



Pittsburgh Young Professionals NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 : Issue 1

WINTER 2004

OUR MISSION

Pittsburgh Young Professionals (PYP) is dedicated to providing young professionals in the western Pennsylvania area with the opportunity to interact professionally and socially with their peers; contribute to the community through philanthropic and volunteer activities; and promote an environment that helps attract, retain, and nurture young professionals throughout the region.

Have something to say? E-mail your newsletter contributions to us at newsletter@pyp.org!

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Midnight Masquerade Esprit de Corps 2003



On December 6, 2003 more than 500 young professionals joined Chairperson Helen Wylie and Honorary Chairperson, Bill Flanagan at the new David L. Lawrence Convention Center for the Pittsburgh Young Professional annual gala, Esprit de Corps. The 2003 theme of Esprit de Corps was “Midnight Masquerade” and the beneficiaries were Junior Achievement of Southwest Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Young Professionals Scholarship Fund.

The “masked” guests danced the night away and were entertained by the sizzling sounds of Billy Mancini and the Bombay Blue Sapphire Band. Billy and his group entertained the crowds with an energizing style to such great hits including *Luck be a Lady*, *Last Dance*, and *The House is a Rockin'*. Guests were even showed a little early holiday spirit with Billy's own version of *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*.



And of course, with great music, you have to have great food and beverages. Led by Lisa Watson and her team, elegant displays of food were provided by Levy Restaurants and all beer was donated by Frank B. Fuhrer Wholesale, while white-gloved hosts and hostesses passed hors d'oeuvres for all to enjoy.

And as if that weren't enough, guests had the opportunity to purchase tickets for the popular Chinese Auction. Some gift basket winners included Karen Broadhuhn, Don Lankey, and Jennifer Yurek (who won two baskets, including the Nemaocolin Getaway Package!). And who was the lucky winner of two tickets to anywhere in the Continental United States, courtesy of Delta Air Lines? We are proud to announce that the winner was John Horgan of Pittsburgh. Enjoy your journey, John!

And when the clock struck midnight, Classic Limousine whisked the 2003 EDC attendees to Bossa Nova where they continued to party late into the morning while enjoying a beverage of their choice courtesy of Bossa Nova!

And of course all of this could not have been possible without the support from our outstanding sponsors! These sponsors included: Delta Air Lines, The Rhythm House Café, Bossa Nova,

Development Dimensions International, Pittsburgh Business Times, Arthur Murray Dance Studios, Babst Calland Clements & Zomnir, Comdoc, Inc., Dollar Bank, Henderson Brothers, Pittsburgh Magazine/QED Multimedia, IBM, AT&T Wireless, Classic Limousine,



continued

ESPRIT DE CORPS

DineCheck, Gregg Services, John T. Boyd Company, NAI Grant Street Associates, Pittsburgh Cut Flower Company, H Financial Services, Bruce and Monica Gay, and Susanne Herald. Thanks to all of you!

And finally, we need to thank each and every one of you who purchased a ticket to the 2003 event! Whether you purchased a ticket or bought tickets for the Chinese Auction, or both, on behalf of Pittsburgh Young Professionals and the entire 2003 Esprit de Corps Committee, please accept my sincere thanks and appreciation for your support. We hope to see you next year!

*Helen Wylie
Chairperson
Esprit de Corps 2003*

Esprit de Corps 2003 Committee

Helen Wylie, *Chairperson*

Melissa Affolter	Vijay Nallapati
Karen Broadhuhn	Emil Pena
Kimberly Love	Pam Stanzaki
Tom Martin	Amber Stankay
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PRESIDENT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear PYP Members,

As your newly elected President, I want to thank everyone for being part of this important and vibrant organization. Currently with over 430 members, the incoming Board looks forward to the New Year by offering the programming and activities that PYP members are looking for.

Thanks to Tom McManus for his two years of service as PYP President. Tom has remained active within the organization and will function as “President Emeritus” allowing us to tap into his experience and networks.

I would also like to thank those of you who supported Esprit de Corps as we raised funds for Junior Achievement. A special thanks goes to Helen Wylie (2003 Esprit Chair) and the planning committee whose efforts brought us “Midnight Masquerade” at the Convention Center.

The incoming Board and I have worked together to develop aggressive goals for this year that we hope will make your PYP experience both fun and worthwhile. These include:

1. Strengthening PYP’s programming, events and activities
2. Improving and increasing external relations and collaboration
3. Enhancing PYP’s public image through increased public relations and marketing of PYP to targeted segments of the community

Some new things to look forward to in 2004:

- Increased cultural activities on PYP’s events calendar
- Membership Discount Cards
- PYP Scholarship Fund with defined award criteria and active fundraising
- Advisory Committee to guide the PYP organization
- Updated website launched
- Increase collaboration with other groups — one idea being talked about is a late spring boat cruise with a ‘Latin’ flavor

Keep your eye on our busy events calendar, there is always something of interest for everyone. And lastly, I invite everyone to get involved in some aspect of PYP! Whether it be through volunteering, networking, social activities or personal development, it is your organization...make it what you want!

