Beyond the Studio: How Jazzercise's Founder Built a Legacy Around Reciprocity

Judi Sheppard Missett and the guiding principle for businesses

CARLSBAD, CA, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Judi Sheppard Missett founded Jazzercise in 1969 to give women a more joyful and effective way to work out. More than five decades later, a philosophy she calls the 'golden circle' of reciprocity has become an indispensable part of how the brand engages with its instructors, franchisees, and communities around the world.

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>
> *Judi Sheppard Missett*

This principle is rooted in the idea of "creating winning situations for all." In other words, businesses thrive when they invest in the people and communities around them. For Judi, generosity is not an initiative; it's a leadership practice. "I learned this from my mom," Judi says. "I grew up watching her engage in community life through multiple causes, from schools to civic organizations, and more."

That philosophy became embedded in Jazzercise's franchise model, where local instructors and business owners have become drivers for positive change in times of need. "Jazzercise franchisees support causes that are meaningful to their communities. From disaster relief to health initiatives, building this golden circle of reciprocity in which communities support businesses, and businesses support communities, becomes key as trust, loyalty and success emerge," she explains.

Beyond Jazzercise, Judi's commitment to women's leadership extends to organizations including Enterprising Women, where she has supported and mentored female entrepreneurs through business and leadership programs. Her work has been recognized by organizations including the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Sport and Physical Education, and the Enterprising Women Foundation.

Today, Judi's legacy and philosophy continue through the next generation of Jazzercise leadership, with her daughter, Shanna Missett Nelson, spearheading the company as CEO and

Chief Choreographer, and her granddaughter, Skyla Nelson, representing the third generation of the family within the brand.

For Jazzercise, reciprocity remains connected to the broader culture Judi helped established; one centered on creativity, leadership, community, and relationships that go beyond the studio. By making reciprocity a core value, Judi has created a lasting impact that extends far beyond the dance floor.

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