



The Executive

JUNE/JULY 2009

MCCE MINI INSTITUTE: A DAY WELL SPENT IN ST. CLOUD!

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executive's Mini Institute, hosted by the St. Cloud Area Chamber, was a fantastic event! Joe Constance, Constant Training delivered a great morning workshop on the Seven Keys to Surviving & Thriving which was full of valuable information and the small group discussions sparked some great ideas among the group.

"This was my first mini institute - I was very impressed. Great information"

The remaining portion of the conference was dedicated to a series of break-out sessions focusing on some of the major issues Chamber professionals face daily. Some of the topics included: social media, membership retention and sales, Non-profit accounting, managing your board, effective ambassador groups, and much more.

Presentations from this event are archived on the MCCE web site at www.mnchamber.com/mccea/archived_presentations.cfm

"Day well spent - very motivational. Thanks for the opportunity"

Thanks again to our sponsors who helped support this event: ChamberMaster, NovoPrint USA, Inc. and VillageProfile.com.

Also, a special thank you to Teresa Bohnen, president, St.. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce for her leadership in planning and hosting the event. The Saint Cloud Area Chamber also hosted a kick-off for MCCE's newest program, Chamber Showcase. Chamber Showcase is a program developed to showcase best practices at leading chambers of commerce around the state. Over 20 chamber professionals attended the first Chamber Showcase and the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce staff highlighted some of their key programs and communication material. The next Chamber Showcase will be held prior to the Fall Conference this September at the Brainerd Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce.



Photos Right: 2009 Mini Institute attendees gain some valuable information during one of the break-out sessions; Miranda Anderson, communication & events director, Brainerd Lakes Chamber, leads one of the most popular sessions of the day, "Effectively using social media in your chamber"

"Was a great opportunity for Chamber's to bounce questions off of one another and get ideas -- It was nice to connect with so many Chamber's and meet so many new faces. I had an awesome time and would definitely go again"

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ALBERT LEA HAS BEEN CHOSEN TO BE THE CENTER OF AN INNOVATIVE, TEN-MONTH PILOT PROJECT: THE AARP/BLUE ZONES VITALITY PROJECT

Albert Lea, Minnesota, has been chosen to be the center of an innovative, ten-month pilot project designed to improve the health and life expectancy of people who live and work in the city. The AARP/Blue Zones Vitality Project, sponsored by the United Health Foundation, has a goal of adding at least 10,000 years of projected life expectancy to the participants (that's at least two years per person) through environmental and individual changes.

Albert Lea was chosen due to its proximity to the Blue Zones headquarters in Minneapolis and to the resources of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Dan Buettner, author of "The Blue Zones, Lessons for Living Longer from People Who Have Lived the Longest", asked the School of Public Health to assist in this project. Albert Lea was also chosen due to the enthusiastic support from the community.

The Albert Lea – Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce became involved from the first meeting. Immediately, the Chamber recognized the potential benefits to its member businesses. Obesity has been linked to a 36 percent increase in health care spending, costing more than healthcare related to smoking or drinking. With small changes to their lifestyles, individuals can bring newfound health and happiness to the workplace. These changes can result in less time away from work due to illness while, at the same time, infusing the workforce with increased energy to perform their tasks.

As part of the project, in cooperation with member businesses and the Vitality Project team, an Employer Pledge was developed. The pledge asks employers to consider making changes to the workplace and to encourage employees to make changes throughout their lives. It encourages employers to think beyond the typical worksite wellness activities that focus on motivating the employee to take better care of their health. Project leaders consider the worksite also a point of change, where the physical and social environment of the worksite can be enhanced to help employees make healthier choices while they are at work.

While the Employer Pledge has a number of suggested changes, additional options are given such as indoor walking paths, and employee gardens. All of these activities go toward making the healthy choice, the easy choice.

Dan Buettner asked the CEO of a large manufacturing facility in the community why he was so enthusiastically supporting the program. Mike Larson, CEO of Innovance, Inc., replied that while he wanted to have everyone's health improve, the truth was that healthier employees were happier employees and, thus, more productive. With increased production, Innovance's bottom line would see a positive impact.

The Albert Lea – Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce believes that its being proactive in this matter represents a true member benefit. Representatives of the Vitality Project have presented the project to many employers, at the Chamber's CEO Peer Group, and even Chamber Business After Hours. The Chamber is encouraging all its member businesses to sign the Employer Pledge and implement the changes that they have selected.

For more information on the Vitality Project and to view the Employer Pledge, visit the Albert Lea – Freeborn County Chamber's website at www.albertlea.org. For copies of the Employer Pledge Start Up Kit, contact Randy Kehr, Executive Director at 507-373-3938 or e-mail at director@albertlea.org.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES MADE EASY

By Bob Harris, CAE

Raise your right hand, "Do you solemnly swear to execute the duties of the office of the president?" "I do."

Right after accepting the position, the next statement may be, "Your president's message is due by Friday for the newsletter."

