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Women's Business Center, Inc.

The Buzz About Biz...

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Upcoming Events
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Community Events & News



**Women's Business Center
 Fifteenth Anniversary Gala
 Celebration**



**Call 251-660-2725 for
 sponsorship opportunities**
Date:

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Place:
 Renaissance Riverview Plaza
 Hotel

Topic:
 The Four Secrets of Women Who
 Get What They Want

March 3, 2009

Welcome Friends!

As you are aware, it's income tax time again! For most small businesses, this can be a daunting task. From gathering all those receipts to determining which deductions apply to your business. It doesn't have to be if you plan ahead! Here are 5 simple tips that can help make filing your taxes easier:



- Be proactive; keep good records of both expenses and income.
- Save all receipts and keep them in an organized fashion.
- Hire a tax consultant! This can save you from future problems with the IRS.
- Pay estimated state and federal taxes on a quarterly basis. By consulting with your tax consultant, you can decide on how much to pay each time.
- Separate your personal and business expenses. This is especially important if you run a home based business. This will save a lot of time at tax season and helps to legitimize your small business.

A few useful links:

IRS Information related to the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009](#).

A useful guide called '[What ifs of an Economic Downturn](#).'

Want to learn about social networking, sign up today! If you are interested in an upcoming teleseminar on using social networking, please email me at sbrowder@womenbiz.biz with a subject line, '*interested in social networking for my business.*' To see Sylvia featured in an Expert Q & A about social networking, [click here](#).

In this issue, look for useful tools that can be used in your everyday business life and the calendar of upcoming workshops and seminars.

This newsletter is for everyone, those just starting a new business, more experienced business owners and everyone in between.

Help us meet your business needs by sending your ideas, suggestions, questions or topics you would like to see included in our monthly newsletter to sbrowder@womenbiz.biz.

To your business success,

Sylvia Browder
 Project Director

Starting a Business in a Down Economy?

Many of us are facing tough challenges from the economy's slowdown. In Monroe County alone, the community was hit by the closing of a third sawmill in recent weeks, thus, over 200 layoffs.

In light of the challenging job market, people may be a little



Speaker:

Kate White, Cosmopolitan Magazine
Editor-in-Chief & New York Times
Best-selling Author

Cost:

\$75 per person \$700 table for ten

To register, [click here](#).

Certification & Procurement Workshop, A Success!



The Certification & Procurement workshop was held on February 18, 2009. The all day workshop featured knowledgeable speakers from both certification and procurement organizations.

The lunch speaker, Art Brown, CEO of Lescot Enterprises, discussed, 'Navigating the Internet for Business Development Opportunities.' There was plenty of time for questions, networking and gathering valuable information.

Frances Jones, Tri Star Corp., wrote:

"The 3rd Annual Certification and Procurement Workshop was exceptional. Not only is the WBC staff courteous, professional and accommodating, they know how to put together a top-of-the-line workshop! The workshop location was convenient and the nominal cost could not be beat.

Each speaker had impressive bios, representing key organizations in the city & county of Mobile and the State of Alabama. Each presented a wealth of information, including handouts and gifts. Although there was a time limit for each presentation, each speaker answered questions and offered sound advice and encouragement to those present. I always look forward to events offered by the Women's Business Center."

Thanks to our presenters for their invaluable information and our attendees for coming out and learning about opportunities to advance their businesses.

frightened to consider entrepreneurship. But many experts are saying now is as good a time as ever.

There are many advantages to starting a business in the current economy as long as you do your 'homework' i.e., business plan and make sure the product or service you choose is marketable. Once launched, it is important to stay small and grow gradually, keeping a positive cash-flow while building your client base. To learn more, read, '[Starting a Business in a Down Economy](#).'

Ready to start your own business, take the [Small Business Readiness Assessment](#) quiz.

Attend Upcoming workshop, 'Be Your Own Boss'

- Should YOU be a business owner?
- Why do people want to start a business?
- What are the common mistakes?

Download flyers: [Atmore](#), [Brewton](#), [Evergreen](#) & [Monroeville](#)

Ask A Coach: Your Small Business Advisor

**Dear Coach,**

I am so stressed out! There are rumors of lay-offs from my company. I've worked there for many years and feel so let down. I was thinking about all the skills that I have as an executive assistant and was toying with the idea of starting a virtual assistant business. Are you familiar with this type of work?

M.N. Torreson - Montgomery

Hello M.N. Torreson,

Thanks so much for contacting me for your business question.

Fortunately, I am familiar with the virtual assistant community.