Bruce Gay
2004 PYP President

We Made the Grade!

During October 2003 the MSC conducted a survey, of which 20% of the total membership responded. Not only did the feedback demonstrate that we are solid organization, but the results showed that PYP “made the grade” when it came to Member satisfaction!

About 80% of the respondents said that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘strongly satisfied’ with PYP’s events and programs. Another 85% responded that they would see themselves as a member one year later, and 91% said they would recommend PYP membership to friends and colleagues.

The most popular events of member interest were: Happy Hours and Cultural Events. This was followed closely by Community Service, Networking/Career workshops and the Dinner Club.

Based on the survey results, the Board of Directors found there are areas for attention, which include:

- Continue to partner with other organizations, both in “young professional” and “business networking” arenas

- Host events in locations convenient to a majority of members; publicize event locations well in advance with detailed directions and information on parking.
- Encourage Members to become more active
- Investigate opportunities for weekend events; almost 75% of the responses said they would like to see more events on weekends
- Offer more “cultural events”; try to get member’s more active in Pittsburgh’s cultural scene
- Streamline email communication to members agreed upon by the Board and Committee Chairs; however, almost 75% of members noted that they weren’t receiving too many emails.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this survey.

A summary report of the 2003 Membership Survey can be found on the website at <http://www.pyp.org/2003SurveyReport.pdf>.

COMMITTEES

PYP COMMITTEE ROUND-UP

Networking

The year 2003 brought a new addition to the Networking Committee — the Job Networking Forum.

Spawned from the imagination of an unemployed, but highly ambitious young professional, the Forum breathes fresh air into the old-fashioned, sometimes stuffy concept of networking.

The concept is simple. Bring together a group of people with disparate backgrounds and career goals and let the dialogue begin. Participants talk about nearly every facet of the job-hunting process — from interview style and technique to the nuances of follow-up.

The Forum is not reserved for just the unemployed. People exploring other opportunities or eager to spark their present skills sets routinely make up twenty-five percent of attendance. Employers and HR professionals have also been in attendance in recent months to get a fresh perspective on the lengths job seekers will go to find employment.

So if you're out of work or still searching for what you want to do when you grow up, be sure to take advantage of this wonderful PYP offering. Also, you can more about the Job Networking Forum later in the newsletter in an article by Kelli McIlhinny.

Be sure to check out the PYP event calendar for upcoming networking opportunities or write to Brendan Mangus at networking@pyp.org or Greg Friedman at greg@pyp.org for more details.

Third Wednesday of the Month

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Panera Bread — Oakland (first floor of Best Western Hotel)

3401 Boulevard of the Allies — 412-683-9616

www.panerabread.com/Map.aspx?LocationId=73

Brendan Mangus, Networking Chair
networking@pyp.org



PYP Top Ten Volunteers

Submitted by Carla Tokarsky (PYP CIC chair)

I would like to say that my favorite CIC event in 2003 was the Future Cities Competition. Additionally, would like to provide a list of the top ten volunteers during 2003. Congrats for to all for their work and hope to see you at future CIC events!

Here are the top ten volunteers for 2003:

1. **Darrell Rapp – 38 hours**
2. **Julie Slaybaugh – 33.5 hours**
3. **Beth Sanchez – 31 hours**
3. **Dan Zaunick – 31 hours**
4. **Kelly Stiles – 30 hours**
5. **Kim Schriver – 27 hours**
6. **Karen Novak – 26.5 hours**
7. **Mary Jo David – 25 hours**
8. **Yana Zatuchnaya – 23.5 hours**
9. **Becky Busch – 21.5 hours**
9. **Robyn Zdilla – 21.5 hours**
10. **Rich Germano – 20.5 hours**



MEMBERS

PYP MEMBERS SPEAK OUT



Tax Time is Here Again!!

Procrastinators beware; April 15th is only a few short months away. Here are a few things to think about when you are preparing your 2003 income taxes. Several tax changes brought to you by President Bush's Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 (JGTRRA) can make your task even more complicated if you don't take a little time to understand the changes. Here is the bottom line on the 2003 tax changes and what key things not to miss when preparing both your individual and small business tax returns this year.

