

AWE

ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ENTREPRENEURS

Aligned for Success

An Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs Publication • August 2008

AWE Board Members

Kim Schwamberger

President
Finishing Touches by Kim
616-890-1607
president@awe-westmichigan.org

Beverly Mapes

Vice President
Top of the List
616-460-6778
vp@awe-westmichigan.org

Deanna Fridley

Secretary
Crosby & Henry Insurance Agency
616-942-2573
secretary@awe-westmichigan.org

Kathy Heintzelman

Treasurer
Heintzelman Accounting
616-742-3932
treasurer@awe-westmichigan.org

Floriza Genautis

Programs Coordinator
Management Business Solutions
616-855-6531
programs@awe-westmichigan.org

Connie Sweet

Marketing Coordinator
Connection Graphics, LLC
517-645-4387
marketing@awe-westmichigan.org

Suzanne Knight

Membership Coordinator
121 Personal Computer Training
616-785-1266
membership@awe-westmichigan.org

AWE In the News!

Did you catch the recent article on AWE-West Michigan in the August edition of *MiBIZ Business Women*? If you didn't see it visit their website at www.mibiz.com and check the archives. A photo of the new board for 2008-2009 was featured along with information on changes we will be implementing based on the recent survey responses. Member feedback is always welcome and committee involvement is encouraged. Make the most of your membership and help make AWE continue to be the premier organization promoting the success of women entrepreneurs through educational resources, leadership development, and networking connections. Special thanks to Elaine Eldridge (yourword-swork.com) for authoring the article.



Photo by: Kelly Loucks Wilson, KriZma Photography

2008-2009 AWE-West Michigan Board:

Kim Schwamberger-President, **Beverly Mapes** - Vice President, **Connie Sweet** - Marketing Coordinator, **Floriza Genautis** - Programs Coordinator, **Kathy Heintzelman** - Treasurer. In back left to right: **Suzanne Knight** - Membership Coordinator, **Deanna Fridley** -Secretary

President's Corner

I hope you are enjoying this fabulous Michigan summer. I know I am. As we are at the peak of summer we know things will be changing soon to the season of fall. Fall in Michigan can be just as beautiful. The one thing known by all Michiganders is the change of the seasons will happen whether we are ready or not. Women entrepreneurs and business professionals know change in business can be both scary and fabulous all at the same time, ready or not. What might change look like in the business world? It may appear to you as a change in the market, technology, laws, location, growth, trends or possibly in ways you may not yet have recognized.

AWE is about women supporting women. Your comments on the survey told AWE that changes are needed to enhance the services available to help our members. So mark your calendars and attend an upcoming program, and look for valuable information to assist you through education, connections, and leadership as we begin a new AWE season.

Before you finish reading this newsletter, I have one request. Stop and take a moment and ask yourself, "Am I resisting change holding me and my company back or embracing and ready to learn all that I can for me and my company to be successful?"

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Sincerely,
Kim Schwamberger
Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs, President



INSIDE:

- Upcoming Events
- AWESome Membership News
- Networking Article:
Conversations that Connect

2008 Upcoming Programs

Join us the third Monday of each month for AWEsome Hour. AWE WIN Lunches continue every fourth Monday.

AUGUST

AWEsome Hour Networking at NAYA Bistro and Wine Bar

August 18, 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Member Cost: \$20.00 Non-Member Cost: \$30.00

Naya is located at 1144 East Paris SE,
just South of Cascade in Grand Rapids.

Join AWEsome women at one of the freshest spots in the city. Naya's contemporary atmosphere offers a professional and comfortable setting for AWE's first of many creative networking events. Enjoy refreshing beverages and tantalizing appetizers while increasing networking effectiveness with fellow AWE members and guests. AWEsome Hour will be touring area venues in support of local businesses in the Grand Rapids community. Join AWE at the hotspots in town and pick up networking ideas you can use everywhere!

WIN Lunch Meeting –

August 25, 11:30am-1:30pm

Fair Housing Center of West Michigan

20 Hall St. SE, downtown Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Member Cost: \$10.00 Non-Member Cost: \$15.00

Practical Creativity for Women Entrepreneurs

Chris Frederick Willis of Media1

See details of Chris's presentation in following column.

SEPTEMBER

AWEsome Networking Hour

September 15, 5:00 - 8:30

Thousand Oaks Golf Club

4100 Thousand Oaks Drive (off 5 Mile, east of the Beltline)

Weather permitting, we will enjoy the remnants of this splendid Michigan summer and meet in the beautiful outdoor facilities Thousand Oaks Golf Club offers. This fun networking event is great a kick off to fall not to be missed!

