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Business

Breakfasting and networking



Felena Hanson was the keynoted networker at the Service Corps of Retired Executives, or SCORE, networking session at Morgan Run.

By Nora Todor Stoytcheva

Networking to the left, networking to the right, and the early birds gathered the best buzz.

That's what brought Cheryl Meyer, from Celestia Jewelry Designs to Morgan Run Resort and Club at 7 a.m. Friday, May 18. She works with semiprecious stones and sells her handmade original designs at street fairs, home parties or by appointment at prospective stores.

Setting up early, Meyer was the first of a group of about 20 small business owners who exhibited their wares, and businesses, at the Women's Countywide Breakfast sponsored by the Service Corps of Retired Executives, or SCORE. The group has kept its acronym although the name recently was officially changed to Counselors to America's Small Business.

It's a bi-monthly meeting, so popular that Lisa Bentson, a vice-president of women's programs at SCORE, said it was sold out again.

The networking opportunity is big for small business with 80 percent of participants either solo acts or with fewer than five employees. The breakfast and meet-and-greet cost \$25 and drew about 100 people to the elegant club.

A resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Association, SCORE counselors provide free advice for small business owners or people contemplating to plunge into the world of entrepreneurship.

"People may come with questions how to start a business or if they need additional help when they are established," said Rolf Haas, a retired insurance broker, has been with SCORE for 10 years.

“Not every counselor understands everything,” Haas continued. “I do not understand of technology, but I would refer them to a person who knows and he or she will point them to the right direction.”

Or as Marshall S. Rice, a real estate broker who became a volunteer counselor after being introduced to SCORE by a friend and seeing how other people are contributing, said, “It’s fun to share the wealth.”

Bentson has been with SCORE for four years, and also is president of LEADS Club International. Her mother formed this group in the 1970s to provide networking opportunities for women who were not accepted by organizations such as Rotary International at the time. It has chapters throughout the United States and Australia.

The business ladies — a few gentlemen among them — came to network, to promote their business and to listen to the presentation “10 Low Cost Marketing Strategies” by Felena Hanson from Perspective Marketing. Her Web site is [ww.PerspectiveMrkg.com](http://www.PerspectiveMrkg.com).

Said Sharon Bay, publisher and editor-in-chief, of the monthly San Diego Family Magazine, “I am here to listen to the presentation, for the education, but also to meet with people. I already know many of them.”

Young, elegant and an epitome of a successful entrepreneur, Hanson has built an impressive resume for just 12 years after graduating with a degree in marketing. She teaches marketing and entrepreneurship at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in San Diego, also for the online MBA Program at California State University Dominguez Hills and for the Master’s of Engineering Management program at Cal State in Long Beach. She provides consulting services and has a long list of speaking engagements.

Hanson prepared a structured handout with her advice and a list of resources that, it seemed, would take a person months to collect.

Before, and after, the engaging presentation, participants had an opportunity to present themselves and their businesses. The exhibitors introduced themselves to everyone while others made contacts around the exhibit tables.

“There is never a second chance to make a first impression,” said Del Mar resident Kris Kissner. “When meeting a new client, your car is the first impression.”

Of course, Kissner was introducing the Carwash Club, a \$ 24.95 per month service of Chevron Express. Along with owner Corinne Hackbert, also of Del Mar, she was giving free coupons for a full carwash and deli sandwich.

Another networker, Kristen Scott, said she drinks wine for a living and loves it. She is a representative of Wine Shop at Home and gives guided wine tasting at client’s homes. The wines are selected California vintages with prices ranging from \$11 to \$20.

And they sure did.

The next SCORE Women’s Countywide Networking Breakfast is going to be on July 20. For more information, visit www.score-sandiego.org or call (619) 557-7272.

This article can be found at <http://www.delmartimes.net/#business1>