



Alliance of
WOMEN
Entrepreneurs

Pathways to Success

2006 AWE Regional Conference Jan. 27

As most of us begin to look ahead to 2006, most of us hope we will have greater success in the New Year. AWE has created a workshop with that goal in mind! On January 27, 2006 we will be holding our third regional conference. But this is NOT just another conference!

Speakers from across the region will be bringing insights, practical advice, and strategies for how you can succeed. Patti Butcher, an LPGA golf pro and business owner will be our keynote with insights on parallels between the game of golf and the world of business. Break out session topics will include marketing tips, insights for

when and how to hire employees, financial strategies, moving to the next level of your business, and much more.

Whether you are a seasoned business owner, new entrepreneur, thinking about starting your business, there is something extremely valuable for you. With workshop tracks designed to fit your professional needs, you are sure to walk away with valuable information. Watch our web site for more information in the near future. Begin 2006 by attending this dynamic conference and your opportunity for success will definitely grow!

By Rhoda Kreuzer

AWE Adds More Member Benefits

AWE has been extremely busy this year adding new information and services for our membership. Two that you may not be aware of are fast becoming a great asset for our membership.

AWE is now a member of the Regional Alliance for Diversity in Public Purchasing. The mission of the Alliance is to encourage women and minority owned businesses that provide services and products to public institutions. AWE is working with these institutions to make you aware of opportunities to grow your business by working with organizations like Kent County, the City of Grand Rapids, GRCC, St. Mary's and Grand Valley State University. AWE is working to open doors of opportunity for our members with these organizations and beyond.

Another new opportunity for AWE, is working with the Michigan Women's Business Council to conduct site visits for certifying women owned businesses. As we continue to learn more about the certification process, AWE will be able to provide greater education on the benefits of certification. We want to assist you in knowing if this step is of value to your business and provide support along the way.

AWE members are growing as new opportunities such as these develop. 2006 is sure to hold even more incredible opportunities for success. Stay involved and watch your business soar!

By Rhoda Kreuzer

Newsletter First Quarter 2006

SAVE THIS DATE!

AWE Regional Conference
Jan. 27, 2006

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Visit AWE on the Web
www.awe-

Member News

Sue Rios has joined West Michigan Center for Family Health (WMCFH) as a health insurance agent and sales consultant. WMCFH offers traditional family practice health care services and more for one annual fee without hidden charges, additional co-payments, or a cap on visits. WMCFH does simple surgeries and provides discounts on medications and lab work. We provide valuable healthcare to those who do not have health insurance, or have high deductibles. Call (616) 233-0933 for information. Or, contact Sue at sjrrios1@yahoo.com or (616) 366-3015.

Stelle Slootmaker, Constellations Concept & Copy, has created a Web site for Dr. Luise Light, nationally renown nutritionist whose new book *What To Eat :The Ten Things You Really Need to Know to Eat Well and Be Healthy* (McGraw-Hill) hit the bookstore shelves Jan. 06. Visit www.luiselight.com.

President's Corner

As I look back at AWE's accomplishments over this past year, I am prouder than ever to be an AWE member. This year was a working year for AWE. We all, volunteers and board members alike, have poured our hearts and souls into this organization.

We will begin seeing the fruits of those labors in 2006, as among other things, AWE will launch new and fresh topics for both our WIN and dinner meetings. AWE is listening to its members and in 2006 I am sure you will share my excitement as we benefit from some of your great suggestions.

A majority of 2005's AWE board will be remaining on the board in 2006. This consistency, combined with the talent of the new AWE board members, will allow us to build on the momentum gathered from 2005.

In the newsletter, you will find a listing of the new 2006 board members for AWE. There are many AWE members

already volunteering to assist on committees for AWE next year. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions about becoming a more active member of AWE, I encourage you to contact me or any AWE board member. There are plenty of opportunities for you to take part in making this a better organization for us all.

As we move into 2006, I think you will find that now, more than ever, AWE has something for every career woman. AWE helps you to be successful not only in business but to be successful in life—whether you have been in business 25 years or are just getting started.

I wish everyone success and happiness in 2006. I look forward to seeing you at our next AWE event.

Thank You!

Mary Tabin

AWE membership is open all to business owners and professionals who support AWE's goals and objectives and seek to promote and support women professionals in Grand Rapids.

