

One Cascade Plaza
18th Floor, Akron OH 44308
PHONE: 330.379.3163
1.877.AKSCORE
1.877.257.2673

E-MAIL: akronscore81@aol.com
www.akronscore.org

SCORE®

Counselors to America's Small Business

Counselor

Issue No. 2

Serving Medina, Portage, Summit and Wayne Counties

Mid-Year 2010



Holding the award plaque for the Outstanding Chapter of the Year for 2009 in SCORE District 549 is Rick Stupp, chairman of Chapter 81. To Stupp's left is Ken Yancey, CEO of the national SCORE organization. Gary Sutherland, Chapter 81 secretary, is at right.

SCORE Honored with District Award Third Time for Outstanding Record

SCORE Chapter 81, serving Medina, Portage, Summit and Wayne counties, has been named the Outstanding Chapter of the Year for 2009 in SCORE District 549. The award was presented on May 6 during a District 549 information meeting held at Avon Shores Country Club in Avon, Ohio. Chapter 81 also won the award in 2005 and 2007.

Ken Yancey, CEO of the National SCORE organization, and Roger Moreschi, District Director, presented the award. In part, the award plaque notes, "This Chapter's leadership, dedication and service to the small business community in District 549 stands as a model for other chapters."

"It is a distinct honor to be recognized by the SCORE organization as last year's outstanding chapter in our District," said Rick Stupp, chairman of Chapter 81. "Our 80-plus counselors are hard at work every day to offer counseling, advice and workshops at no cost to new and existing businesses in our coverage area." SCORE District 549

includes chapters in Northern Ohio, centered in Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Mansfield, Toledo and Youngstown.

SCORE Chapter 81 provides more than 80 workshops annually at nine locations, serving approximately 1,500 clients. Workshop locations include Akron SCORE headquarters, Portage Lakes Career Center, Wayne College, Hudson Library, Medina County University Center, Wooster Branch of the Wayne County Library, Wayne County Schools Career Center and the Mid-point Campus Center in Brunswick

SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business through counseling and mentoring. SCORE Chapter 81, founded in 1965, serves clients in Medina, Portage, Summit and Wayne counties through its counselors who are veteran area executives. Approximately 20,000 clients have been served since the chapter's founding. SCORE is sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Business Roundtables Encourage New Ideas

Business Roundtables, a program to engage local small business owners with peer groups and to help emerging or troubled firms overcome problems or seize opportunities, is a new initiative of SCORE Chapter 81.

Business Roundtables was initiated as a program of the Outreach function of The University of Akron. Because this effort coincides with our Outreach programs, it became natural for our SCORE chapter to become involved.

Objectives of the Roundtables are to: 1. Hold a bi-monthly event in odd-numbered months to help people with new business ideas advance from *concept* to *start-up* through a process and interaction with seasoned entrepreneurs. 2. Help existing and would-be entrepreneurs discuss and improve on their new business concepts.

The six-step process for Business Roundtables includes: 1. Build team awareness, understanding and readiness 2. Develop local alliances 3. Prepare Business Roundtables 4. Facilitate Business Roundtables 5. Expand reach and increase attendance 6. Track, review and refine.

The effort is managed by a 15-member committee that is composed of members from a variety of community groups in education and economic development. Gary Sutherland, Chapter 81 Secretary, is chair of the committee and Marty Oppenheimer, SCORE Chapter 81 Outreach Chair, is a member of the committee.

Roundtables are held at The University of Akron College of Business Administration from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Attendance fee is \$15, which includes parking and light food. SCORE counselors are encouraged to sign up as facilitators.



Six-step Business Roundtable process

Chairman's Message



Rick Stupp
Chairman

SCORE Chapter 81 started way

back in 1965 as a satellite of the Cleveland SCORE chapter. The chapter has grown steadily for the past 45 years, but particularly over the past decade. Starting out with Akron and Summit County as a base, our chapter has grown to serve Medina, Portage, Summit and Wayne counties.

We mounted an aggressive campaign in 2004 in which we sought funds for marketing campaigns and administrative assistance that resulted in increased client services and the recruiting and retention of more volunteer counselors. We now have more than 80 counselors fulfilling the needs of clients. Our successful outreach program has spread the word of what SCORE Chapter 81 can do for our four-county community.

As a result of our efforts, area Chambers of Commerce, banks, universities, non-profit organizations and businesses have unanimously recommended our services. SCORE Chapter 81 performed "Shoe Leather Marketing," a national SCORE program, long before it was rolled out at the national level.

We served less than 1,000 clients in 1999 and nearly tripled that number served in 2009 with 2,700. On an average basis, approximately 34 clients per counselor were served last year.

On a long-term basis, our objective is to deliver proportionate services to client businesses in each of our four counties. To do that, we need to increase SCORE membership to provide needed services and increase SCORE's visibility to reach small businesses needing assistance. We are distributing literature through banks, libraries and area Chambers of Commerce and we continue to market our programs through print

and broadcast media advertising, flyers and a planned public relations/publicity program.

