



# SACC Arizona

*Promoting Trade, Commerce and Investments between Sweden and Arizona since 1996*

## SACC Arizona - Featured Member

### Suzanne Southard

#### **When Suzanne Southard was looking for a summer job, she took a page from her father's book and came to the US.**

That summer gave her a taste for more, and so she moved to the US after finishing Bachelor of Arts in Marketing and Economy in Sweden. Her sights set on a bank job.

"I came over in the 1990. The Gulf war was raging and I could not get a job in a bank. But I found a position as manager of the cashiers at Ikea in Pittsburg. A total cultural chock! I had worked at Ikea in Sweden and there people were used to bring their own stuff to the cashiers, wait in line and load into the cars. In the US, the customers weren't used to lines. They demanded more open cashiers and assistance with delivery."

But her Swedish spirit remained strong and infused with American service mindedness, she rose to become Customer Service Director.

During her time in Pittsburg she married husband Rich. They relocated to Dallas, and she became a stay at home mom with the first of three children. "Some of my Swedish friends thought it was strange that I would be a "hemmafru", but that's the American way. It's close to impossible to find part time job that works for a stay at home mom."

Instead of working, she got engaged in the Swedish Professional Women's Club, SWEA, in Dallas. In 2008 the family relocated to Phoenix. "My husband found a great job at the Children's hospital here". Her connection to SWEA grew stronger and in 2012 she was appointed President for SWEA Arizona.

"We got a request from SWEA International to hold the 2015 World Meeting here in Phoenix. First I was hesitant and said no. But after polling our members they said YES! We planned and worked hard with the preparations for two years. It was an enormous project with a budget of 200 000 dollars."

The result? 300 people for all over the world descended to Phoenix in October 2015 for several days of meetings, dinners and excursions.

After the SWEA International Meeting, Suzanne stepped back from presidency and Tora Reed took over the positions. Instead Suzanne is now focusing on strengthening SWEAs appeal to younger women.

"Yes, that's what I want to do more of. Younger women are often in the midst of their careers' and it is important for them to have professional networks and access to inspirational, educational speakers. That's why I am also a member of SACC Arizona. I think that we can build tighter ties between SWEA and SACC Arizona. Especially considering that newly arrived Swedish couples need a social network that is attuned to their needs."

But besides SWEA and raising a family, Suzanne has another passion: Running marathons.

Contact SACC Arizona to become the next featured member. Let our member know about your successes - [mail us today!](#)

#### **Earlier Featured Members**

[Sergio Cecutta](#)

[Sheldon Stone](#)

[Lars Lagerman, honorary consul](#)

[Scuba Professionals of Arizona](#)

[Mona Mellegard, Entrepreneurial Award Recipient](#)

[Odense Marcipan](#)

[Strategic Points Tax Solutions 2012](#)

[Engineer Your Business 2011](#)

[SunAir Awnings 2011](#)

[CMS Winemarketing 2011](#)

"I run to keep healthy, but it is also a very good stress release. There is a lot of thinking going on when you run."

She has done many fundraising marathons through the years. Raising money for Phoenix Childrens' Hospital through Arizona Rock'n Roll Marathon for six years. "I also think it is important to be a part of your community and I want to be a good role model for my children, to show what you can do for your community in a volunteer capacity."

Her latest endeavor is to run the New York Marathon in November this year with Team for Kids. It is a charitable organization that raises money for helping children fighting obesity and find a healthy lifestyle. [You can read more on Suzanne's marathon webpage](#) about this runner with a charitable goal.





[Join Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

**Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce Arizona Inc.**

PO Box 5102 | Scottsdale, AZ 85261-5102 USA