

## 2008 SWE Emerging Leader Award

## Jada Phillabaum

Caterpillar Inc.

Jada Phillabaum is a marketing recruitment and development supervisor with Caterpillar Inc. She supervises the development of marketing representatives as they progress through a two-year rotational program leading to positions as rental or product support operations representatives. She also leads Caterpillar's recruiting efforts for technical marketing, and is responsible for recruiting, hiring, and placing full-time employees and interns on successful career paths with the company.

Phillabaum joined Caterpillar as a technical marketing management representative after earning a bachelor's degree in agriculture and biological engineering from Purdue University. She worked in a variety of developmental positions during her first three years with the company before becoming a marketing field representative in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

In Sao Paulo, Phillabaum led Caterpillar dealers to achieve an annual business plan of \$175 million in sales. She overcame the obstacles of working in a challenging business environment, conducting business in Portuguese within three months of relocating to Brazil. She effectively learned the Brazilian financing, taxation, and trade policies.

As a result of Phillabaum's marketing skills and her ability to establish process improvements, she was selected to fill a newly established position as Caterpillar's Latin American customer relationship management manager. She oversaw the selection of a software tool needed to meet business criteria in Latin America. Caterpillar identified the project as a "Best Practice" across all marketing regions and recognized Phillabaum's talents by asking her to sit on a six-person team charged with redefining the company's e-business strategy. Phillabaum served the company successfully in Latin America for seven years before returning to the Caterpillar headquarters in Illinois.

Phillabaum is a dedicated community volunteer who devotes considerable time and energy to

**CITATION:**

*For demonstrated leadership in sales and marketing.*

helping others. She has successfully integrated her desire to serve the community with her supervisory position, and inspired her team of 26 employees to volunteer in the community. As a result of their many hours of community service, she and her team were nominated for the Caterpillar Chairman's Community Service Award.

While living in Brazil, Phillabaum volunteered at an orphanage. In Miami, she participated in a leadership development course. Her team coordinated a leadership workshop for middle school students, and Phillabaum organized a visit to Caterpillar's Training Center, offering career counseling for the students.

As an undergraduate at Purdue, Phillabaum learned about sustainable development, studying the

environmental and economic impacts of large farming organizations. She has applied these concepts to her work. As a consultant, she provided economic and environmental machine solutions for landfill operations in Sao Paulo. She also traveled with Latin American customers to visit world-class landfill operations in Europe, facilitating an idea exchange among the participants. She consistently promoted the sustainable philosophy to both Caterpillar dealers and customers in Brazil by highlighting the long-term economic benefits of sustainable harvesting practices.

In addition, Phillabaum established the Social Responsibility Council in Caterpillar's Latin American Commercial Division. The council championed philanthropic contributions and improved environmental practices within Caterpillar.

An active member of SWE's Central Illinois Section, Phillabaum serves as professional section liaison to Bradley University during the regional conference planning.

She is an acting Big Sister and serves on the Heart of Illinois Big Brothers Big Sisters board. She also is a small-group leader and welcome center volunteer for her church.