Individual Tax

JGTRRA *retroactively* reduced the individual income tax rates by bringing the top tax bracket down from 38.6 % to 35% and expanding the 10% tax bracket for 2003 and 2004. Additionally, two provisions of the new JGTRRA provide relief for the so called "marriage penalty" by increasing the standard deduction for married couples to twice the amount of a single person and increasing the width of the 15% tax bracket for married couples to twice the amount for single taxpayers. Additionally, JGTRRA reduced capital

gain and qualified dividend rates for all individual taxpayers. Capital gains after May 5, 2003 and dividend rates were decreased from 20 to 15% for tax payers in the highest four tax brackets.

The "Don't Forget" List

Caution: To qualify for some of these potential deductions, your expenses have to rise above a certain level, usually a percentage of your adjusted gross income. In other cases, there's a limit on the deduction. Please ask your tax preparer whether you qualify. Also, the IRS website is very user friendly for forms, instructions, and publications which explain each these deductions. www.irs.gov

Deductions that you might want to consider:

- Medical Expenses
- Miscellaneous Deductions which may include:
 - Tax Preparation Costs
 - Education, Books, Magazines, and Memberships for your Work
 - Job Search Expenses
 - Job-Related Car Expenses
 - Investment Expenses

- Job-Related Moving Expenses (Hopefully coming to Pittsburgh and not leaving!)
- Other IRS-Approved Deductions
- Interest From Home Refinancing
- Home Equity Interest

Small Business Tax

Don't forget Section 179 and Bonus Depreciation!! Section 179, which allows immediate expense of qualifying capital property, has increased to \$100,000 (from \$25,000) for property placed in service in taxable years beginning in 2003. Also, business property that is acquired after May 5, 2003 and placed into service may qualify for a first year "bonus depreciation" of 50 percent! These two expensing options could provide significant tax relief for your business this year.

Caution!

Document everything. If the Internal Revenue Service decides to question you about any of your deductions, you want to be able to provide all of your pertinent receipts and statements.

JBrad Collins, J.D. MBA

Phone 412-217-3952

Email: taxquestions@collinsauctionhouse.com

Creative Networking

Are you looking for a new job? Does your business need to find employees? PYP may be able to help.

PYP's monthly Job Networking Forum gives savvy job seekers and employers an opportunity to come together to exchange job leads, tips and tactics for a successful job search.

The Forum is an informal round-table discussion where 10-15 people introduce themselves and describe their employment-related interests, then, each participant receives suggestions from the group of possible contacts or companies to explore.

PYP board member Greg Friedman developed the concept for the Forum during his own job search after moving to Pittsburgh nearly a year ago.

"I joined PYP so that I could expand my network of professional contacts," Greg said. "I thought that something like the Networking Forum would help me do that."

Statistics say that over 80% of jobs are discovered through networking. In its brief existence, the Forum has already has success that supports that theory. Robert Ulishney found his current position through the Forum after Greg forwarded him a newsletter of job postings.

"If I hadn't gone to the forum, I wouldn't have met Greg, and would never have gotten this job," Robert said.

If you feel that your search for a job (or employees) has stagnated, try the PYP Networking Job Forum. Maybe yours will be the next success story.

The PYP Job Networking Forum meets from 6-8 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at Panera Bread on Boulevard of the Allies in Oakland.

MEMBERS

PYP MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Quick Cooking Tips for Busy Professionals!

By Jennifer Daurora of McGinnis Sisters Special Food Stores

If ordering the “usual” at a near by drive-thru window or having your favorite restaurant on speed dial has left you heavy around the middle and light in the wallet, let 2004 be the year you let your culinary rock star shine through. Semi-homemade cooking can be the perfect answer for busy professionals who are short on time, but can appreciate big taste.

First examine your weekly schedule and determine how many meals you expect to eat at home. Try to save the culinary experiments for the weekend and stick to the 30-minute meal mantra of the Food Network’s Rachel Ray. A good combination of prepackaged and home-prepared items will allow you to enjoy what little time you do actually spend at home.

Fresh is usually the way to go, but frozen and canned vegetables will allow you to simplify your time in the kitchen while adding healthy benefits to your meal. Frozen vegetables are usually flash-frozen at peak ripeness so they contain just about as much nutrition as their fresh counterparts. Often frozen vegetables can be steamed or blanched right in their own bag. These time saving items can add variety to your meals while slashing preparation time. Also, try to stock up on quick cook rice and pasta. Be sure to read the nutritional labels of boxed side dishes or you may be adding unwanted fat and sodium to your diet.

Regardless if you live alone or are sharing the kitchen, cook a main staple for at least two meals. By applying this routine, chicken that you grill on your George Forman for tonight’s Asian Inspired Stir-Fry can also be the star of tomorrow’s Grilled Chicken Field Greens Salad. If you are extremely sparse on time, try to cook two main ingredients on one day for a week’s worth of heat and eat semi-homemade meals. You can add flavor with a different quick cook side dish or salad each night, and you will never have that “left over” feeling.

