

A straight line to the peak of Curves

Deann Shannon Bouchard is Curves 2007 Franchisee of the Year.

Deann Shannon Bouchard has been an athlete since she was a kid — and now, as the Curves 2007 Franchisee of the Year, she is helping women in Orange to strengthen, firm, and tone their bodies, too.

A longtime soccer player, Bouchard had gone to the CIF championships in high school, and continued playing after graduation. At age 26, she sustained an injury that stopped her from playing on the field. But that didn't stop her from being physically active — or competitive.

"I always wanted to ski race," said the downtown Orange resident in a recent interview. "That was my next goal, and that's what I did."

Bouchard began waterskiing at age 4, and after her injury in 1992 she started skiing competitively. A 12-year member of the US Water Ski Racing Team, she earned four team world gold medals and one individual bronze at the world championship level.

It was during her time on the US team that she first heard about Curves. She and her husband Wayne were visiting her aunt and uncle for Thanksgiving in 2001. Bouchard had recently been laid off from her job in fundraising, and was considering her options.

Her aunt mentioned Curves.



COURTESY OF DE SHANNON BOUCHARD

TOP FRANCHISEE: 2007 Franchisee of the Year winner De Shannon Bouchard, center, stands with Curves founders Diane and Gary Heavin at the award ceremony in Orlando, Fla.



ELISABETH DEFFNER
ORANGE PEOPLE

ularly well-run club, and speaking at length with the owner, Bouchard began to consider opening one of her own.

They opened their first Curves franchise in Orange in April 2002. The next year, they opened another in Anaheim Hills, and in 2005 they opened a second club in Orange.

"People kept coming to my club in Orange, and I was like, 'We've got to open more clubs,'" Bouchard said.

Eventually she sold her second Orange club and the one in Anaheim Hills. Now she focuses on her first club, located on Tustin St. in a shopping center across from Home Depot. She is glad to have had the experience of running multiple clubs — and glad to be focused on just one now.

That focus has paid off. Last year, Bouchard was nominated by the area director to be Franchisee of the Year for the west-

— and Bouchard discovered she was it.

"I was really actually shocked," she said, laughing. "It's hard for me to toot my own horn — but it's such an honor to have an award like that from your peers. I really feel like my hard work has accomplished (something). It makes me feel good for my employees, makes me feel good for my members."

Bouchard continues striving to improve the club, and has recently invested in CurvesSmart, which she describes as "the most advanced fitness technology in the world." Members who choose to upgrade to this program have their workout capabilities — number of reps, range of motion, and so on — entered into the computer. Then, each time they work out on one of the Curves machines, they "log on" with an ID tag. The program will give the member moment-to-moment feedback to let her know whether she was working too hard — or not hard