



2014 Walks of Life Honorees

Barbara O'Brien Brown and Margaret Pigott Flynn

A double date in college later turned into a close friendship that blossomed into a successful business relationship for Barbara Brown and Margaret Flynn, co-owners of BrownFlynn, a Highland Heights communications and sustainability firm.



Barbara O'Brien was attending John Carroll University when her boyfriend, Chuck Brown, suggested a double date with his friends, Danny Flynn and Margaret ("Margie") Pigott.

Margie, who was attending Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, at the time, graduated in 1981 and married Danny. She took a job at National City Bank of Cleveland handling investor relations, but while pregnant with her second child, asked the bank to reduce her hours to part time so she could spend more time with her family. The bank wanted someone full time for the job, so Margie began sharing her job with Barb.

In 1996, the two women decided to combine their talents further by opening their own corporate communications consulting business.

National City became their first client. As sustainability became a buzz word in corporate offices, the women decided to expand their consulting work to advising companies on issues related to the environment. BrownFlynn is the first U.S.-certified training organization to the Global Reporting Initiative in Amsterdam and is a Silver Consultancy Partner to the Carbon Disclosure Project. The firm now has a staff of 15 to assist its clients in improving upon positive social and environmental practices following the firm's motto of "Do good. Do well. Win."

Barb served as vice president of Leadership Cleveland's Class of 2009. She is a trustee of JumpStart Inc. and a member of the John Carroll University board of directors. She and husband, Chuck, have three grown children: Tom, Dan and Katie, and live in Cleveland Heights.

Margie served as president of the Leadership Cleveland Class of 2004 and is chairwoman of American Red Cross Blood Services of Northern Ohio. She is a member of the steering committee of the Corporate Sustainability Network and serves as an advisor to the GreenCityBlueLake Institute, and Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson's Sustainability Advisory Council. She is a guest lecturer at numerous conferences and colleges, and is author of several published articles about sustainability and entrepreneurship. Margie and her husband, Danny, have three grown sons, Patrick, Ryan and Kyle, and reside in Highland Heights