AWE offers the following benefits to all AWE Members:

- Networking opportunities with other women business owners and professionals
- Sales leads/referrals
- Education

- Scholarships
- Quarterly newsletter
- Monthly dinner meetings with presentation
- Monthly lunch meetings with presentation
- Website
- Advertisement
- Membership list
- On-line resources
- Community involvement

For information on becoming a member, contact: Rita Goggins, Membership Coordinator, 616-949-2410 membership@awe-westmichigan.org

GROW Starts New Year with New Class Line Up

FREE! Introduction to Business Ownership (formerly known as "Orientation") **First Tuesday of each month, 6:00 to 7:30 PM**

Introduction to Business Ownership is required before taking classes at GROW. Registration is required. Call 616.458.3404 to register and for parking directions.

Start Smart 1 & 2 **Monday, January 9 and Thursday, January 12, 6:30 to 9:00 PM.**

This is a 2-part class that is required for anyone wishing to enroll in Bright Ideas (4-week business idea development class) or apply for Minding Your Own Business (15-week business plan development class). Introduction to Business Ownership (FREE) is required prior to Start Smart 1 & 2. Parts 1 and 2 need not be taken in the same month, but you must take part 1 before taking part 2. This 2-part class helps prospective entrepreneurs take a look at the world of business ownership and their readiness to enter that world. Clients will complete readiness assessment tools, discuss business ideas, and look at the basics of building a business plan. Call 616.458.3404 to register. Cost: \$50.00 for the 2-part class.

"Lunch with PUNCH!" Roundtable networking and discussion series for business owners.

This series is held the first Wednesday of every month, from noon to 1:00. Bring a friend, bring your lunch, bring your business cards, we'll serve the punch! Cost is FREE, but registration is required. Call 616.458.3404 to register. *The topic for Wednesday, January 4 is "Get Organized--Start Your Year Off Right!"* Visit www.growbusiness.org to view all scheduled topics.

Economic Literacy **Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 PM, Jan. 25 through Mar. 8, 2006.**

The free "Introduction to Business Ownership" is required before taking this class. Cost is on a sliding fee scale basis. This is a seven week class designed to improve your ability to discuss, act upon, and react to events that can shape your economic future. Topics include money management, financial planning, credit and credit improvement, banking, investing, budgeting, and basic economics.

All classes are held at GROW (Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women), located at 25 Sheldon SE, Suite 210, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. For information, contact Denise Miller at 616.458.3404.

Place Your Ad Here!



Don't sit around waiting for business to happen

Put your name in front of 1000s of potential customers for just \$50! Interested?

Contact

Stelle Sloomaker,
AWE newsletter editor,
616-538-0485

stellecheck@msn.com

You May Get a Call!

Wafa Haddad, AWE member and owner of Tigerlilly Arabic Institute, has joined the newsletter staff and will be promoting newsletter ad sales.

The newsletter is an inexpensive way to market your product and services to all who read the newsletter (AWE members, others on the AWE email list) and thousands of visitors to the AWE Web site.

Thank You!

A WE wishes to express our gratitude to **The West Michigan Academy of Music for Girls** for singing its beautiful repertoire of holiday music at the AWE Annual Banquet and Awards program.

AWE member **Dr. Monique Salinas Stauffer** serves as director for this award-winning choral group.

Make It Easy!

Pre-register Online!

Please pre-register for all AWE events using the online Acteva registration system. You can access the system via the AWE Web site or by visiting www.acteva.com/go/awe.

2005 AWARD WINNERS



Alliance of
WOMEN
Entrepreneurs

Doris Drain, Hollie Schipper & Beth VanSlyke

Doris Drain Woman of the Year

Doris has provided countless hours of service to AWE, both in a leadership role and behind the scenes. She has not only served on the AWE board for numerous years but she goes above and beyond in her volunteer efforts for both AWE and her other community activities.

"It is an honor to be chosen by the other AWE members for this award," Doris says. "Being a member of AWE have been very valuable for me by being a source of education on small business issues and increasing my contacts and the networking opportunities that are present at every event."

The recognition Doris deserves goes beyond any material acknowledgment AWE could ever provide to her. Doris deserves the "Woman of the Year" award many times over. Thanks for all you do, Doris.

Doris Drain is Vice President of commercial loans with United Bank of Michigan

Hollie Schipper Alliance of the Year

As soon as you talk to Hollie, you realize she is focused on promoting and marketing other people. She selflessly goes above and beyond her membership responsibilities with AWE and gives her own personal time to advance the interests of others.

"The award was significant for me in that I believe in AWE, it's mission and the support that we are able to give not only women in business, but also professional women," Hollie says. "It is important to develop relationships, to help each other to grow our business."

I have had the pleasure to work with Hollie as a board member for AWE and she provides invaluable insight. She has immeasurable drive and ambition. I am thrilled to see Hollie receive this award because she truly cares about AWE members and their success.

