



The Pink Ladies: There's more than makeup behind the Cadillacs

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When Cristin Green drives around town, she turns heads.

Her iridescent, pearlized pink Cadillac Deville glistens and changes color in the sunlight as she drives her "trophy on wheels" around Greeley.

The only thing better about having such a nice car is not paying for it.

Green is an independent senior sales director for Mary Kay Inc., one of the largest direct-selling skin care and color cosmetic companies in the world.

After working with Mary Kay for more than two years, Green has earned the use of the pink Cadillac through the Career Cars Program, which rewards consultants whose units sell more than a certain amount of cosmetics and skin-care products.

She is the most recent among a fleet of women in Weld County who have earned the use of a pink Cadillac through Mary Kay. These unusual cars also can be found throughout Weld in Greeley, Windsor, Platteville and Erie, but nowhere else in northern Colorado.

"Weld County is growing," Green said. "This is such an incredible business, people don't know how to say no" to Mary Kay products and saleswomen.

It is difficult to determine exactly why so many Mary Kay consultants in Weld have earned the Cadillacs; Fort Collins and Loveland have none. The company was created with no boundaries or territories, meaning units can expand throughout the United States, with commissions counting back to the mother unit.

This is the second career car for Green, the first being a red Pontiac Grand Am she earned as an independent beauty consultant.

Green earned the Cadillac on March 30 when her 55-person unit reached \$96,000 wholesale within six months. She received a call from a dealership in Fort Collins on June 7 saying they had a pink Cadillac reserved for her. She cleaned out her Grand Am and called her grandmother, her first Mary Kay team member, to go with her to pick it up.

"We drove to Fort Collins and in the parking lot, there it sits," Green said. "You can spot it a mile away. I thought 'Oh my gosh, there's my car!' "

She signed her name a few times, took the keys, left her Grand Am and drove away in a 2005 Cadillac.

"It was very emotional, to say the least," Green said.

Consultants can reach three levels in the Career Car Program, from a red Pontiac Vibe to a silver Pontiac Grand Am, leading up to the pink Cadillac. After two years, the consultants can requalify to earn the use of a new car for the next two years.

"The exciting thing about the car program is that Cadillacs are updated every year. Every two years you can earn a new car to continue what you have done so far," Green said. "Once it loses that new-car smell, you can get another one."

Mary Kay also offers cash compensation for consultants who do not want to take the cars. The compensation varies depending on the car and is awarded monthly for a two-year period.



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JIM RYDBOM /
jrydbom@greeleytrib.com Standing next to their pearlized pink Cadillac Deville's, Mary Kay Inc. consultants, from left, Cristin Green, Pam Brudreau, Chris Havens and Janet Beichle take the art of selling cosmetics to the next level in the Career Car program.

"Although the Mary Kay Career Car program offers cash compensation, the overwhelming majority of independent sales force members who qualify to earn the use of a Career Car take the car rather than the cash," said Kathrina McAfee, Mary Kay corporate communications representative.

Elise Williams, an independent senior sales director in Platteville, took the cash compensation for the first two cars she earned because she wanted to hold out for the Cadillac.

Before she received her pink Cadillac about two years ago, Williams drove a 1997 Volkswagen Golf, which she said motivated her to work for the Cadillac.

"It's such a great feeling of accomplishment," Williams said.

For 42 years, Mary Kay has operated off the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Although the products and selling techniques have changed through the years, Chris Havens, an independent future executive senior director in Greeley who started her Mary Kay business 25 years ago, said this rule has always remained the same.

"We don't take customers from each other," she said. "We work by the Golden Rule. We can all share our best ideas with a new person and never feel threatened. In Mary Kay, you can't get ahead without helping other people."

Jeanette Beichle helped Green branch off and form her own unit.

Since starting her Mary Kay business 12 years ago, Beichle, an independent executive senior sales director in Greeley, has earned seven cars, six of which were Cadillacs.

After working as a dental hygienist for 15 years, Beichle was introduced to Mary Kay by her neighbor. With a push from her husband, Beichle started selling Mary Kay products part time.

Quickly, her Mary Kay income surpassed that of her day job.

"It was after that my husband again encouraged me to see where I could go (in the company)," Beichle said.

Beichle's unit has more than 200 consultants located throughout the United States. Her team has reached the \$1 million circle of excellence twice, back-to-back, Beichle said, meaning that in a one-year span, the group sold hit at least \$1 million in sales.

"Mary Kay's mission is to enrich the lives of women through the product but also through the Mary Kay opportunity," Beichle said. "That can be really anything you want."

The flexibility of the business is what attracted Pam Boudreau, an independent senior sales director in Windsor, to Mary Kay. A former high school teacher and guidance counselor, Boudreau heard about Mary Kay when she had her second daughter and took a year off from teaching.

"I didn't know how to wear glamour makeup," Boudreau said of when she first was introduced to Mary Kay. "I thought, 'How can I teach anyone else?'"

When she started working with Mary Kay, Boudreau said she wasn't dreaming big. She originally hoped to earn about \$50 a month in sales. However, her first month with the company she earned \$500.

"I didn't dream as big as I should have in the beginning," Boudreau said.

After 22 years with the company, Boudreau's 100-person unit has earned about eight cars, the last being the pink Cadillac, which they earned about a year ago.

"I am very humbled," Boudreau said. "My unit, I have to thank the members for pulling together to build into a Cadillac unit."

One of the greatest things about the Mary Kay business is watching other ladies become successful and reach their goals, Boudreau said. Once someone earns a Cadillac, it breaks the belief barrier and shows others that it is possible, she said.

"The enthusiasm is contagious. The excitement is motivating for everyone," Boudreau said.

While many women start working for Mary Kay part time to earn extra money, there is no limit to where they can go in the company, Green said.

"You can never get to the top in Mary Kay," she said. "If you pass (the highest level), they make a level for you."

Many of the Cadillac recipients in Weld have goals they are still reaching for within the company. One of these goals is to become a national sales director, which is possible when 18 ladies in the unit become independent sales directors.

Havens is close to this goal, with 11 ladies within her unit already working as sales directors.

But above all, these ladies want to help other women reach their goals and make better lives for themselves and their families.

"Whatever you want out of your business, you can find it out of Mary Kay," Green said.

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