a successful entrepreneur by identifying needs and solving consumer problems. He has kept the core values at the center of his business despite growing fast (something I enjoy, as well, for being part of Aptar). He consistently works in and for his community. And he realizes people form the foundation of his business. He respects diversity and has been quoted saying, "We want to provide our people with dignity and self-esteem, so we offer tangible benefits." I can't think of a better way to spend the day and learn from an innovative entrepreneur that works within his community and invests in his people. It is something to aspire to.

Nominator's comment:

"Kay Stanish is the woman who does it all," said husband Jeff Stanish. "She has a successful career globe-trotting around the world. She is a mother to two wonderful and active boys. And she is an active philanthropist. I sometimes wonder when she has time to rest."



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Kay Stanish is director of development and global marketing development for Personal Care + Home Care at AptarGroup.

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