Virtual Assistants, also known as VA's, have been around for more than 10 years and in this day and age utilize the technology era. They are highly qualified, experienced business owners who basically do the same work as a typical Secretary, Personal Assistant and Office Administrator combined. Many VA's are College or University educated in business and office administration with work experience in an office setting. Some VA's have even added VA Certification to their list of credentials.

Please visit The [International Virtual Assistants Association](#) (IVAA), a non-profit organization dedicated to the professional education and development of members of the Virtual Assistance profession, and to educating the public on the role and function of the Virtual Assistant. Please check out their site and find out about their support to the industry. Also, go to [Google](#) and search 'virtual assistant' or 'how to start a VA business.' You will find a multitude of information about the industry. One thing to remember, though you will be virtual, you will also need to establish your business locally to grow in your local community. That means attending networking events, developing a marketing strategy, etc.

For an appointment with one of our business counselors, please click on the form below. .

To your business success,

Sylvia Browder

For general business questions, please print and fax this [form](#) to 251-660-8854 and email your question to sbrowder@womenbiz.biz.

Disclaimer: The information in this column is not guaranteed to be the appropriate solution for each individual.

Client Spotlight:

W.I.N,N.E.R.S Inc.

Welcome Lakesha Womack!



Lakesha Womack was recently hired as a part-time Business Consultant for the WBC's, Bizmobile Project. Says Project Director, Sylvia Browder, 'Lakesha is a great asset to our organization. She has hit the ground running in her new role.'

Lakesha has 15 years experience managing, coaching and training team members in the retail, food service, real estate, publishing and financial services industries. She is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and we are excited to have her on our team

Says Womack, "Becoming a Consultant with the WBC is a tremendous honor for me because of the level of service that I will be able to provide small business owners who may not otherwise have a resource to take their business to the next level."



Thank You

[City of Mobile](#)

Our partners are the life blood of the Women's Business Center, Inc. Without their commitment of resources, dollars, and in kind services, we would not exist.

[Become a Partner](#)

W.I.N.N.E.R.S., Inc. (Women In Need of Nurturing Education and Recovery Services)

W.I.N.N.E.R.S., is a transitional housing program that will provide substance services to women 18 and older who are making the transition from prison back to society, homeless or needing substance abuse services.

This program fosters a structured atmosphere of recovery and growth that this population desperately needs.

For more information:

Lisa Brown, Executive Director
8800 Three Mile Rd.
Irvington, AL 36544
251-824-1585

Email: winningbacklife@yahoo.com



March Calendar

For a full description of each workshop, fees, times and dates, please [click here](#) to download our March calendar.

For more information about ALL workshops /or to register call 251-660-2725 today.

Business Planning for Entrepreneurs: Raising Capital - Mobile

Schedule: Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Having enough capital to start a business is essential to staying open. This workshop showcases funding options available to entrepreneurs.

Facilitator: Tom Siegwald, Director, Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence/Business Innovation Center

Responding to a Request for Proposal: Techniques for Developing a Winning Offer - Mobile

Schedule: Thursday, March 12, 2009

Want to do business with the big players? Learn how to read a Request for Proposal (RFP); develop your proposal, matching your company's specialized experience to the RFP; and present your company's specialized experience on one page.

Facilitator: Aleta Greenspan, IIDA

Access to Capital - Brewton

Schedule: Thursday, March 12, 2009

Recent events in the financial sector have raised alarm levels. Credit has been adversely affected. Many who now seek debt capital are facing more stringent lending requirements than ever before. Small businesses want and need access to funds for working capital, to invest in new infrastructure, in new products and services and to meet payroll.

Facilitator: Brent McMahan, U.S. Small Business Administration

To view our calendar on our website, please, click here. To register or obtain more information on any of our events, call the Women's Business Center at 251-660-2725 or email info@womenbiz.biz. Please pre-register as events are subject to

**SPOTLIGHT:
Women's Business
Center, Inc.
Board of
Directors 2008-09**



Herman Tinsley, Project Manager
Economic Development
[Mobile Area Chamber of
Commerce](#)

The Women's Business Center, Inc. announced today the selection of new officers and directors for its 2008-09 fiscal year.

To read article, [click here](#).



Quotes to Remember . . .

To be a success is not always to be a success individually. In fact, most of the time we achieve our successes as part of a team.

That is why I want to devote this issue to the secrets of successful team.

::: Chris Widener :::

**Become a
Women's Business
Center Alliance
member TODAY!**



Current members, enjoy our new

cancellation for lack of registration.

On the road with the Bizmobile

Do you want to start a business or are you a small business owner in need of technical assistance?



