

GMEN Member Update --- March, 2005
=====

This is the first of what will be monthly e-newsletters to GMEN members. The quarterly paper newsletter will continue with its focus on specific programs defined by funders. If you have information to share with other GMEN members, please forward by the 25th of each month to pcwill@bellsouth.net

**National Conference: Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO)
May 10-13 in Portland Oregon**

Are you registered to attend AEO's annual conference (www.microenterpriseworks.org)? If so call GMEN at 678-296-1059 to let us know. All GMEN members attending this conference are asked to hand out Atlanta collateral to conference attendees to build enthusiasm for next year's AEO conference in Atlanta. In addition, there will be a special presentation by GMEN at the closing luncheon to get the crowd ready for Georgia in 2006! **You will receive the collateral and a FREE GMEN Workshirt at a specified location in Portland. We must have your shirt size by April 14th if you will be attending the AEO conference**, at your expense. Forward your intention to attend and shirt size to pcwill@bellsouth.net by April 14th.

State Conference: GMEN annual statewide conference on June 9-10 in Atlanta

Recently you received the conference registration brochure for this year's conference. **Make sure to process your registration immediately for the early bird, reduced registration fee by May 10th.**

Several events will take place during the conference:

- The annual membership meeting will be held on Thursday, June 9th at 6pm. During this membership meeting there will be bylaw changes, election of new board members, and an update on planning for the 2006 AEO conference in Atlanta.
- The annual awards reception will be held on Thursday, June 9th at 7pm. **Make sure to respond to earlier emails asking for nominations for the rural award, innovation award, and entrepreneur of the year award.**
- The conference itself is held on Friday, June 10th at 8:30 am. **Make sure to respond to earlier emails asking for nominations for entrepreneur speakers. This is a great way to market your program.**
- In addition, the second annual business plan competition will take place on Friday, June 10th at 9am. **Make sure to respond to earlier emails asking for nominations for entrepreneur submissions.** They will receive up to a \$1500 equity infusion into their businesses. Last year many of the entrepreneur speakers were also business plan competition participants.

Regional Meetings 2005

GMEN is holding regional membership meetings around the state. The first regional meeting was in Albany in January, and the second in Savannah in March. The next regional meeting will be in Atlanta for GMEN members and supporters from the metro Atlanta area. The last regional meeting this year will be in Cleveland, GA on September 23rd, for GMEN members and supporters across north Georgia.

These regional meetings are being hosted by local GMEN members in these areas. If you would like to host a GMEN regional meeting in 2006, let us know.

Access to Markets

GMEN will be holding its first marketing competition for microentrepreneurs in August. This competition will focus on helping microentrepreneurs improve their marketing efforts to increase the sales of their products and services. The prizes will include free marketing services. Watch for more details.

GMEN's competition will be focused on the five industry areas resulting from last year's survey of all microenterprise organizations across the state. We found that a majority of your clients are providing products or services in five major industries: child care, construction, food services, retail, and tourism.

Also as supporters of entrepreneurship, make sure and look at the work of the Commission for a New Georgia (www.new-georgia.org). They have identified five strategic industry clusters for Georgia:

Strategic Industry Clusters	Supporting Industry clusters	Supporting initiatives
Aerospace	Advanced Telecommunications	Entrepreneurship!!!
Agribusiness	Business & Financial Services	Homeland Security
Energy & Environmental	Homeland Security	Nanotechnology
Healthcare & Eldercare	Multimedia	Software
(lifesciences)	Software Development	
Logistics & Transportation		

GWEN conference, April 19-21 @ Lake Lanier www.gwen.org. This is an excellent opportunity to make contacts for selling products and services. GMEN members are encouraged to support their members in attending this event. In that regard, GMEN will reimburse a portion of the expense of up to four entrepreneurs attending this conference. If you are interested in more details, contact PC at pcwill@bellsouth.net. Must receive email on interest by April 8th.

Fundraising tips

Each year, the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship awards five full scholarships to individuals working in the field who wish to enter the one-year full-time MBA program. Each scholarship covers all fees for the course, as well as providing an allowance for living expenses and travel. Social entrepreneurship is a strong component, go forward, for funding non-profit organizations. For more information go to www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/html/faculty_skoll_scholarships.asp

Walmart provides \$1,000 grants to local organizations. For more information go to www.walmartfoundation.org/wmstore/goodworks

Need to do a search for potential funders, consider joining www.fundraisinginfo.com

Member News

Congratulations to Patricia Harris, President & CEO of Cobb Microenterprise Center, on her selection by the SBA Georgia District Office as the 2005 Women in Business Champion of the Year. She will be officially recognized on April 12th during the Georgia Lenders Quality Circle, Small Business Week Luncheon at the Commerce Club.

The Governor's Small Business Center and the Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce will host an "Entrepreneurial Fitness Expo and Endurance Awards Event" on Wednesday, May 4th. For more information go to www.georgia.org/gsbcc

The Get-Ahead Association is providing access to GMEN entrepreneurial clients for banking services through credit unions through out the state. For more information go to www.gettingaheadassoc.org

If you have news about events or other activities at your microenterprise organization, please forward to pcwill@bellsouth.net by the 25th of each month for inclusion in the e-newsletter.