

*Cathryn Mattson*

# Moguls' club manager

Master marketer tapped to turn Tiger 21 into global enterprise

BY AARON ELSTEIN

**S**URE, there are lots of perks that come with being really, really rich.

But sometimes even the wealthiest people must leave behind the Gulfstream and seek the company of others who understand first-hand just how hard it is to find a good butler. Cathryn Mattson wants to ensure that the experience of multimillionaires bonding with their brethren is as enriching as possible.

The former food industry executive is the new chief operating officer of Tiger 21, an ultraexclusive investment club and peer-counseling group. The position is new and carries a clear mission: Turn what amounts to a meeting place for people with at least \$10 million into a real enterprise.

"People can come here to talk about their money, their kids, health, philanthropy—all free of solicitation," says Ms. Mattson, who used to

help market such things as Hellmann's mayonnaise and Lipton's tea. "This is a safe, confidential environment where people can let their hair down. The goal is to transfer this idea to places outside New York."

**Of opera and investing**

FOUNDED IN 1999, Tiger 21 has 144 members. In return for \$25,000 in annual dues, members can gather in a Fifth Avenue mansion where a rehearsing opera singer who rents space there fills the halls with melodious sound. They can listen to speakers like renowned investor Carl Icahn or former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell. Also available are daylong seminars in which members critique each other's investment portfolios, provide referrals to experts in the art of money management, swap travel tips and grapple with other concerns of the well-heeled.

Ms. Mattson, who oversees a staff of 20, is ideally suited for managing Tiger 21's day-to-day operations and orchestrating its growth. She has been leading groups since grade school, when her favorite game was Go to the Head of the Class.

After completing her M.B.A. at Columbia, Ms. Mattson spent 20 years at Unilever and its predeces-

|   |
|---|
| <b>PERSONNEL FILE</b>   |
| <b>COMPANY</b> Tiger 21   |
| <b>TITLE</b> Chief operating officer  |
| <b>AGE</b> 58   |
| <b>RÉSUMÉ</b> Senior director for strategy and business intelligence, Unilever Best Foods; COO, Women's World Banking |
| <b>MANAGEMENT STYLE</b><br>Collaborative  |
| <b>FAVORITE DIVERSION</b> Theater   |

sors. She began as a marketing analyst and made her way up to senior director for strategy and business intelligence. She then took the COO post at Women's World Banking, which provides microloans to female entrepreneurs in developing countries.

Her strategic and developmental talents will be put to good use at Tiger 21, which needs someone who can help transform it into a business, according to President Tommy Gallagher. He hopes the club will open chapters in many more U.S. cities and, eventually, abroad.

Management interviewed 25 candidates over six months before



CATHERINE GIBBONS

deciding on Ms. Mattson in late July, Mr. Gallagher says. "She has a way of being able to communicate with people. She'll help us think about who we are and where we're headed."

**High school teacher**

STARTING OUT, Ms. Mattson didn't see herself in business. She began her working life in the 1970s as a high school teacher for at-risk children in South Carolina. After moving to New York, she worked at a nonprofit that brought musicians

and other performers to play at schools and also had a stint as manager of an off-Broadway company, a Theater at St. Peter's Church.

She enrolled at Columbia figuring that business school would help develop her management skills, but the fast pace and high pay proved more alluring than she had expected. "Working in the business world was something I thought I'd spend three years on," she says. "More than 20 years later, I'm still at it."

COMMENTS? [AEIstein@crain.com](mailto:AEIstein@crain.com)