SCORE Chapter 81 has come a long way since 1965 and was recognized for the excellence of its programs by being named District Chapter of the year for 2009 in SCORE District 549, which includes chapters throughout Northern Ohio. The chapter previously received this award for its outstanding performance in 2005 and 2007.

SCORE Offers Free Business Counseling

SCORE offers personal and confidential counseling to anyone who is thinking of starting a business or already has an established business. SCORE volunteers have a professional track record in every facet of the business world. From finance, management, marketing, accounting, taxes, planning to public relations our experience covers every aspect of business and business fundamentals.

SCORE counselors meet with clients personally, confidentially and as frequently as necessary to define and analyze their opportunities, then help them find the solutions. The "art" of establishing a successful business can be complicated and challenging and getting help and advice can be one of the most important decisions a business entrepreneur can make.

SCORE service is FREE. Counseling sessions occur at the SCORE office located in downtown Akron and at other locations in the four-county service area and can be arranged by appointment or at your place of business.

Starting and planning for any new business takes planning, knowledge and

continued on page 4

SCORE Mentors Help Veterans Grow Small Businesses

Volunteer SCORE counselors offer [free business mentoring and resources to veterans](#), members of the National Guard and Reservists who are starting or growing a small business. Many SCORE volunteers are veterans who donate their time to mentor veterans and other entrepreneurs in their hometowns.

SCORE offices nationwide have programs and services specifically for members of the military community, some of whom will be leaving the service soon and others who completed their terms years ago. SCORE provides new and updated resources for veterans online at www.score.org/veteran.html.

Helpful links and resources include:

- Insights for veterans with leadership tips, grants and an introspective questionnaire to help determine if starting a small business is the right option
- Directories of state programs and other resources for veterans
- Statistical research on small business owners who are veterans
- Links to business loan programs, including SBA Economic Injury Loans, Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loans and the Patriot Express Loan Initiative
- Information about specific SCORE programs for veterans and links to SCORE's free [online](#) and [face-to-face](#) mentoring, [online workshops](#) and [eNewsletters](#)

Since 1964, SCORE nationwide has helped more than 8.5 million aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners through mentoring and workshops. More than 12,400 volunteer business counselors in 364 chapters serve their communities through entrepreneur education dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses.

Workshop Attendance Continues to Climb

The popularity of SCORE's workshops is evidenced by the 1,500-plus clients that attended one or more of the 80 held during 2009.

Current workshops offered are *Business Basics, Management Skills, Marketing, Financial Management, Not for Profit, Great Customer Service, Business Plan and QuickBooks*.

"Our workshop programs are reviewed regularly to make certain they remain timely and relevant to today's business environment," Chapter Chairman Rick Stupp said. "There is no charge for the workshops, but advance registration is required by calling 330-379-3163 or via the Internet at www.akronscore.org"

SCORE not only offers free workshops, but it also can customize them to a particular business need, including holding them at clients' business locations.

SCORE Counselor

Published by Akron SCORE Chapter 81 "Counselors to Small Business" to provide professional guidance and information, accessible to all, to maximize the success of America's existing and emerging small businesses. The material in this newsletter is based on the work supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) under cooperative agreement number SBAHQ-05-0001. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.

Editor..... Tom Duke
Editorial Board & Contributors Hans Ropers
Pat Thompson
Howard Tolley

SCORE Success Stories

Tasty Cuisine, Superior Service Put Caterer on Success Track



Sue Valentine

“Food They’ll Love, Service You’ll Appreciate” is the tag line of the attractive brochure of caterer “A Difference in Dining.” It is the key to the company’s success. Owner Sue Valentine is a PMBA client of SCORE counselors Russ Vernon and Bob Mather, whose advice is helping her fine-tune

all areas of her business that will make for an even brighter future. “A Difference in Dining” opened in 1985 with the aim of providing clients a unique dining experience. It was the fulfillment of a dream of Ms. Valentine.

Her mastery in the kitchen comes from three generations of life centered on cooking and serving others. She has extensive experience in food service and hospitality management.

Vernon says, “I have been impressed with Sue and her brother Phillip Stevens. I attended the Martin Luther King Day Luncheon she put on for approximately 200 people.

The delicious buffet was executed professionally with attention to detail. As a side note, our bakery at West Point Market is working with her on the packaging and promotion of her signature pound cake via several demonstrations at the store.”

Bob Mather points out that the company’s attractive new brochure, stationery, business cards and table tents are the outgrowth of discussions leading to a new marketing approach. Valentine is high in her praise of how the SCORE team has been guiding her. This includes drafting of the company’s mission statement, business plan, catering menu selection and more.

Among the clients of the company have been Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic, Girl Scouts of America, Emanuel Christian Academy, Stark State College, The House of the Lord, University of Akron’s Project Grad, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Akron Urban League and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

“A Difference in Dining” is located at 911 St. Ambrose Drive in Akron. The phone number is 330-620-1515 and the e-mail address is evalentine@neo.rr.com.

