

# SHARON HARPER |

President and CEO,  
The Plaza Cos., Peoria

Sharon Harper has been running her own company for more than a quarter-century, but in 2008 she gained new insight about leadership. That's because she was closely involved in U.S. Sen. John McCain's presidential campaign as an adviser and spokeswoman. Harper calls McCain's loss "very difficult," but said it led to new friendships beyond an already wide circle in the Valley.

"I will always treasure (that)," she said.

Now a bit rested from a crazy year on the campaign trail, Harper is firmly back at the helm of The Plaza Cos., which has developed projects including Classic Residences at Silverstone, an upscale senior living community in North Scottsdale, in association with Hyatt; and SkySong, a

1.2 million-square-foot mixed-use development, with partners Arizona State University, USAA Real Estate Co. and Higgins Development Partners.

Adjustments to the company's operations have kept Plaza competitive during trying times, she said.

"The company has diversified geographically throughout Arizona with (various) business service lines," Harper said. "Also, Plaza has focused on diversity with our three product types, which are medical office, biotech/bioscience facilities and senior living."

In addition to executive duties, Harper is engaged in a wide variety of charitable endeavors.

"A great source of pride for me is my service as a trustee for the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust and a board member of the Arizona Community Foundation," she said.

She also makes time for her husband and family.

"There is no greater accomplishment or sense of pride than my family," she said. "I am fully engaged in everything I do, whether it is with The Plaza Cos., serving the community, or being with family and friends."

— Jan Buchholz



## AT A GLANCE

**HOW LONG AT POST:** 27 years

**EMPLOYEES:** 45

**DESCRIPTION:** Develops, manages and leases commercial real estate primarily associated with health care, senior living and biotechnology industries

**CHARITIES/CIVIC INVOLVEMENT:**

Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, Arizona Community Foundation, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Greater Phoenix Leadership, Brophy College Preparatory, Banner Health Foundation, Thunderbird School of Global Management, Arizona State University President's Club