Try to have a quick nutritional snack on the way home so that you will be able to resist the temptation to order take out. Use cooking methods such as baking and broiling that are hands free. Seafood can be broiled for 10 minutes per inch of thickness at 450°, which will allow you to check your e-mail or return phone calls as your dinner bakes in the oven!

Here are some tips to keep the main areas of your kitchen ready to go for any meal.

- **A Well-stocked Party** — Quick cook wild rice; a few cans of diced tomatoes preferable already flavored such as basil and herbs, or roasted garlic. Keep almond slivers or pine nuts on hand to dress up pasta or salad. Don’t forget a jar of roasted red peppers and a variety of your favorite spices and herbs.
- **The Coolest Freezer** — A few bags of assorted frozen vegetables. A selection of pre-portioned meats such as poultry, pork or seafood. Beef can be frozen, but it always tastes better when cooked fresh. Portion your items so that there are two servings per bag to save time during the week.
- **A Fresh Fridge** — Quick cook veggies such as zucchini or pre-sliced mushrooms. A head of hearty lettuce such as romaine or red leaf, and at least one type of crumbled or grated cheese for a quick meal. Finish off with a selection of your favorite sauces such as soy, BBQ or chipotle.

When you do dine out, make the most of your meal by turning part of last night’s New York Strip into today’s steak sandwich topped with store bought apple cranberry chutney and Roquefort cheese, piled high on a French baguette that you baked yourself using single-bake rolls from the grocer’s freezer. Most importantly, keep it simple, experiment and have fun!



PROFILES

PYP MEMBER PROFILE: FELICIA RANKIN



Name: Felicia Rankin

Age: 25

PYP Member Since: I believe since April 2003

Current Role in PYP: aspiring Correspondence Coordinator, but until then a joyful member

Hometown: Ambridge, but have been working and learning in Pittsburgh for about 7 years

Education: Point Park College

Career background and current employer: Student Services/ Pa Culinary Ins.

Career Goals: To be able to provide the best social experience to students that are new to the Pittsburgh area

Why did I join PYP? To be more involved in the Pittsburgh area

What I enjoy most about PYP? The ways it makes the city feel like a community

My most memorable event with PYP: ...Strip District Crawls

The one activity I enjoy doing in my spare time is:

Playing Football, time with my family

Favorite thing about Pittsburgh: That it's just the right size city for me

Favorite Pittsburgh restaurant: Max and Erma's

Pittsburgh's best kept secret: All of the social groups and activities

What Pittsburgh needs most? More events right downtown for families

Favorite fun website? www.pittsburghpassion.com — at least to me

Song you can't get out of your head: "Toxicity"

Best book you've read this year: I started reading *Dome* — it's only January!

Best movie ever: *Waterboy*

Last movie I saw and how much I liked it: *Pirates of the Caribbean*, I give it about an 8.5/10

The best advice you have ever received: We all have 24 hours, it's up to us how we use it.

Right now I'm counting down the days until... KICK off

One important or secret thing people should know about you? I am a rookie on a semi-professional football team, Pittsburgh Passion

Anything else: If I tell you then it would not be a secret but it involves *Heat*.

Employment Discrimination — How do I know if I have a claim?

Be on the look out for these suspicious circumstances:

- A. Supervisors, managers or co-workers have made ageist, sexist, racist or derogatory comments about you or others.
- B. You were neither disciplined nor criticized before you were terminated.
- C. Your employer tolerated the same things it is now complaining about for a long time.
- D. Your employer has given different reasons for its action.
- E. Other employees not in your protected class were not held to the same standards.
- F. Your employer's business judgment seems irrational (e.g., terminating the highest producing sales representative on the sales force).
- G. The facts given by your employer to justify its decision are untrue.

- H. Your employer's action follows closely in time after you have complained about harassment or other discrimination in the workplace.
- I. Your employer did not follow its own written standards, policies or guidelines in taking the action against you.
- J. Other employees in your protected class have also experienced discrimination.
- K. Other managers, supervisors or employees found you to be a good employee.
- L. Customers found you to be a good employee.
- M. You received good performance evaluations, awards, pay raises or promotions.
- N. You were replaced by someone outside your protected class.
- O. You were not allowed to present a rebuttal or reply to your employer's criticisms.

With rare exception, you only have 300 days from the time your employer acted against you to file a Charge of Discrimination with the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Council) and PHRC (Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission). Sometimes the period is only 180 days. Do not delay or hesitate, or you could lose your right to recover damages.

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WINTER 2004

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