Consider this advice to write a timely, relevant column:

- **Focus on the organization (not yourself.)** The president's role is to advance the mission --- thus it is wise to restate the mission and explain the plan of work in the inaugural column.
- **Space is limited.** Find out the recommended number of words. Fit the message to the space and avoid a column that continues on other pages.
- **Try to be brief.** An effective message can be written in 250 to 400 words (This column is under 300 words.) Readers are distracted and seldom get to the final paragraphs.
- **Adhere to deadlines.** Don't delay a newsletter because the column was submitted late. The editor has a window of opportunity for production and distribution. If staff is expected to edit the message, submit it earlier.
- **If the president is uncomfortable writing, delegate at least one column to the incoming president.** It shares the leadership spotlight and introduces members to the incoming leader.
- **Don't feel creative?** Look for ideas in interactions with members, news headlines and the achievements of the board, committees and staff.

Don't let fear, delays or writer's block inhibit the opportunity to communicate with members.

Note: Bob Harris, CAE, provides free tips and templates for nonprofit management and governance at www.nonprofitcenter.com; he can be contacted at bob@rchcae.com.

CONGRATULATIONS 2009 MCCE MINI INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Congratulations to the 2009 MCCE Mini Institute Scholarship recipients, which include:

Nicole Biskey, Greater Wayzata Area Chamber;
Melissa Deming, Twin Cities North Chamber;
Erica Hollom, Edina Chamber;
Tessa Ihland, Wahpeton Breckenridge Area Chamber;
Juanita Lopez, Crookston Area Chamber.

The scholarship covered the \$65 registration cost to attend the event. MCCE continues to support education and professional development for members by offering several different scholarships to our members.



Calendar of Events

September 23-25, 2009

MCCE Fall Conference
Grand View Lodge, Brainerd

November 11-13, 2009

2009 Regional Government Affairs Conference
Intercontinental Hotel, Chicago, IL

January 20-22, 2010

MCCE Annual Meeting
Location TBD

March 10, 2010

Minnesota Business Day at the Capitol
Crowne Plaza, Saint Paul

May 12-14, 2010 (tentative)

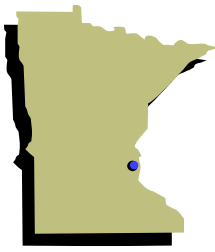
Mid America Chamber Executives (MACE) Conference
Spirit Lake, Iowa

June 3, 2010

MCCE Mini Institute
Civic Center, St. Cloud

September 29-October 1, 2010

MCCE Fall Conference
Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center, Alexandria



LOCAL LEADERSHIP CHANGES ACROSS THE STATE

Madelia Chamber of Commerce – Courtney Hennis was recently appointed the new executive director of the Madelia Chamber of Commerce.

Willmar Lakes Area Chamber – Jeff Fillepec has been named the Director of Member Services at the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. Fillepec began his duties at the Chamber in May.

Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber – Carol Wenner, former membership coordinator at the Chamber, has recently left to take a position as development associate for Knute Nelson. For the past five years, Carol worked as the membership coordinator for Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber.

MEMBERSHIP SALES EXCELLENCE AWARDS – SIGN UP TODAY!

DEADLINE IS AUGUST 3

MCCE has developed a membership awards program for local chambers of commerce. Benchmark your sales success against like sized organizations by submitting your quarterly sales figures. The top sales professionals in each of the four dues income categories will be recognized based on total number of individual sales and on total dollar amount.

Any chamber is eligible to participate in the Sales Excellence Awards as long as the Chamber is a member of MCCE. In addition, any staff member within a chamber may enroll in the awards programs. Some chambers have full time sales staff, in smaller chambers, sales may be a part of one or more staff members job responsibilities. The awards are based on individual sales. The judges may choose to provide an award for overall growth to a Chamber however; the focus of this program is on recognizing individual sales.

The numbers are reported quarterly and based on an honor system. You will be informed how to report your numbers before the first reporting deadline, August 15.

Criteria:

- The 2009-2010 MCCE Membership Sales Contest is open to all members directly responsible for the sale of memberships.
- The chamber must be a current member of MCCE.
- Participating chambers should enroll by August 3, 2009, but may enroll at anytime for benchmarking purposes.

MCCE CONFERENCE BID FORMS

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives is currently accepting proposals for the **MCCE 2010 Annual Meeting, January 20-22, 2010**. The MCCE Annual meeting is just one of two annual three-day conferences (Wednesday-Friday) for chamber professionals across the state. Fall Conference is the other annual three-day conference, which is scheduled for September 29-October 1, 2010 at Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center, Alexandria.

Hosting a conference is a great opportunity to highlight your Chamber and Community. If interested, please complete a RFP by working closely with the bidding facility to develop a proposal. You can download the full RFP at www.mnchamberexecutives.com. All bid forms are to be completed and sent to the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives office **no later than, August 29, 2009**.