WIN Lunch

September 22, 11:30am-1:30pm

Fair Housing Center of W. MI

20 Hall St. SE 49507 at Division and Hall

Renwick Brutus - Achievement Resources"

"Becoming Irresistible - Beating the odds and winning in business."

Look for announcements and September issue of *Aligned for Success* for details.

SAVE THE DATE::

October 20 - AWEsome Hour - Malarky's-East Beltline

October 27 WIN Lunch --Fair Housing Center of W. MI

November 17 -Membership Drive - Dinner

November 24 -AWEsome Hour Networking

August WIN Lunch Meeting topic

Practical Creativity for Entrepreneurs

"Thinking out of the box" is not only a cliché, it isn't even enough: as entrepreneurs, we need to be able translate our innovative ideas and energy into practical action. The good news is that, as women, we are uniquely "wired" to multitask and build the networks and teams we need to help bring our ideas to life!

In this month's fast-paced WIN presentation, Media 1 CEO Chris Frederick Willis will explore some ways to tap into our creative side and offer tips for practical application. We'll end with an interactive exercise to send you back to work with renewed creative energy.

Chris began Media 1 from her home 15 years ago. Today, Grand Haven-based Media 1 has grown to 19 employees and in 2007 reached \$1.75 million in revenue. Media 1 is an instructional design and consulting company that develops custom training and learning solutions, including sales and performance support.

Chris is passionate about melding the best practices of technical communication, instructional design, and performance support to shape a sensible learning methodology for the real world. In addition to speaking and writing about e-learning topics, Chris has led dozens of award-winning corporate learning projects from conception to delivery.

Media 1 was awarded 2006 Small Business of the Year by the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce. It has also been recognized as one of the Michigan 50 Companies to Watch by the Edward Lowe Foundation, and was a finalist for the Employer of the Year award in the third annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business. Current Media 1 clients include such well-known firms as Hewlett Packard, Dematic, X-Rite, Meijer Corporation, Siemens, and USF Holland. Visit Media 1 at www.media1.us.

Another AWE member benefit! AWE MEMBERS did you know you can submit articles on your business or industry for publication in *Aligned for Success*? Email your article to marketing@awe-westmichigan.org. All articles are subject for review and will be included on a first come first served basis.

Sponsorship opportunities available.

Pre-registration is required. To make a reservation reserve on our secure site or call 616-719-5382. Online reservations for dinner meetings close the Friday prior at 12:00pm. When making a reservation by phone please include your name, company name, phone number, credit card information, number of guests you will be bringing and their name(s). Prepay with credit card/check.

For more information on AWE please call us at 616-719-5382 or visit our Web site at: www.awe-westmichigan.org

AWEsome Membership News

AWE would like to welcome **Barbara Cooley of Your Life and Times**. Watch for Barbara at the next meeting, or better yet, drop her an email or call and get to know her. As you welcome new members to AWE, share how you can help them grow and prosper in business. Save The date... Monday November 17, 2008 will be the membership drive culmination. We will have our regular dinner meeting, with a fabulous speaker (TBA) and introduce all the new members from last year, and a few "Old" ones, too.

If you know of someone who could benefit from an AWE membership let me know. Our committee is working hard to bring you new members, coordinate volunteers, and follow-up with existing members. Anyone interested in joining our fun committee (we have short meetings every other month and FOOD)---please contact me at suzanne@121pct.com. Being on the membership committee is a great way to meet many new businesses. It is a good way to connect with experienced entrepreneurs who have a lot to give and share. Join us!

Membership benefit of the month:

We would like to highlight the GR Chamber. If you are a member of the GR Chamber and AWE, you are entitled to a discount on your Chamber membership. It works like this: Join AWE and pay the \$150.00 dues (what a deal, consider-

ing all the benefits--come Nov 17 to hear more) then when you pay your Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce dues deduct \$100.00 off the price of their dues. This is just one of a multitude of reasons to join and stay with AWE, the AWEsome bunch.

Save The date...

Monday November 17, 2008 will be the membership drive culmination. We will have our regular dinner meeting, with a fabulous speaker and introduce all the new members from last year, and a few "Old" ones, too.

Welcome New and Renewing AWE Members

**Pava J.Leyrer CMC, CRMS -
Heritage National Mortgage Corp.**

Linda Clatch - Macatawa Bank

Robin L.Fager - Heritage National Mortgage Corp.

Barbara Cooley - Your Life & Times

Free Domain Names - Not Necessarily Free

By Connie Sweet

Free Domain Names? For How Long? Since so many of the cool domain names have been snagged (and mostly by people who aren't even using them-ugh!) choosing one can be a daunting task. As difficult as this step is however, it is just the first decision of many before you launch your website.

