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Deborah Malakoff of VCA to be honored at Eighth Annual Pleiades Award Event

By Gloria Maccaroni

New York - Deborah Malakoff, a 20-year veteran of the optical industry has been selected as this year's recipient of the eighth annual Pleiades Award Event which will be presented by the Optical Women's Association (OWA) on Friday, March 23rd.

Currently Deborah serves as the vice president of Trade Shows for the Vision Council of America, a non-profit association representing eyewear manufacturers. In her role, Malakoff works closely with Reed Exhibitions and the VCA Show and Exhibitor Advisory Committees to establish and direct the long range objectives of the International Vision Expo family of trade shows. She is a member of the International Association of Exhibitions and Events, the Optical Women's Association and the American Society of Association Executives.

Joining the optical industry in 1984, as marketing and visual merchandising manager for Eyselab she led a team of visual merchandisers in the expansion of four stores to a chain of thirty eight optical superstores. She later joined Bob Hillman, where she

served as director of creative services and was part of senior management which helped to execute the new Hillman/Kohan Eyes concept, evolving into ten fashion eyewear superstores.



Deborah Malakoff

Deborah holds a bachelor's degree in both Advertising Design and Marketing from the University of Maryland. In her spare time, she enjoys skiing, golf and traveling.

The Pleiades Award spotlights an individual who has shown commitment to the mission of the OWA by fostering the growth of women in the industry. This award is named for the star cluster Pleiades in the Taurus constellation. The Pleiades is also known as the "Seven Sisters" referring to the seven brightest stars in the cluster.

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL PLEIADES AWARD EVENT

Please join the OWA in recognizing a shining star in the Optical Industry

Deborah Malakoff

Vice President Trade Shows, Vision Council of America

Friday March 23rd, Marchon Showroom, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
8 West 40th Street, 21st Floor (between 5th and 6th Ave), New York City

6:00 PM- 7:30 PM Cocktails and Silent Auction
6:45 PM Award Presentation

This invitation is extended to OWA members and nonmembers. All are welcome.

RSVP by March 19, 2007 to owa@opticalwomen.com

The OWA would like to thank our sponsors

PLATINUM SPONSORS: Essilor, Essilor Laboratories of America, Marchon Eyewear, Safilo USA, Wal-Mart Vision Center

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With special thanks to Marchon Eyewear for providing the venue for this event.

One Minute Mentor: Seven Tips to Make Meetings More Productive

By Sandy Likes

Do you look forward to meetings because objectives are accomplished and there is a positive end result? Or do most of the meetings you attend start late, stray off topic and result in the scheduling of additional meetings in order to discuss the real purpose of the meeting that was just adjourned? Whether you are the person leading the meeting or one of the attendees there are actions you can take to improve the productivity of a meeting.

1. **Have an agenda that clearly states the purpose of the meeting.** It can be a formal agenda that is distributed in advance or it can be an informal statement of topics in the e-mail scheduling the meeting. Be sure to review the purpose of the meeting at the beginning of the meeting.
2. **If pre-reading is required, send out a reminder two days in advance of the meeting.** Hold people accountable for being prepared; ask in the meeting who has read the pre-reading assignment.
3. **Bring current copies of pertinent documents** so everyone can work off of the same version.
4. **Start the meeting on time even if everyone is not there.** People will begin arriving on time if they know you are not going to wait on them.

5. **Have someone responsible for taking minutes of the meeting and creating a responsibility checklist that includes task, due date and person assigned.** Send out the minutes and checklist after the meeting and once again the day before the next scheduled meeting.
6. **Focus the group's attention on the purpose of this meeting.** When people bring up topics that are not on the agenda, write the issue down on a flip chart to be discussed at another time.
7. **Make sure you have the right people at your meeting.** Maybe someone else should be attending because they have information you need or because their projects may be impacted. Maybe some of the people involved don't really need to be there --- they just need to be copied on the minutes and checklist you generate.

As an attendee, you can implement the seven tips to a more productive meeting by being on time, recommending that the meeting get started promptly, confirming the purpose of the meeting, and volunteering to take minutes or help create the responsibility checklist. You get the message. With a friendly spirit of cooperation and accountability, meetings can become a useful tool for getting things accomplished.

Executive Director Now on Board

The Optical Women's Association has seen tremendous growth since its inception in 1997. As we celebrate our 10th year, the mission of enhancing the leadership role of women in the optical industry continues to be our main focus. With continued growth and expansion of services, the need for administrative support for our members and sponsors has also grown.

