

Mentor Spotlight: Getting to Know Heather Shaw



How did you get into your field? What alternative career could you see yourself having?

“I was recruited out of college for an internship with Saks 5th Avenue. From there, I moved down to the Fort Lauderdale store and worked my way up, as now I am the General Manager and Vice President. I have always had a love for fashion and knew I wanted to work in the retail world; I really could not see myself doing anything else.”

What has been the most interesting aspect of your job?

“My job enables me to meet such interesting people, including designers, celebrities, even Kings and Queens! I also get the opportunity to travel a lot which is exciting. No two days are ever the same, so there is hardly a dull moment.”

Any favorite or notable perk?

“Other than the people I get to meet as mentioned above, I would say my employee discount is a cool perk. I also enjoy the aspect in which our company gives back to the community around us.”

Describe a day in the life of the VP of Saks?

“As I previously stated, no two days here are ever the same. Usually I review sales and customer surveys, engage in our store wide rally to kick off the day in which we discuss our successes and

events, walk the floor to discover what is new, and participate in meetings, interviews, and conference calls. At least twice a week, I am out and about in the community at board meetings, cocktail receptions, charity events, etc.”

What is one piece of advice you would give your younger self?

“To be successful, you must network and build relationships with others. It is extremely important to have a mentor, someone who has your back, and that you can be honest with.”

What inspired you to join the Viner Mentor Program?

“I love helping and inspiring others. I wanted to support someone going through new experiences and share some insight.”

Have you ever had a mentor? What was the most impactful thing you took away from that relationship?

“When I graduated college and went to work for Saks, I gained a mentor there. She trusted me with information, gave me extra projects, and the confidence I needed to propel my career. Mentors give honest feedback, which I truly valued and was thankful for. My mentor looked out for me and my career, being a huge part of my success.”

How do you balance having a successful career with being a mother?

“I have a very supportive husband who fortunately handles a lot on the family side as he understands retail. We don’t expect perfection. When I am at work, I try to focus on work, and when I am at home, I try to focus on being at home.”

Who is your mentee, and what is one characteristic about him/her that you admire?

“My mentee is Mia Marks. She is a very smart go getter. She knows what she wants, and she has the confidence to go and get it. Whenever Mia and I speak, she is always enthusiastic and positive.”

What is an aspect of your professional journey that not many people may know about?

“I actually met my husband at Saks, we both worked at the Palm Beach Gardens store.”