

# Strategy+Style Marketing Group Continues Career Creation with 2nd Generation Intern

*L-R: Alexa Tietjen; Karen E. Fluharty, Strategy+Style Marketing Group and Brenda Tietjen, Center Stage Productions. (Photo: Strategy+Style Marketing Group)*

MONTVILLE, NJ, UNITED STATES, June 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Alexa Tietjen's high school graduation last week and acceptance to Parsons School of Design at The New School in NYC, is a stepping stone to a new career, but not her first thanks to an internship program from [Strategy+Style Marketing Group](#), a consulting and marketing services firm focused on retail and real estate. The program will resume in 2026.

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Who could envision that one speech would create three generations of marketing professionals, in an industry that must combine longevity with constant renewal to appeal to an ever-changing consumer?”

*Karen E. Fluharty*

Her plan, to major in Strategic Design Management , with a minor in Fashion Communication, results in part from the comprehensive training given at Strategy+Style Marketing Group, with a more than a bit of generational knowledge. Alexa Tietjen, in fact, is the second generation of her family

to be mentored by Strategy+Style Marketing Group Founding Partner and Chief Strategist Karen E. Fluharty.

Long a mentor for shopping center marketing professionals, Fluharty has developed a comprehensive, hands-on plan that allows her interns to learn while doing, and even educate the boss herself.

“Who could envision that one speech three decades ago would create three generations of marketing professionals, in an industry that must combine the stability of longevity with a constant need for renewal to appeal to an ever-changing consumer?” Fluharty said.

Fluharty spoke in the late 1980s to a student group from the American Marketing Association about her experiences as regional marketing director in the shopping center industry, she had little idea that would be the start of a lifelong connection that would inspire decades of retail real estate marketers. Fluharty, already an established professional, spoke at Rowan University in Glassboro, N.J., where she met Brenda Tietjen, who asked her for a job.

Fluharty and Tietjen created an internship (paid in gas money and food court vouchers), and a lifelong friendship was born as Brenda assisted in developing strategic plans, executing fashion and community activations, and learning shopping center marketing.

"I never wanted the internship to end," she said.

After exploring other industries after collage, Brenda returned to retail real estate, holding Marketing Director positions with Livingston Mall, Walt Whitman Mall and the Shops at Riverside and more. Meanwhile, Fluharty held senior positions at Prime Retail and Chelsea/Simon Property Group, where she launched luxury outlet centers around the world. The two remained in touch.

"We had the same life and career milestones — new jobs, our children and future business decisions," Fluharty said. "You need a knowledgeable, sympathetic yet objective ear to advise you, to help you make such critical decisions for your life. We served that role for each other."



From left, Alexa Tietjen; Karen E. Fluharty, Founding Partner and Chief Strategist of Strategy+Style Marketing Group; and Brenda Tietjen, Marketing Director at Center Stage Productions. (Photo credit: Strategy+Style Marketing Group)

One such decision for Fluharty followed the Great Financial Crisis of 2008/09 — how to continue evolving the marketing industry in light of major changes in retail real estate. In 2010, she created Strategy+Style Marketing Group, an outsourced, highly specialized marketing department for developers who had drastically reduced its in-house departments, working with clients globally.

Brenda Tietjen now serves as Director of Marketing for Center Stage Productions, a leader in providing décor to high-profile public destinations.

Not surprisingly, the industry also appealed to her daughter Alexa, now 18 years old. Her first call: Fluharty.

"Karen was always in our lives – and a positive role model for her as to how a successful businessperson looks, how they can raise children and have an amazing career," Brenda Tietjen said. "Alexa has big dreams for herself."

"Karen is a very inspiring person," Alexa Tietjen said. "She never stops, but she loves it."

Fluharty was excited to inspire — and be inspired by — yet another generation of marketing professional.

“It’s always true that the mentor learns just as much as the mentee, and Alexa was no exception. We learned from each other,” Fluharty. “She brought different perspectives and skills during her internship here, working on contemporary platforms, video and social algorithms to help create better engagement.”

Despite their different experiences and points of view over the generations, some aspects of shopping center marketing remain a constant, Fluharty said.

“It requires talent, ambition, understanding the customer and that we must parlay those qualities into programs that are best for the asset and ownership. Just like Brenda all those years ago, Alexa absorbed all of that and more,” she said. “There is always a place for Alexa at Strategy+Style Marketing Group.”

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