Hollie Schipper, CMFA, works as a financial planner with Waddell Reed.

Beth Van Slyke Entrepreneur of the Year

Beth is extremely deserving of this award. She—through 4 Point Staffing—has an impeccable reputation within AWE and the Grand Rapids Community for providing excellent service and, most importantly, for caring for the people she works with, whether they are clients or employees.

"I have been blessed with a terrific staff, an awesome client base and remarkable candidates, so being named AWE's 'Entrepreneur of the Year, 2005' is like the icing on the cake for me," Beth says. "The Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs has been a catalyst to my success."

Beth exemplifies the mission of AWE. She is a highly motivated, extraordinarily talented and thoughtful business owner. She is a great person and most deserving of recognition for all of her hard work. Congratulations, Beth!

Beth Van Slyke is the founder and president of 4-Point Staffing.

By Mary Tabin, president, AWE

February Sponsor of the Month



Sue Perry, Invention Perfection

You have developed the concept, maybe even made a prototype. But now what? It may have been easy to build the first dozen in your garage, but now you have to gear up to make thousands – A DAY! And what about a sales force, customer service, a patent, and getting paid?

That's where we come in. We help you do the things you **MUST DO** before you get a patent. We take your idea, and determine if it is marketable and manufacturable. Then, if it is a feasible product, we help you protect, develop, manufacturer, sell, and deliver it! You make no commitment to paying for a patent, factory, or workers until you are sure your product is viable and ready to sell.

For under \$500, you can see if your idea can be made and sold.

For information, call 616-581-1490 or visit www.inventionperfection.com



**3rd Monday
Dinner Meetings**

Feb. – Women's Leadership
Barbara Hill, President, Michigan Women's Foundation

March – Christine Baker, Principal, The Rehmann Group, Topic -How Much Is Your Business Worth?

- Cost: \$24 for members - \$30 for guests
- Register at www.acteva.com/go/awe.
- Location: Noto's Old World Italian Dining, 6600 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids.

Arrive between 5:45 and 6:00 pm to sign in and network. Bring your business cards and brochures!
Dinner is served at 6:15 pm.

Members! Display tables and a 2-3 minute commercial just \$10. Bring a door prize to promote your business!

March Sponsor of the Month



**Hanni Epp, founder,
West Michigan Caregivers Alliance**

Hanni is a therapist, consultant and former caregiver whose passion is helping other caregivers and their families through times of transition with compassion and purpose. As a guide and an ally, her goal is to help ease the process for family members.

“Care-giving is a family commitment. No matter who the care recipient is, or who the primary caregiver, everyone in the family is affected,” Hanni says. “As families, we need support in coping with giving care to our loved ones. West Michigan Caregivers Alliance provides counseling and therapy for individuals and families who are facing life changes and transitions, including care-giving challenges. Together, we can uncover ways to better manage stress and to bring balance back to your life.”

For information, call 616-456-6016 or visit www.wmichcare.com

**4th Monday WIN Luncheons
Women In Networking**

Feb. – Retirement Options that Provide Wellness Opportunities.

March – "If I have cash flow, why don't I have any cash?"
Deb Dittmer of Corlett & Dittmer

- Free for members, \$10 for guests. Bring a lunch or pay \$5 for First Park's delicious lunch bar.
- Register at www.acteva.com/go/awe.
- Location: First Park Congregational Church. Downtown Grand Rapids, Ransom & Fulton. Free gated parking. Arrive at 11:30 a.m. to sign in and network. Speaker begins at noon. Bring your business cards and brochures! The "WIN" Lunch is a great informal way to promote your business and educate our members. Would you like to facilitate a WIN lunch? Call 975-0134.

**Register and prepay by the Thursday prior to avoid \$10 late fee.
Cancellations must be received by the Thursday prior to the meeting. No shows will be billed.**

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Deadline: Submission deadline for second quarter newsletter is March 10, 2006.

Submissions made after that date will be published in the third quarter newsletter. **Direct all submissions to Stelle Sloomaker at stellecheck@msn.com.**

WWW.
AWE-WESTMICHIGAN.ORG

AWE

Mission Statement

AWE was founded to advocate, promote, and facilitate growth and prosperity of its members. AWE continues to honor the original precepts of its founding:

- To encourage ownership and management of business by women professionals
- To encourage and support women in businesses
- To foster economic stability for women professionals.
- To improve the climate for entrepreneurship and small businesses at the local level through unique networking opportunities
- To provide educational programs that will benefit the members of the Alliance.

2005 AWE Board

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