

Chamber Forms Committee To Work With Non-Profits

By CO-CHAIRS PEGGY ROTHBAUM, Ph.D. and PAULA EHOFF, M.Ed.

The Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce (GWACC) recently established a Nonprofit Committee to work hand-in-hand with its nonprofit members to promote, support, advance and raise awareness of their impact on their communities.

March 30, 2011 was our inaugural Lunch-n-Learn event, held at the Westfield Area "Y." Darielle Walsh, consultant specializing in not-for-profit organizations, gave an enlightening presentation on "Building Stronger Boards." Darielle covered such topics as characteristics of high-performing boards, benchmarks for high-performing boards, and roles, responsibilities and expectations of board members. She also distributed an informative summary handout and took questions.

The event was attended by about 40 people affiliated with nonprofits or who do business with nonprofits. Those in attendance listened to "hands-on" suggestions for strengthening their boards and had the opportunity to interact with other nonprofit

professionals. Robert Treat provided a delicious lunch and plenty of time was provided for networking. Feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive. Attendees suggested that the next educational Lunch-n-Learn topic should focus on fundraising.

With that feedback in mind, we are pleased to announce that our next GWACC educational event, on November 30, will feature Amy Eisenstein, the principle of Tri Point Fundraising, a full-service consulting firm. Amy works with nonprofit leaders to supercharge and reinvigorate their organizations with her no-nonsense approach to fundraising and board development.

The presentation will cover fundraising basics for nonprofits, as well as strategies to raise more money in any economy. Amy will start off with board member essentials and move into how to turn volunteers and board members into savvy fundraisers. She will discuss how to begin an individual giving program and cover the basics of identifying, cultivating, soliciting and stewarding individuals for your annual campaign. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers. Her new book, "50 A\$ks in 50 Weeks," helps readers identify new prospects and systemize asking so that they raise exponentially more money.

The November 30, 2011 event will be held at the Westfield Area "Y," 220 Clark Street in Westfield. It will be held in the Kellogg Room on the second floor. This event will begin at noon and last until 1:30 p.m. Robert Treat Delicatessen will provide another delicious and beautifully presented lunch. For more information or to register for this event, visit the Chamber website, westfieldareachamber.com, or e-mail the Chamber at info@westfieldareachamber.com. You also may reach the Chamber by phone at (908) 233-3021.

The Nonprofit Committee is a leadership resource that is just one more benefit of Chamber membership. We are actively seeking Chamber members for the Committee. If you are interested in joining the Chamber and the Nonprofit Committee, please contact the Chamber regarding your interest. Please plan to attend this educational Chamber event - it will be well worth the investment!