

Small-business owners share experiences

Why would anyone take the risk of starting a small business?

"Owning your own business is a wonderful experience," said Cheryl Hayes-Gassen of Livonia, owner of Rainbows in a Basket. "I have the satisfaction of doing something I love and being able to pour my creative abilities into my baskets. My baskets are works of art for me. That is worth everything."

Hayes-Gassen and nine other clients of Schoolcraft College's Small Business Development Center will be on hand Wednesday, Nov. 7, during the college's first Small Business Fair to share their experiences, offer to advise budding entrepreneurs, and explain how the Small Business Development Center can help them establish their company.

In addition to the business owners present, there will be Small Business Administration and Schoolcraft Small Business Development Center representatives, SCORE representatives, bankers, an attorney, CPAs and a marketing specialist to answer questions and offer advice.

"We created the fair to provide market exposure for Schoolcraft College Small Business Development Center clients who have established or grown their business over the past year with some assistance from the SBDC network," said Bernice Brown, who heads Schoolcraft's small business development effort.

Hayes-Gassen, who works out of her Livonia home to fashion gift baskets from items ranging from woks to rocking chairs, pancake griddles, backpacks and skateboards, said Brown gave her much help.

"Brown answered a lot of questions about financing, gave me direction on talking to bankers and helped me apply for a small business loan and write a small business plan," said Hayes-Gassen. "Working with Bernice has exposed me to sound business principles, hooked me up with retired SCORE workers and helped me continue to develop ideas."

"Right now the business supports itself, and my plan is to grow it even more."

The fair will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in McDowell Center, room 200. Anyone may attend. There is a \$6 entrance fee. For information on the Small Business Fair or the Small Business Development Center, call (734) 462-4438.

Workshop focuses on business dining etiquette

Nov. 13. Presented by Schoolcraft College's Entrepreneur Program and Small Business Development Center, the workshop will take participants to a local restaurant where they will learn the proper etiquette, protocol and dining skills to approach a business meal with ease and confidence.

Denise Anne Taylor, president of Competitive Advantage Inc., will lead the workshop. She is trained and certified by the Protocol School of Washington, the nation's leading protocol and etiquette firm.

Workshop participants must pay in advance. The \$50 fee includes the meal and presentation. For information or to register, call the Schoolcraft Business Development Center (734) 462-4438.

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BUSINESS CALENDAR

MON, NOV. 5
BUSINESS WOMEN
Suburban West Business and Professional Women will meet 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, N. Laurel Park (I-76 and 6 Mile), Livonia. Dinner followed by installation of new officers. Call Mary Martin (734) 422-7719.

WED, NOV. 7
BREAKFAST MEETING
John McElroy, host of PBS's Autoline Detroit and American Driver programs, will speak at the MMTTC First Wednesday Breakfast Briefing 8-10 a.m. at the MMTTC Advanced Training Center (47911 Halyard) in Plymouth. Call (888) 414-6682 or visit www.mmttc.org/tw

THUR, NOV. 8
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
The National Association of Woman Business Owners will host breakfast meeting on "Managing Conflict in Your Business and Personal Life." The breakfast begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. at Southfield Tower, 29201 Telegraph Road, in Southfield. Call (313) 961-4748 for information.

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