



Shahin Clark '82 >>

## REVENUE SUPER SLEUTH

SHAHIN CLARK KNOWS THE INS AND OUTS OF CORE BANKING SYSTEMS. With more than 25 years of experience finding lost revenue for financial institutions in the United States and Puerto Rico, she focuses on deep-dive analyses of core banking systems to generate \$1 million per \$1 billion in assets without cutting staff or utility bills, or increasing fees. Since launching Lodestone Banking with her husband, Mark, in 1994, Clark has led more than 60 consulting projects for 50 financial institutions with assets ranging from \$200 million to more than \$35 billion. "I am not an accountant," says Clark, who holds a dual degree in management data systems and marketing from the Whitman School of Management. "I delve into the extreme details of banking systems and operations to uncover revenue opportunities that others have overlooked. What I do was termed 'forensic revenue analysis' by the American Bankers Association magazine."

Born in Persia (currently Iran), Clark came to the United States in the mid-1970s to study computer science. She heard about Syracuse's excellent reputation in the field and decided it was the best choice for her. She had always been analytical, but knew nothing about banking when she graduated in 1982. "One of my professors sent my resume to Marine Midland Bank and the next thing I knew, I started working for them as an internal consultant," says Clark, who also earned a business degree from Pitman College in London, England. Later on, she helped Marine Midland transition to HSBC, and then led teams of internal consultants to restructure the bank's 366 branches and commercial lending processes before most of its branch network was sold off. Clark was asked to relocate to Buffalo, but she didn't want to move, so after leaving HSBC she worked for two years with a bank consulting firm and consulted for numerous institutions, such as Nations and Bank of Boston, before starting her own consulting business in Jamesville, just outside of Syracuse. "I began to realize the banking industry and consultants did not have an effective methodology focused on finding lost revenue due to incorrect system specs and/or errors," Clark says.

As president and co-founder of Lodestone Banking, Clark travels the country and the world giving presentations introducing her unique methodology to potential clients, including an invitation from the Chinese govern-



ment in 2008 to give lectures on the subject of bank profitability. She says most people are reluctant to change a bank's core deliverables, policies, and practices because the whole system is like a domino. "You change one thing and-BAM!-you just lost a lot of revenue," says Clark, who is the lead consultant on every project. "You have to put on a unique pair of glasses to look for bottom-line profitability. We're in high demand because no one else is doing this type of profit-driven analysis, and we are not afraid to make changes because we have the core system know-how."

In spite of her busy schedule, Clark finds time to participate in SU's mentoring program and presents lectures to finance students at Whitman. "With 7,000 banks in this country, the field of forensic revenue analysis is a potentially huge avenue for SU students," she says. "Unfortunately, most students are not familiar with the type of work I do. That's why I think it is important for me to share my knowledge and talk with students about the many exciting opportunities for them in the banking industry today."

—Christine Yackel