

Graduates Praise Leadership Program

Making invaluable contacts, acquiring an appreciation for Northbrook's outstanding resources, and gaining valuable information that can provide direct benefits in the workplace, are just a few of the benefits of the Chamber's Leadership program, according to recent participants. Across the board, recent graduates expressed an appreciation for the diversity of the curriculum as well as the hands-on setting and the amount of information shared in such a short time period.

Leadership helps participants grasp all that Northbrook has to offer. "I can't speak highly enough about every single session of Leadership," notes Bob Caldwell, NorthShore FamilyCare. "After taking the class and understanding what a great sense of community there is in Northbrook, I wish my home was here not just my business!"

Longtime residents also find the class provides valuable insight and access to important area businesses. "Northbrook has been my home for 23 years, and my workplace for ten, so it was interesting to learn more about some of the businesses that existed right in my own backyard which I would have no other way of accessing but for Leadership Northbrook," comments attorney Kris Ruben. "I was so impressed with the tour of Bernhard Woodwork to observe the high end fabrication they do for upscale stores like Tiffany's, as well as the woodworking for upscale homes on the lakefront in the North Shore. And, it was

terrific to get a look inside Highland Bakery and remarkable to learn that they supply the bread for big names like Wendy's and many other local restaurants and establishments. I highly advise participation in the program for anyone who either lives or works in Northbrook."

Leadership is also helpful to anyone new to the community and interested in forming professional relationships, without a huge time commitment.

"Participating in Leadership Northbrook was a perfect jump start for me as a newcomer to the community," comments Village Management Analyst Michael Strong. "In a matter of months, Leadership introduced me to several influential movers and shakers in Northbrook. The quality of the presentations and influential community members who volunteered their time to present to our group was impressive. For those who don't think they have the time to participate in Leadership Northbrook, they should understand that the program provides a platform that enables relationship building, which is an important investment in their success."

Past graduates of the Leadership program are encouraged to recommend candidates for the upcoming class. The class size is limited, and registration is on a first come, first served basis. For more information, or to refer potential candidates for the class, please call the Chamber office at (847)498-5555.

Leadership Northbrook Cont. from pg. 1

each other as well as identify leadership traits.

The class is open to anyone, whether a long-time Chamber member or a new employee at a business or an area resident. Northbrook residency is not required. To register, please refer to the newsletter insert or call the Chamber office at (847)498-5555. A limited number of scholarships are available for not-for-profit organizations.



SOHO Participants Share Expertise, Make Connections

Every month entrepreneurs and small business owners are invited to meet over an brown-bag lunch at the Chamber office to help each other problem solve and discuss issues of mutual concern. The lively discussion at the Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) meeting often involves sharing helpful suggestions and tools that not only improve business efficiency, but help members make new connections.

"One of the things I have come to appreciate about SOHO is its structure, organization and open forum for finding out what is on everyone's mind," comments Luke Pawlis, Avidia. "In the short time I have been attending, I've made several important business connections. I am in the

process of establishing a long term working relationship with Earle Greenberg, Chicago Videoworks."

Others find synergies with similar businesses. Recently Ed Sampson, Ameri-Clean, referred several clients to Rita Arquette, Emeric Facility Services. "They didn't fit with our business, so I was happy to refer them to someone I knew. Chamber networking often turns up unforeseen and unlikely connections, so the meetings are very productive for small business owners like myself."

Recent SOHO discussions have provided insight on everything from using Hoot Suite as a way to schedule, update and monitor social media posts, to advice

on how to react to comments on Yelp or other business review sites.

"I find the SOHO meetings very helpful," comments Wei Zhang, Heartland Financial Institute of Financial Education. "I plan to implement a few changes on my social media account that Wayne Karlik and a few other members suggested such as adding key words to my business profile to enhance my visibility in a web search, and keeping personal and business webpages separate through a secure setting."

Members are invited to register to attend the SOHO meeting the second Wednesday of every month at 11:45 a.m. at the Chamber office.