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BUSINESS BASICS PROGRAM at Niagara College

by KAREN MARTIN

When Kristy Jones entered the Business Basics Program, delivered through the Niagara College Business Development Centre, she knew only that she wanted to start a business, but was unsure how to go about doing so.

When she completed the three-week program, she left prepared to write a business plan for her proposed retail store and ready to take all the necessary steps to get her business up and running. "This program is invaluable to those starting up a business," Jones says.

Jones is typical of the 200 clients who come through the Business Development Centre's Business Basics Program each year. Clients enter the program unsure how to go about actually getting a business off the ground and leave with the skills to open and run a successful business.

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BUSINESS BASICS

According to Heather Carter, Manager of the Business Development Centre, Business Basics provides clients with the opportunity to explore and develop a business idea, as well as to assess their own suitability for self-employment along with the viability of their business ideas. "For three weeks, participants focus on their business idea and get ideas and assistance from business experts and just as importantly, a group of peers, who are in the same situation as they are" says Carter.

The three-week, intensive, classroom experience is designed to help fledgling entrepreneurs kick-start their businesses. The curriculum covers all aspects of the fundamental principles of business start-up and is delivered by business professionals with real-world knowledge and expertise. Clients attending the program also meet

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BUSINESS BASICS

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with a business advisor three times during the program for one-on-one coaching.

Curriculum delivered during the three-week session includes the following sections: Self-Assessment, Concept Development, Introduction to Marketing and Market Research, Personal Financial Management, Record Keeping and Financial Management, Legal Issues for Small Business, Developing Your Business Plan, Sales and Quality Service, Advertising and Promotion, Effective Business Communication, Financing for Entrepreneurs, Effective Time Management, Technology Skills to Survive and Thrive in Business, Marketing on the Web, Effective Business Operations, and Introduction to International Trade.

The Business Basics Program began in 1995, with 18 clients attending two sessions of the program. Originally called Small Business Fundamentals, the program has now grown to a point where 12 full sessions will be offered this year.

Since its inception, more than 1,000 clients have graduated from the Business Basics Program, with the majority of these clients going on to start successful businesses.

Business Basics is offered for \$599, which includes three weeks of in-class instruction, three one-on-one coaching sessions, a program manual, parking privileges at the Glendale Campus of Niagara College and access to College learning resources. Program fees are covered for unemployed individuals, including those receiving Employment Insurance benefits or social assistance.

For more information about the Business Basics Program, check out the Business Development Centre's website at www.mybdc.biz, or call 905-641-2252, ext. 4456.

The Business Basics Program is offered in partnership with and funded by Human Resources Development Canada.

10th Annual NIAGARA ENTREPRENEUR of the Year Awards

Nominations are Open!

Enterprise 2003 marks the tenth anniversary of the Niagara Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. Established in 1994 to recognize the achievements, excellence and innovation of Niagara's entrepreneurs, the awards are supported by a committee of volunteers from Niagara's corporate, education and economic development sectors.

The men and women who have been recognized through these awards exemplify the true spirit of entrepreneurship. Through hard work, determination, creativity and resourcefulness, they have established new ventures or led existing businesses into renewed growth.

The Entrepreneur of the Year Awards program continues to grow annually and garners extensive exposure within Niagara's business community and from the media.

Nominations are now being accepted in the following categories:

- BELL CANADA EMERGING ENTREPRENEUR AWARD
- CIBC ESTABLISHED ENTERPRISE AWARD
- KPMG FAMILY ENTERPRISE AWARD
- PBB GLOBAL LOGISTICS INTERNATIONAL TRADE AWARD
- NIAGARA COLLEGE TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AWARD

New for this year's awards are:

INNOVATIVE SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

This award will be presented to an individual who has demonstrated innovative activity resulting in a successful small business venture with revenues under \$2 million.

TOURISM ENTERPRISE AWARD

The recipient will have demonstrated innovation, commitment and leadership resulting in the success of a tourism enterprise in the Niagara Region. To qualify for this award you must fall into one of these business categories: dining, travel, accommodations, winery, tourist attraction.

Nomination forms are available at Small Business Club Niagara, or by calling the Institute for Enterprise Education at 905-688-5757, or online at www.niagaraentrepreneur.com. Nominations close April 30, 2003.

Award recipients will be announced at Enterprise 2003, a gala awards ceremony on Friday, October 24, 2003 at the Sheraton Fallsview in Niagara Falls.

SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS:

BROCK OFFICE AUTOMATION

Mike Gammon



Mike Gammon is a local and proud of it. Born and raised in St. Catharines, he graduated from Brock University and chose St. Catharines as the place to set up his company, Brock Office Automation. "I'm committed to the area...there's no place else I'd want to be," he says.



A long-time member of Small Business Club Niagara, Gammon is also involved with the St. Catharines Business Club and the St. Catharines Ad and Sales Club where he will serve as President for the second time this September.

In 13 years, Brock Office Automation has grown steadily from three employees to nine full-time employees in 2003. The company has an impressive showroom on Nihan Road that it shares with

Raham Business Interiors Inc, a company selling office furniture. This innovative showroom partnership has worked "really well in terms of cost-sharing and also synergy of marketing impact", says Gammon.

Brock Office Automation provides document solutions for commercial, industrial and institutional clients. This includes supplying and servicing a range of products from copiers that multi-task as printers, scanners and fax machines to new communication products like LCD projectors and electronic white boards.

The company keeps up with the latest technology, which changes rapidly. "The products are exciting

because of network connectivity," says Gammon. "Fifteen years ago the document was finished when it was printed. Now the document is more than just a piece of paper. We can archive documents electronically and pull them up on demand. ...We're also taking on what used to be the realm of the printing company by providing finishing – binding, covers, staples and folding."

Gammon says his goal is not to be the biggest office supply company in town. He would much prefer to be the best at providing value to his client. Gammon has carved out a niche with predominantly small and medium-sized businesses which appreciate the excellent service and support his company provides. By spending time with the client he and his staff learn what products meet their needs. Sales are backed up with training and prompt service.

By paying attention to the customer, Brock Office Automation has gained an incredibly important asset – customer loyalty. "It's gratifying to have clients renewing consistently," says Gammon.

Mike Gammon and Brock Office Automation – a local success story!

For more information please go to www.officeautomation.com or call 905-984-8266.

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win

women in niagara

Women in Niagara is a networking group to inspire enterprising women. Build alliances in a fun interactive environment through learning, laughing and sharing.

ELAINE CHAREL

The Power of the Pen

An evening of interactive fun while learning how to communicate more effectively with others through the strokes of handwriting. Have Elaine analyze YOUR handwriting. She will identify leadership traits and aptitudes and will use humour to show how foibles and fears can be turned into STRENGTHS.

Thursday, May 15, 2003
7 to 9 p.m.

Dom's Pasta & Grill

3250 Schmon Parkway, Thorold
Cash Bar and Light Refreshments

WIN Members \$10 Non-Members \$15

For more information or to R.S.V.P.,
please call 905-685-6100.
VISA and MasterCard accepted



Human Resources
Development Canada

Développement des
ressources humaines Canada

Canada

2003 SEMINAR SCHEDULE

St. Catharines Business Self-Help Office
City Hall, 50 Church Street, 2nd Floor
St. Catharines 905-688-5601
smallbusiness@city.stcatharines.on.ca

Marketing Made Easy

April 23, 2003 7 to 10 p.m.

\$20. Rotary Bankers Room

St. Catharines Library, 54 Church Street

Where and how to advertise and solutions
to common marketing dilemmas.

Starting a Small Business

May 29, 2003 7 to 9 p.m.

\$20. Rotary Bankers Room

St. Catharines Library, 54 Church Street

Questions on the ins and outs of starting a
small business? Our experts have the answers.

PST/GST

June 26, 2003 7 to 10 p.m.

\$15. Rotary Bankers Room

St. Catharines Library, 54 Church Street

Government officials take the mystery out of PST/GST.

The Art of Networking

July 30, 2003 7 to 10 p.m.

\$10. Committee Room 1

St. Catharines City Hall, 50 Church Street

Top executives agree that networking is a key factor in
establishing a successful business. Learn from the pros.

SMALL BUSINESS INFORMATION SEMINARS

If you have recently started or are planning to start
a new business, have taken on employees for the
first time or have questions regarding your tax
obligations as a small business operator, the Canada
Customs and Revenue Agency is able to help.

The St. Catharines Tax Services Office offers a small
business information seminar, specifically designed
to help the small business entrepreneur with
helpful information on many topics including:
GST/HST, Payroll Deductions, Electronic Payments,
T4 Internet Filing, Reporting Self-Employed Income.

This 2-hour seminar is FREE and is held at the
St. Catharines Tax Services Office at 32 Church
Street (next to the Market Square). Questions are
welcome. Publications and Guides will be available.

For more information, seminar dates and
to register your attendance, please call:
905-984-2308 or 905-984-2274.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 16 7-9 p.m.