McJak Candy Company Is a Sweet Deal

Larry Johns had always been interested in owning his own business. After college he spent a number of years designing electrical controls for state of the art manufacturing plants. Ten years ago he felt the time was right and he began looking in earnest for a company to buy. After some time he was contacted by an industrial real estate agent who asked him to look at a small candy factory — named McJak — in Medina that had come up for sale. Designing electrical controls and making lollypops are far apart, but Larry felt there were enough good things about McJak to take the gamble.

Larry and his family then relocated to Medina and the process of learning the candy business and how to improve it began.

One of the first issues he faced was improving and expanding their product lines in the retail market. SCORE counselors Russ Vernon, and Marty Oppenheimer were two of Larry’s initial contacts. In discussion of the use of SCORE, Larry said, “It was like having a very experienced board of directors to discuss strategies and ideas to improve the company’s performance.”



After 10 years under Larry’s leadership McJak is ready to take a quantum leap forward. In June they will double in size with an addition of 12,000 square feet to the existing 14,000 square-foot factory on Branch Road.

The addition will house a one-of-a-kind machine to produce McJak’s gourmet lollypop line. This machine will decrease their labor by 70 percent and increase productivity by 30 percent.

By expansion into the new facility McJak will free up space in the original plant that will let them improve their process on the other product lines, which include gourmet fudge, cotton candy and kettle corn. It will also enable the company to hire more employees.

McJak products are sold under private brand labels, and can be found at outlets such as Walgreens, Rite Aid and Staples.

SCORE Chairman Outlines Importance of Counselors

“I can’t stress enough the importance of local counselors to the SCORE program,” said Ken Yancey, national SCORE CEO at the SCORE District 549 meeting held on May 6, 2010 at Avon Shores Country Club in Avon, Ohio.

The district meeting was attended by eight SCORE Chapter 81 members who heard Yancey review SCORE’s 2010 and beyond plans. Yancey said that one million hours a year of service is being provided by SCORE counselors, with 501,000 total services delivered and 360,000 clients served annually. “More than 20,000 new businesses are created annually, as well as 25,000 new jobs due to SCORE’s efforts,” Yancey said. He said that face-to-face meetings are up 46 percent nationally.

SCORE must focus on leadership recruitment in coming years in order to meet the need. Yancey said that recruiting should be done in specific skills areas to fill the talent needs for a chapter’s vision.

Discussion was held on developing sponsors for workshops and possibly charging for workshops, something the Chapter 81 has never done. The need for social media skills was also discussed as well as the availability of Constant Contact to coordinate social media sites and to manage lists.

Yancy also introduced the Quick Start Workshop concept, a five-session program in which the first session is free and the other four sessions entail a \$125 fee. (Note: This concept is being studied by Chapter 81 and will be covered in depth in a future issue of the *SCORE Counselor*.) The Quick Start program could be conducted with a university.

A Volunteer Certification program has been developed and will be outlined fully in the near future.





Jacob and James Summers, owners of SINCO

SINCO – Building a Solid Foundation

When Jacob and James Summers decided to start their own construction business in 2009 the first question they asked themselves was “Where can we get help and learn how to build a business?”

The first step was to join the Partnership for the Minority Business Accelerator (PMBA). The second step was being introduced to SCORE. It was Don Crigger and Ed Curry who provided them with the information and important details of how to establish and manage a successful business.

SINCO is a Hispanic family-owned,

general trade’s construction company specializing in metal framing, soffits, ceiling systems, millwork and other areas of commercial carpentry. Both Jacob and Jim Summers admitted that they knew very little about running and managing a construction company. They met with Don and Ed every month. The information and guidance they received was invaluable. They became “educated and informed” about the many details of business management and the complex documentation

The brothers wanted to do it right. They made detailed plans and set up each

aspect of the business so that nothing was left to chance. They are still making important changes and additions to their company but the foundation is now solid and working.

SINCO has plans for the future and wants to establish a solid foundation and reputation as a quality builder. They are working on the mechanics of running their business, the marketing and a public relations program to be implemented this year. Their corporate identity program is currently being designed as well as a web page which will showcase the company, its employees and services.

SINCO is located at 4585 Arlington Rd., Uniontown, OH 44685 and can be reached at 330-354-5802.

Business Counseling

continued from page 2

the right information. There are many business tools and resources which need to be considered and documented.

The successful clients SCORE has helped have always said: “I could not have done it without your help. I had no idea that starting and managing a business was this complicated and that I would need to understand and know about so many different steps and even legal requirements.”

One Cascade Plaza
18th Floor, Akron OH 44308
Phone: 330.379.3163
1.877.AKSCORE
1.877.2673
E-Mail: akronscore81@aol.com
www.akronscore.org



We teach new dogs old tricks

SCORE’s Mission:

SCORE provides resources and expertise to maximize the success of existing and emerging small businesses.