

President's Message

We had a great turnout for our Membership Drive/Student Night last month! I would like to especially thank the organizers of the evening: Tami Gast, Stacy Olson, Jackie Joaquin, Paula Eastman and April Clem. We owe a BIG thanks to Robert Half for sponsoring the cost of the evening's food and drinks! It made for a very enjoyable evening for members and guests alike. Thanks also to Aureus, In-Search, and Premier Recruiters for sponsoring the door prizes, which were a big hit! If you invited guests to the meeting, please follow up with them to encourage them to join and answer any questions they may have about our organization.

If you are planning to attend the ASWA National Conference November 10-12 in Chicago, please let me know. We will be voting on delegates for the conference at our October luncheon meeting and want to be sure to include anyone that would be interested. Every member should have received a registration packet by now, and you can also register online. It should be a great event, so please plan to attend if at all possible. There is a proposed bylaws change attached to this bulletin as well. Please take a moment to read it, as we will discuss our chapter's position at the October meeting as well in preparation for the national conference.

Don't forget our annual Public Relations Dinner and Educational Seminar to be

held November 17 at the Omaha Country Club. Kim Mead has organized a great lineup for the seminar, as you can see in the attached flyer. The flyer includes registration for the seminar as well as a way to reserve your ticket for the Dinner. Please forward the flyer to anyone you think would be interested in attending these sessions. One of the Dinner events is the popular basket raffle fundraiser for our scholarship program. I challenge each member to secure at least one donation for the basket raffle, either items for a basket or a cash donation. You can start by asking your employer or businesses you frequent to donate to this great cause. Keeley Lammers and Jessica Ward would be happy to collect your donations. If you have empty baskets that would be appropriate for the fundraiser, those are needed as well. Our featured Dinner speaker will be Krista Knicely Anderson. It is sure to be a great evening, so please plan to attend and encourage your coworkers to join you for the fun.

Program brochures for our chapter's monthly meetings are now available. Thanks to Cindy Alharithy for a quick turnaround! These brochures will be available at the monthly meetings, so please be sure to pick one up so you can get all of the events on your calendar.

Our first luncheon of the year takes place with the October meeting. The topic is Health Savings Accounts, so please invite others who would be interested in this topic, such as Human

Resources/Employee Benefits professionals who might have responsibility in this area. We are also holding a food drive for the Omaha Food Bank at this meeting, so please bring non-perishable items or a cash donation to support this cause. Hope to see you all on the 20th!

Kelly Martinson
President 2004-2005

October 2004 Meeting

Luncheon: October 20, 2004
Time: 11:30-11:50 Registration, buffet and networking
11:50 Business meeting followed by speaker
Menu: Mexican
Cost: \$10.00 per person
Location: Champions Club
13800 Eagle Run Drive
Omaha, NE 68164
Speaker: Health Savings Accounts by Tony Sorrentino, SilverStone Group
Reservations: Tricia Riggins
triggins@fzacpa.com or 963-4315 by NOON, Friday October 15, 2004

**Note: If you register to attend, but are then unable to make it you will be billed for the cost of the meal.

September Speaker Recap

For our September Membership Drive and Student Night meeting, we enjoyed an evening with Kathy Fry, registered dietician. The theme was "Healthy Choices" and Ms. Fry presented insights on keeping a healthy balance in our diets, and choosing healthy snacks. There was lively interaction from the audience regarding fad diets and recent nutrition news.

October Speaker Info

Join us for lunch this month on October 20th for a very timely presentation on the brand new Health Savings Accounts. Tony Sorrentino from SilverStone Group will be speaking about the basics of such accounts, including eligibility of participants, coverage and contributions, as well as the latest guidance recently published by the IRS. Feel free to invite others who you think would be interested in this topic.

DONATIONS FOR THE OMAHA FOOD

With the approach of the holiday season, our chapter wants to give back to the community. So at the October regular meeting we are asking everyone to make a donation to the Omaha Food Bank. You can bring a non-perishable food item or make a cash donation. Please make checks payable to the Omaha Food Bank. If you are unable to attend the October meeting and would like to make a donation to the Omaha Food Bank, send donations to Linda Aust, 6322 S. 161st Street, Omaha, NE 68135 before October 22.

Article

Amy Derksen from Accountemps submitted the following article.

The Case for Employee Empowerment

Today's accounting professionals face a number of challenges, from mounting workloads to new regulations, which can take a heavy toll on morale. As a

manager, you can help your team keep their spirits up and encourage productivity by giving them greater control of projects and how outcomes are achieved.

Empowering your staff will better prepare them to face future challenges and provide them with the confidence needed to thrive in their roles. Their ability to work autonomously will also give you more time to focus on your own responsibilities as a manager and work on higher priority projects. People are more likely to feel motivated when they know their work is valued and appreciated. When assigning new projects, let employees know how their efforts will contribute to the department and the company's success. Also, make sure you match the right person with the right job. If he or she doesn't have the requisite skills, consider additional training.

Beyond just assigning the task, empowering employees involves delegating the decision-making. Assure your accounting team that you trust their judgment and provide them with the resources needed to make sound choices. Avoid micromanaging, but be sure to set deadlines and establish measurable goals so employees stay on track.

Finally, have faith in your staff. Chances are you hired some, if not all, of them. At the very least, you know their strengths and weaknesses and understand who is the best fit for each initiative. Communicating confidence in your employees' abilities will lead to improved productivity and more inspired workers.

LADY VESTEY WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

2003-2004

This year's recipient is **Gaye Lynn Schaffart, Vice President, Business Development and Strategic Planning with Northern Plains Natural Gas Company**. Join us at the Public Relations Dinner on November 17, 2004 to meet Gaye Lynn and celebrate her achievements! Gaye Lynn is being submitted to National ASWA as a Balance Award Nominee from Omaha. Thanks to Ruth Schneider for nominating this dynamic role model!

LADY VESTEY SUSTAINING DONOR PROGRAM

It is that time of year again where we remind members that the secret to the long-term success of this award—**this is our 5th year!**-- program is through the generosity of anonymous donors to its cause. To the present list of donors, **THANK YOU** for continuing to be a part of this commitment. For anyone who would like to become a sustaining donor or a one-time donor, **WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU!** Please contact Betty Dudzik, 896-6462, 933-3100x20 or bdudzik@huskerglass.com.

There is no minimum or maximum pledge and you will be contacted annually for your donation. We acknowledge that economies change all the time so you will not be "committed for life" in the event you cannot donate the same amount from year to year. If you know of a company that would be willing to sponsor or co-sponsor the cost of the award this year, please contact Betty. **This is a wonderful program for the Omaha Chapter to provide. Be a part of it today!**

REMINDERS

The PR Dinner invitations will be available at the October regular meeting. If you are not able to attend the October meeting but would like an invitation, you can contact Linda Aust.

Donations for the basket raffle on the evening of the PR Dinner are still welcome and very much appreciated. If you or someone you know would like to donate, please contact Jessica Ward at jward@lutzcpa.com or Keeley Lammers at klammers@lutzcpa.com or at 496-8800 if you have any questions.