



## Woman executive is not shy when opportunities knock

[By Michael Kinsman]

Patricia Woertz is a female and a chief executive officer, and very determined that people not view her as a female chief executive officer.

"I'm fairly certain that Archer Daniels Midland didn't hire me because I'm a woman," Woertz said while she was in Southern California to give the commencement address at the University of San Diego ceremony for business, engineering and liberal arts majors. "I think my background and my performance mean more."

That's true. Woertz, 53, has an impressive background and work history filled with successes. But many other women do, too. So why do only 11 of the Fortune 500 companies have female chief executives?

Woertz doesn't have an answer for that, or she doesn't feel comfortable sharing it.

Yet, she's well aware that ADM is the largest public company in America headed by a woman and that she brings a different perspective to the giant agricultural processing business traditionally run by men.

Like it or not, upon her May 1 takeover at ADM in Decatur, Ill., Woertz became one of the most important players in corporate America - partly because she's a woman. Her every move will be scrutinized as she leads a corporation with \$36 billion in annual sales.

"I hope people will judge me by my performance," said Woertz.

She is hopeful that, as more American business goes global, business executives will stop drawing distinctions between men and women workers, just as they became

more receptive of cultural diversity out of necessity.

"Obviously, I'm a woman, but I also am an executive that has developed skills through the years just like any other executive, male or female," she said.

Woertz was a role model for all the graduating University of San Diego students, an individual who has climbed through the corporate jungle to one of its most powerful jobs. Yet, female graduates probably might have tracked her career path a little more closely.

When Woertz graduated from Penn State in 1974, she was an anomaly as a female accounting major. She and one other woman joined the ranks of 200 recruits at the big firm that would become Ernst & Young.

"I don't think she stuck around too long," Woertz said.

Three years later, Woertz would seize the chance to work for scandal-ridden Gulf Oil. The company had found itself in the middle of the Watergate scandal as one of several large corporations that illegally funneled millions of dollars to Richard Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President.

"Gulf was cleaning house, and I saw opportunities in the energy field," Woertz said.

She thrived in the oil industry, eventually moving to Chevron in 1987. There she kept

alert for opportunities to accept challenges and responsibility.

"I moved around a lot and made my family go with me," Woertz said. "I knew this was the career path I wanted."

By the time Woertz retired from Chevron earlier this year, she was the fourth-top executive of the company, overseeing \$100 billion of business a year.

"I looked for and took the opportunities I could," she said. "The oil business was global and that gave me lots of opportunities."

Woertz, who's divorced with three adult children, now works for a company that uses about one-third of all corn, wheat and soybeans processed in the United States to make a variety of feed and food additives. ADM also is the nation's largest maker of ethanol, and people are looking at Woertz and her background to lead them into more biofuel fields.

She hopes to be successful in building consensus at ADM, just as she encouraged University of San Diego graduates to consider consensus building as a valuable asset.

Woertz urged them to look at the challenges and innovations required in a modern global economy.

"What about the opportunities, the innovations?" she asked. "Where are those innovations going to come from? I believe they're going to come from you ... and



the people around you ... when you bring together your diversity of knowledge and the rich diversity of your hearts and souls.”

She said she intends to do that very thing in her own CEO job.

After a career in the predominantly male corporate world, Woertz is watching closely as her 23-year-old daughter, Paula Lucchini, adjusts to her job working with nearly all men at Chevron.

Lucchini, who completed her USD engineering degree work in December and returned for graduation, said that while she finds adjustments are necessary, she needs only look at her mother’s example to understand that she can be accepted into the male work environment.

“It’s a little strange, but I think I’m getting the hang of it,” said Lucchini, who has worked the past four months for Chevron.

Woertz listened and smiled. She hopes that her experiences will mean something to others, if only to her own children.