

Long Island BUSINESS NEWS

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Where Business Gets Down To Business

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NOT-FOR-PROFITS

The agenda

By KENNETH R. CERINI

Advocacy for women has come a long way. After gaining equal voting rights and other equalities in society, many women feel it is just the tip of the iceberg and strive to achieve more, including pay equity and other work-related equalities. Providing advocacy and a voice for women on Long Island, the Long Island Women's Agenda (LIWA) offers programs and resources for all women.

"Our organization aims to assist women in their personal advancement and provide valuable resources for them to utilize in their lives," said Leslie Berkoff, President of LIWA. "Early childcare and education are one of the primary focuses of LIWA. Recently we presented a seminar series launching a public awareness campaign with parenting seminars. By offering these services to women on Long Island, we can help them to become more successful human beings - no matter what they are, an employee, a student, or a parent."



Berkoff: There's work to be done.

Are the majority of your seminars designed to promote health improvement or overall life improvement? Our seminars really cover both areas. Our health care committee put together a seminar on menopause called "Demystifying the Myths of Menopause". It was so well received that we had to add additional seminars on this topic. We like to provide an assortment of stimulating topics and issues for women to share their ideas, feelings and knowledge with one another. We have a wide variety of committees including health, work, family, business, membership, legislative affairs, economic development, education, arts and culture. For example, some of our seminars cover purely personal matters and other seminars lean more to the professional/work aspects in our lives. Our early care and education seminars are intended to address the problem of lack of early care. Long Island only serves 16 percent of the people who are in need of some type of care, including education. We want to bring awareness in hopes that the community will bring about change within both women and men. In addition, family issues affect everyone. We like to think that our programs and seminars can reach beyond the women who attend. Our children need proper care, not just by their own parents, but by the entire community. These efforts have been supported by several elected officials who have come and addressed our attendees.

How successful has the organization been and how have partnerships and collaborations with other organizations helped? We're in our eighth year of serving Long Island. We feel that we provide quality resources and education to all who are involved. Our Web page and newsletters are other venues where we provide information and a way to share information with one another. We have partnered and collaborated with many organizations. We are working on our education initiatives with the Long Island Fund for Women and Girls, including our "The Early Years Matter: What Every Parent Needs To Know" seminar series. Held in nine locations across Long Island, including two in Spanish, this program is designed to empower parents to advocate on behalf of their children, and provide information on the many resources available to them. Our "Networking with a Twist" program is another opportunity for us to reach out to our individual members and member organizations on Long Island to promote networking and collaboration. We are also planning a legislative event for the fall, as well as a continuation of some of the previous seminars that we have produced. Our calendar of events provides one centralized location that our members can utilize to locate LIWA member organizations' events. With over 60 organizational members and over 200 individual members, we feel like we have a positive effect on Long Island.

We have noticed a certain level of fallout in non-profit organizations, due to a lack of involvement and a lack of attendance at events. How does your organization attract a sizeable following?

Our events are open to members and non-members. We offer a plethora of programs and cover a wide variety of topics. By attracting organizational members, we have a larger number of people to work with and educate. We direct our appeals to the community as a whole, which causes our turnout to increase as well. We are frequently utilized by organizations as a vehicle to broadcast their own messages, information and knowledge.

What do you see in the future of LIWA and what other messages are you trying to spread? The difficulty of attracting attendance and collecting fundraising dollars is promoting an increase in consolidation and collaboration. Certain messages gain strength in numbers and can appeal to more people at once. Organizations find it simpler and more profitable to team up with fellow organizations with similar causes. They want to increase their own attendance and, in addition, increase the lines of communication they have with members and potential members.

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Website: www.liwa.org

Founded: 1998

Staff: 1

Annual Budget: \$98,640

Fundraised Budget: \$65,052

Program Services: 73 percent

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Forest Avenue, across from the Post Office.

The Huntington market starts on May 21 and is open Sundays at the Elm Street parking lot.

The Lynbrook market opens on May 21 and will sell produce Sundays at the corner of Sunrise Highway and Forest Ave.

The Riverhead market opens July 6, and runs Thursdays at the parking lot behind

Swezey's.

The Port Jefferson market launches July 6 and is open Thursdays at the Town Parking Lot next to the ferry.

Patchogue's market, which will run Fridays in the 7-Eleven parking lot on Route 112, and Hempstead's, which will be open Fridays at Christ First Presbyterian Church, open July 7.

Lastly, the New Hyde Park market launches June 14 and will be open Wednesdays at North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System.

Call (631) 323-3653.

Edited by Henry E. Powderly II.

Please e-mail not-for-profit releases and photos to nfp@lhn.com.