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PRESIDENT / CEO,  
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& CLINICS



# 2008 Women of Influence

IN SILICON VALLEY

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT • FEBRUARY 29, 2008



NAWBO<sup>®</sup>  
Silicon Valley

**FOLEY**  
FOLEY & LARDNER LLP



## SUSAN MCHAN

President and CEO | Opes  
Advisors

**RESIDENCE:** Los Altos

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor's Degree in Education from Hardin Simmons University.

**PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT:**

My proudest achievements stem from my role as a business owner. For over 19 years

I have designed opportunities to provide value to clients, create careers for employees and make a difference in people's lives. The products and services of my businesses have been built upon ethics and value and have been a benefit to our local community. I have employed over 480 people and have helped these people build their careers and support their families. Many of the same people that work for me are my friends and colleagues in life.

### **WHAT IS THE BIGGEST ISSUE/CHALLENGE/OR OPPORTUNITY FACING WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE?**

Because I am a woman, it's the only way I experience the workplace. From that perspective, I don't necessarily focus on challenges; I focus on competing and being good at what I do. Women are notably strong communicators. Our strength in communication allows us to build consensus, build teams and erase boundaries. These results lend to our ability to sell our vision, gain support and accomplish effective actions. In fact, research supports our success in the workforce: 48 percent of all privately held companies are owned or controlled by women and profits in these firms are growing faster than all firms. We have more opportunity today than ever before.

### **WHO HAS MOST INFLUENCED YOU AND WHY?**

I've always surrounded myself with people who are very good in their specific domain, whether it is business, marriage or parenting. I've been fortunate to learn from their experiences, knowledge and wisdom. If I have a concern about parenting, I know two especially wise people with whom I am able to think. It benefits me and my children. In my role as a CEO I have a longtime associate who's an expert in that domain. We regularly meet to influence each other. In turn, I look to bring value to others in the domains in which I hold expertise. Some of my greatest teachers are my best friends.