

Michelle Bottino

Fully Promoted of St. Charles

BY JOAN CHAYKIN



Even as a child, Michelle Bottino had a deep desire to help others. “I dreamed of being a psychologist, or an orthodontist,” Bottino says. “My dad said I would get too attached to people as a psychologist and he wasn’t wrong, but I was also always fascinated by teeth. Weird, I know.”

So, Bottino went to school to become a dental assistant and later was invited to teach in the program at her local community college. She figured out methods to help students retain information rather than just reciting the text to them. At 22

Throughout it all, Bottino has remained committed to her people-first values and has found ways through Fully Promoted of St. Charles (asi/385024) to make a difference in her community. She regularly sets up custom online stores that allow nonprofits to sell logoed merchandise and generate new revenue streams. She partners with dozens of local charities, offers reduced- or at-cost products and donates to causes supporting children in foster care, suicide prevention organizations, local chamber initiatives, and law enforcement and military events.

Yet, she still wanted to do more. So in 2023 she started a paid internship program for differently abled adults that provides hands-on job training, confidence-building and real work experience. “I saw an entire demographic of people who truly want to work but are overlooked due to a perceived lack of ability rather than seeing the abilities that they have, the number-one being the desire to work,” she explains. “Our motto is ‘See the Able, Not the Label.’”

Bottino has had five interns go through the program, one of whom she hired permanently. “Callie has been an incredible asset to our team,” Bottino says. “Though she’s hearing impaired and nonverbal, she communicates through her art, her incredible smile and through sign language, which we continue to learn. I feel as though this program has enriched the lives of my team, my

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years old, “I felt as though I cracked the code to understanding people,” she says.

It’s served Bottino well in her thriving business career, as she switched from teaching to sales and then launched her own franchise for Counselor Top 40 distributor Fully Promoted (asi/384000) in 2018, which she grew to more than \$1 million annually in under five years. “I attribute my success to my teaching career,” says Bottino, who completed her bachelor’s degree in 2015 while raising two kids, serving as classroom parent and Girl Scout cookie mom and managing an extensive business portfolio. “I don’t sell. I learn about my clients and look for solutions that help them reach their goals. I think of myself as a better human than a businessperson.”

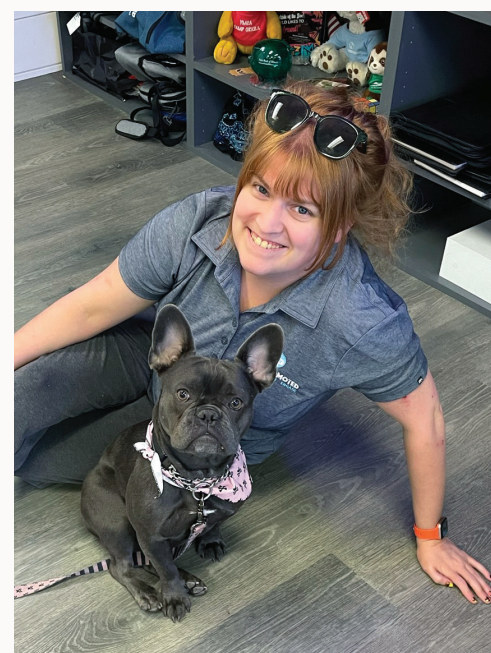
clients and my family. As a business owner, I’m in a unique position to provide opportunities to others that they might not otherwise find. I’ll continue to look for ways to give back.”

The franchise is a family affair – Bottino’s dad handles graphic design projects, her son runs production and her mom does the bookkeeping. But clients’ favorite family member (and another example of Bottino’s compassion) is her pet rescue dog, Mabel, a certified emotional support animal. “She’s my professional greeter and all-around lovebug,” Bottino laughs. “Clients come in and are greeted by her sweet face; some even come just to see her. She’s become a bit of a celebrity.”

“Michelle fully embodies the spirit of a humanitarian,” says Andrew Titus, president of United



Bottino (holding her dog Mabel) and her team at a fundraising event for Kendall’s Kindness, a suicide prevention organization.



Callie, who was hired through Bottino’s special intern program, is shown here with Mabel, a rescue dog and the company’s official greeter.

Franchise Group (the parent company of Fully Promoted) and a member of the Counselor Power 50. “She’s selfless, kind and community-oriented, and the program she’s developed for adults with disabilities is a direct reflection of those attributes.”

Adds Bottino: “It’s who I am at my core. I’m incredibly lucky to be surrounded by the people I trust the most in the world. I can’t think of a better way to earn a living.” ■