The Bizmobile will be in your city:

Bizmobile in Conecuh County

Date: March 4, 2009

Time: 10am - 2pm

Location: Evergreen (1st Wednesday)

Download flyer: [Evergreen](#)

Bizmobile in Clarke County

Date: March 5, 2009 Grove Hill

Date: March 26, 2009 Thomasville

Time: 10am - 2pm

Location: Clarke County Museum Helm House and Grove Hill Area Chamber of Commerce (1st Thursday) & Thomasville (4th Thursday).

Download flyer: [Grove Hill - Thomasville](#)

Bizmobile in Escambia County

Date: March 18, 2009 Atmore

Date: March 12, 2009 Brewton

Time: 10am - 2pm

Location:

Escambia County Industrial Development Authority (3rd Wednesday) and Brewton Area Chamber (2nd Thursday)

Download flyer: [Atmore - Brewton](#)

Bizmobile in Monroe County

Date: March 25, 2009

Time: 10am - 2pm

Location: Monroeville Area Chamber of Commerce (4th Wednesday)

Download flyer: [Monroeville](#)

For more information on these events or services of the WBC, call 251-660-2725 or toll-free 800-378-7461 or email LaToya Brooks at info@womenbiz.biz.

Join Us at... Success Circles



Success Circles are monthly roundtable discussions and mentoring groups for business women.

Success Circle - West Mobile

Schedule: Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Join Dr. Sturm for a lively discussion on how to effectively operate your business internally.

Facilitator: Diana Sturm, Ph.D., Legacy Financial Planning, LLC

Success Circle - Daphne

Schedule: Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Join us for an informational discussion on products & services. What makes your business different from the competition?

member-to-member discounts. For application, [click here](#).

**Join Us ...
'Taste of Alliance'**
WBCA members are invited to join other Alliance members in a friendly and relaxing atmosphere.

House wine will be served at a discounted rate of \$4 per glass. Bring plenty of business cards to share!

Taste! Wine Bar
2524 Old Shell
Mobile, AL 36607
Every third Thursday
5:00 - 6:30

Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)

[Join WBCA](#)

[Join Advisory Council](#)

[More About Us](#)

[Womenbiz Directory](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Facilitator: Sherman Blosser, Women's Business Center

Success Circle - Fairhope

Schedule: Wednesday, March 18, 2009

Join us for a discussion about 'internet marketing: effectively using the internet to market your business.'

Facilitator: Suzanne Luker, TimePlus Payroll

Success Circle - Saraland

Schedule: Thursday, March 19, 2009

Join us for a discussion on products & services. What makes your business different from the competition?

Facilitator: Sherman Blosser, Women's Business Center

For more Information on these events or services of the WBC, call 251-660-2725 or toll-free 800-378- 7461 or email LaToya Brooks at info@womenbiz.biz.

Community Events & News

Consumer Protection Week is March 1-7. This year's theme is "Nuts and Bolts: Tools for Today's Economy." Whether consumers are trying to stretch their paychecks, improve their credit history, or tell the difference between a real deal and a potentially fraudulent product or service, information is one tool that can help them get the most for their money. For more information, visit www.consumer.gov/ncpw/consumer.html

Networking@Noon will be held Wednesday, March 11 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Five Rivers Delta Resource Center - Welcome Center. For reservations, contact Missy Hartley at 431-8638.

The Non-Profit Resource Center of Alabama (NRCA) will host a workshop on grant writing with style on Thursday, March 5 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Community Foundation of South Alabama, 212 St. Joseph St. Attendees will need to bring the grant they are currently working on and a laptop. The presenter will be Dr. Bob Zenah. The cost to attend is \$40 for NRCA members and \$80 for guests and includes lunch. For more information, call 990-6002.

Our Sisters' Closet will hold their Spring Cheap Chic Boutique on Friday, March 6 from 8:30am to 6pm and Saturday, March 7 from 9am-3pm at the Sister's of Mercy Building located at 1450 Old Shell Road across from McGill-Toolen High School. New, nearly new and vintage clothing and accessories will be sold at thrifty prices to provide interview and workplace clothing to low-income women to increase their self-confidence and job opportunities. Call 251.423.2001 for more info or oursisterscloset@comcast.net.

Want to Get Your Business Noticed?
Sign-up for the FREE Web Based Minority Directory. Sponsored by Mobile Area Chamber Of Commerce & Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC). For information and registration, [click here](#).

The Women's Business Center, Inc., would like to thank you for your support of our mission. If you know anyone that can benefit from our newsletter, please forward to them.

To your business success,

Women's Business Center Staff



The Women's Business Center is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact LaToya Brooks at 251-660-2725, 1301 Azalea Rd, #201A, Mobile, AL 36693. info@womenbiz.biz.

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