Once you find the domain you will use, you need to reserve it. Most start up businesses are looking for ways to save money and the temptation for choosing a company that offers free domain names with hosting is irresistible. Unfortunately, the cost you pay in the long run could be devastating to your online marketing.

Some of our clients who have gone this route have found when they chose to switch their website hosting to another company the domain registration was free to them because the hosting company owns it - not them. Some hosting companies will not release ownership and you will have to wait for it to expire and then register it again. This could literally take years. Another option, if the registrar allows, is to transfer the domain to another registrar but this can be costly depending on what your old host is requesting.

Domain names can be registered with many legitimate registrars from \$5-\$25 a year. Pretty nominal compared to a "free"

one that you don't really control. Consider the cost of all the marketing materials you have developed with your domain printed on them. The links from directories and your indexed pages in search engines - not to mention all of your customers who have book marked your site. If you lose your domain name all of these contacts are at risk of being lost.

Talk to your webmasters and hosts before contracting them to be sure even if they register for you, you own it if you choose to leave. At Connection Graphics we allow clients to reserve their own domain name. We recommend a couple of reputable registrars we work with regularly. If you don't feel comfortable working through the process we can also reserve them for you. If we do, you hold the reservation and it will be a stand alone domain name that you can move to a host of your choice at any time. A couple of reputable domain registrars we work with regularly are:

<http://www.godaddy.com>

<http://www.networksolutions.com>

There are likely others out there that are good too. These two are ones we have used for over five years without problems.

Connie Sweet is owner and Art Director of Connection Graphics and is Marketing Chair for AWE West Michigan. She can be contacted at connie@connectiongraphics.com. For more tips on print and web design and marketing, please visit www.connectiongraphics.com



**WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS
ALIGNED FOR SUCCESS**

Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs
PO Box 68512 • Grand Rapids,
Michigan 49516 • 616-719-5382
info@awe-westmichigan.org

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AWE WEST MICHIGAN MISSION STATEMENT:

To be the premier organization promoting the success of women entrepreneurs through educational resources, leadership development, and networking connections.

Deadline for Submissions for *Aligned for Success:*

September 2008 issue deadline August 26
October 2008 issue deadline September 30
November 2008 issue deadline October 28
December 2008 issue deadline November 25
January 2009 issue deadline December 30

Advertisers, sponsors, member news announcements, and article submissions please email:
marketing@awe-westmichigan.org

CONVERSATIONS THAT CONNECT

by Colette Carlson

Conversing naturally is key to your success in the business world. Knowing when to initiate a conversation, keeping it interesting by asking effective questions, sharing your won stories and ending a conversation with kindness is an art.

Create connections by following these seven steps:

Step 1:

Exude confidence. When you're comfortable in your own skin, you make others comfortable. If you take the attitude that you bring something to the table, you will see that attitude reflected in others. Remember: Enthusiasm is infectious.

Step 2:

Show up with something to say. Always be on the lookout for material. Although it may sound contrived, I read the Wall Street Journal looking for interesting, timely information that I can share at my next get-together: a party, association meeting or business affair. Think about keeping a file that you can review before your next event.

Step 3:

Begin with a question. Besides showing interest in someone, one simple question can start an entire conversation. Asking something a bit unusual sets you apart from the crowd. Rather than, "What do you do?" ask, "How do you enjoy spending your weekends?"

Step 4:

Find common ground. The surest way to build rapport is to find something you have in common and build on that interest. Don't shy away from topics that have nothing to do with business. They often create the perfect connection.

Step 5:

Focus on others. Putting your energy and interest in another person marks you as a great conversationalist. Englishman Raymond Mortimer once described the art of conversation in the United States as "not tennis, in which you return the other fellow's serve, but gold, in which you go on hitting your own ball." Keep that back and forth volley going with conversation.

Step 6:

Be inclusive. Excluding others in the group is a conversation killer. Make eye contact with everyone in the group, not just the person who asked you a direct question.

Step 7:

Close a conversation with class. When a conversation naturally lulls, take advantage and say, "It's been my pleasure talking with you, I hope our paths cross again soon." Before leaving, be certain to thank the hosts.

Professional speaker and author Colette Carlson travels the country teaching balance, negotiation, sales and communications programs. For other articles visit www.SpeakYourTruth.com Colette is passionate about providing individuals with the tools necessary for positive, long lasting change in their professional and personal lives. Colette has an "action speaks louder than words" philosophy which motivates audiences to make behavioral changes necessary to ensure their success.

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Phone: 760-230-1212 • Fax: 760-230-1211