Please Note: Local Chamber Responsibilities for the Conference:

- Only personal sales are eligible for consideration in the sales contest. Sales obtained through volunteer or outsourced campaigns or secured by staff as a group are not eligible.
- The definition of a "new" member is one that has not been on the chamber's books for at least one year.
- Sales may be measured in terms of both revenue and number of sales.
- Sales numbers (numbers and dollars) must be submitted quarterly.
- The awards will be presented at Mini Institute in June 2010.

2009-2010 Timeline:

- Spring 2009: Kick off and enrollment
- First quarter: May – July, 2009 Report by Aug. 15
- Second quarter: Aug - Oct, 2009 Report by Nov. 15
- Third quarter: Nov 2008 – Jan 2010 Report by Feb. 15
- Fourth quarter: Feb –April, 2010 Report by May 15

Categories based on total chamber budget:

- Less than \$100,000
- \$100,001 to \$300,000
- \$300,001 to \$500,000
- \$500,001 to \$750,000
- More than \$750,000

To download the enrollment form, visit the MCCE website at www.mnchamberexecutives.com. All enrollment forms must be received by **Monday, August 3 to be included**.

- Serve and participate as an active member on the MCCE Professional Development Committee.
- Be willing to solicit local chamber members as sponsors and/or vendors for the Annual Meeting.
- Provide a minimum of one (1) volunteer for a "welcome committee" and assist as needed during registration on the first Wednesday of the conference. May include ambassadors or staff members of the local chamber/CVB.
- Assist with cost negotiation for food, room rental, and personal rooms at a local hotel and/or resort.
- Conduct Site Visits as needed in place of the MCCE Staff.
- Chamber Executive in the hosting community/communities to work with the Professional Development Committee and Staff during the conference as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Engdahl at (651) 292-4699 or Jennifer Byers at (651) 292-4673 or (800) 821-2230.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Don't let a tight training budget keep you from taking advantage of professional development opportunities. MCCE has a scholarship program dedicated to education of chamber executives and staff across the state. Visit www.mnchamberexecutives.com to learn more about the scholarships and to download an application.

Scholarship applications are currently being accepted for the following programs: MCCE Fall Conference, Institute for Organizational Management and the U.S. Chamber Government Affairs Conference.

These scholarship deadlines are soon approaching so don't wait - apply now!

2009 REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Intercontinental Hotel, Chicago, Nov. 11-13

In addition to offering direct scholarships, the U.S. Chamber and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives are partnering to provide joint scholarships to the 2009 Regional Government Affairs Conferences. Together, we are offering free registration and one night's hotel accommodation (a nearly \$500 value) that will help cover your expenses at the Regional Government Affairs Conference in Chicago, November 11-13:

During this transformational year, the Regional Government Affairs Conferences will focus on maximizing your potential to affect change in local, state and federal public policy. You will learn innovative ideas from national experts and share best practices with your most engaged colleagues to help you answer:

- How do I stretch my dollar while maintaining an effective advocacy operation?
- Which issues will be the next to keep my members up at night? Energy policy? Healthcare? New labor regulations?
- Can I efficiently leverage my contacts by harnessing some promising new media platforms?

Send in your applications today! **Deadline for submitting applications is July 24, 2009.**

For More Information / Scholarship Application:

Visit <http://www.uschamber.com/events/congressional/09govconferences> and download the application at the bottom of the page, or contact the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives at (651) 292-4699.

MCCE 2009 FALL CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Grand View Lodge, Brainerd, Sept. 23-25

Applications are now being accepted for MCCE's Fall Conference. The scholarship funds have been increase to \$400 this year for each scholarship. This increase will cover the registration fee and help offset the lodging and/or travel expenses.

To apply, visit the MCCE Web site at www.mnchamberexecutives.com or contact Lisa Engdahl at lengdahl@mnchamber.com or (651) 292-4699. The **deadline to apply is August 7, 2009.**

U.S. CHAMBER INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIPS

MCCE works hard to advance the effectiveness of chamber professionals by providing career development, communications, and networking to ensure professional and organizational growth. Every year, MCCE offers a few scholarships to the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management. Institute is a four year program designed to instruct, inspire, and invigorate through challenging courses, best-practice discussion, and idea-sharing with colleagues; making it the best professional development and networking program in the industry.

The scholarship available through MCCE covers half the registration cost for 2 consecutive years. To apply, visit the MCCE Web site at www.mnchamberexecutives.com or contact Lisa Engdahl at lengdahl@mnchamber.com or (651) 292-4699. The **deadline to apply is August 7, 2009.**

Institute dates & locations for 2010:

- Winter Institute, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, January 3-7, 2010
- Midwest Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, June 6-10, 2010
- Southeast Institute, University of Georgia, Athens, GA, June 20-24, 2010
- West Institute, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, July 11-15, 2010
- Northeast Institute, Villanova University, Villanova, PA, August 1-5, 2010