Bill Carr Award-Winning Humourist

"Lighten Up: Creating Your Future with a Positive Approach to Change"

May 21 7-9 p.m.

Open Mic and Networking Night

June 18 7-9 p.m.

Speaker to be announced

July 16 2-9 p.m.

6th Annual Golf Tournament and BBQ

ADVERTISING

SBCN accepts advertising for each quarterly newsletter. Advertising costs are as follows:

(Ad set-up included.)

SIZE A :
2 3/4 W X 4 1/8 H
Cost: \$100

SIZE B:
2 3/4 W X 2 H
Cost: \$60

Please call Mona at 905-685-6100 to reserve your space.

BILL CARR

 Award-Winning Humourist

Lighten Up: Creating your Future with a Positive Approach to Change

April 16th, 2003 7 to 9 p.m.
Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Thorold



Bill Carr is a humourist and an award-winning writer, stage actor and journalist. Born in Atlantic Canada, he travels throughout North America entertaining audiences with his offbeat characters and custom-tailored performances. Bill became known nationally as a humorous commentator for CBC TV's *The Journal* and *Middy* and is a regular panelist

for *NewsWorld*. Other television credits include guest performances on *Adderly*, *Switchback* as well as several pilots, one of which he co-wrote as well as co-starred in with Don Harron called *God Knows*. Bill has appeared in advertisements seen both nationally and in the United States and has worked extensively on CBC Radio as a radio drama performer, writer and commentator.

Change can be exhausting and unless properly handled, can cause major fatigue in individuals and in their organizations. Bill uses the change phenomena to turn apprehension, fear and fatigue into excitement, positive attitudes, rediscovered enthusiasm and success. He provides an insightful perspective on the world and the mundane absurdities of life that often go unnoticed. Bill will focus on how we need to lighten up and allow ourselves time to dream, grow and to be productive and adventurous by putting laughter, humour and creativity back into our lives.

Non-Members \$10.

Open Mic and Networking Night

May 21st, 7 to 9 p.m.
Four Points Sheraton, Thorold

This is a fast, easy and FUN way to tell other Small Business Club Members about your business and to profit from a valuable networking opportunity!

BRING LOTS OF BROCHURES, FLYERS
AND BUSINESS CARDS!

A New Service for SBCN Members

Starting February 1, 2003, Small Business Club Niagara will be offering an "ad-mail" service to interested businesses. Any submissions should be in PDF format. The advertising/promotional information will be approved by the Board of Directors prior to being released to our members. Each of our members will be given an option to either agree to or decline receiving any such information. The cost to our members is only \$20 per submission. Non-Members \$50.

BUSINESS SKILLS FOR PROFESSIONALS FROM PROFESSIONALS

DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE



Developing business skills is an essential component of success whether you have started a new business or are growing within an established company.

Our Business Seminars enable you to learn from professionals in all areas of business development including: Idea & Business Plan Development, Marketing, Customer Service and Managing Your Finances.



GENESIS BUSINESS BASICS

For more information call
905-641-2252 ext. 4456

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www.mybdc.biz

NEW MEMBERS ROSTER

Business Development Bank of Canada

Lori Dobby

Jon Radick, CIBC – Personal Banker

Jon Radick

Doug Brascoupe Miracle Coupons & Marketing

Doug Brascoupe

Future Consulting Group

Hari Sreedharan

KIS Bookkeeping & Office Support

Carey Simmons

Life Force Energetics

Susan Wojcieszko

MediaGlue

Roger Segalin

Mena's Magical Moments

Chris Cowman & Mena Train

Nature in Formation

Art Howell

Opportunities Niagara

Peter Papp

Personal Touch Designer

Janine Carr

Pleaseantview Memorial Gardens

Brian & Carolyn Steven

Savoia Hors D'Oeuvres & More

Oscar Turchi

Sea Tracker Charters

Phil Trachman

Seaway Trailer Sales Ltd.

Denis Martineau

STEP Consulting, Skills Training for Employee Performance

Donna Pohran

Thomas Enterprises

Carl Thomas

Web Global Media

Laurie Green

Window Designs

Angela Bontempo

Unemployed?

Starting a full time business? Increase your chance of business success!

The Self Employment Benefit Program provides support to qualified individuals in starting their own businesses. Assistance includes coaching, ongoing technical advice and financial support. Coaching is tailored to suit your needs and includes subjects such as business plan development, accounting, marketing and use of computers.

**SELF
EMPLOYMENT
BENEFIT
PROGRAM**



Call SBCN at 905-685-6100
for more details.



Human Resources
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Please visit us on the web
at www.sbcn.ca