With this in mind, we are happy to announce the appointment of **Debby Rebischke** to the position of **Executive Director**. Debby has over 30 years experience in communications and marketing in the optical industry. Working closely with the board, Debby will assume administrative duties, be responsible for member and sponsor communications, oversee accounting procedures, and coordinate scheduled meetings and events. Debby's portfolio of experience is a natural fit for the OWA and we are excited to have her on board as part of this association.

Debby can be reached at 612-419-7546 or at drebis@comcast.net. **Please update your file with OWA's new address and contact info. See box below.**

Learn more about the OWA at:

Optical Women's Association
2417 West 105th Street
Bloomington, MN 55431
Call: 612.419.7546

Email: OWA@opticalwomen.com or
drebis@comcast.net

Visit our website at www.opticalwomen.com

To join, contact any Board Member for an application or mail a check to Optical Women's Association for \$125 along with your name, company name, address, e-mail address, and phone and fax numbers.

Note: if more than one person in your company joins, membership is only \$95 per person.

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Pam Wood, L'Amy America

How to Meet 1500 People at Lunch is Networking Topic for New York POWW Event

By Gloria Maccaroni

Yes, you read it correctly, how to meet 1500 people at lunch was the topic of the POWW event sponsored by OWA. The workshop took place on Tuesday evening November 14th at Safilo's showroom in New York and was attended by metro area OWA members and optical industry guests.

Participation at the workshop started at the check in desk, where attendees were given a networking exercise to complete during the reception. The exercise was designed to make it easy to approach and talk to a lot of people in a short period of time. It was suggested that after introductions, you try to find out what you have in common with the other person thru a series of questions. The room was abuzz with chatter and laughter and everyone had the chance to meet many new people in just 30 minutes...

There was a unique range of discoveries from two people learning they both had grandparents from the same small town in Pennsylvania, to two others who had herb gardening in common. Everyone enjoyed the exercise and met many new people!

Corrine McCormack (committee chair of the event) introduced Emily Koltnow the evenings' guest speaker. Emily is a frequent guest on radio and national television with over 50 appearances including: CNN, The Joan Rivers Show, and Good Morning America. She created WIN workshops, a unique session for executive women which features her fun approach to networking and authored the book "Congratulations! You've Been Fired!" Emily is a specialist in career

strategies and founder of Koltnow & Company, an executive recruiting firm.

Emily started the workshop with a few Trivial Pursuit Questions...which immediately triggered audience participation. From the answers to these questions, she demonstrated how easy it is to find a person or service you're looking for by networking and using our people resources.

We were asked to think outside the box by completing a "nine dot" puzzle...sounds easy but it was hard. This exercise made us realize that we know a lot more people than we think we do. For example, the average professional knows at least 300 people. Sounds like a lot? Not really, if you jot down the number of relatives, high school and college friends, people from current and previous jobs, clients, suppliers, professional organizations etc, etc, you will be amazed at the number!

Other networking ideas ~ Keep in mind; networking is the exchange of information. The best way to network is to get involved in the organizations you join. Participate by signing up for the Membership or Events Committee of an organization. When invited to a luncheon or event, make it a point to introduce yourself to others. Stay connected by taking 10 minutes every day to maintain relationships with people.

The evening was truly a success! The OWA would like to thank Safilo for the use of their beautiful showroom and all of the committee members, Corinne McCormack, Jaime LaFrano, Dana Weeks and Gloria Maccaroni for their efforts to introduce POWW to New York.

POWW Event at the OLA was a Leading session!

Industry leader and inspirational speaker, Valerie Manso presented the Leadership program in Orlando, FL



Dana Weeks introduces Valerie Manso



Susan Crawley and Sandy Morgan of Volunteer Optical attend event



Speaker Valerie Manso



John Sexton, Pentax Optical, Jeanine Michalec and Michele Bartlett, Quality Accessories, Inc.

OWA Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

Let the celebration begin! The Optical Women's Association is marking its 10th anniversary with a year long look at the organization's highlights and history. From the organization's founders to the creation of our awards program, we'll share our history and take pride in how we've grown over the years.

While most of us know the Optical Women's Association is a nonprofit organization founded in September 1997 with the mission of supporting and promoting the professional development of women in the optical industry, many of us, don't know the story behind the creation of the group. Over the coming months, we will talk to the founders, long-time members, and new members to share the benefits of the organization and how the mission of enhancing and promoting the leadership role of women in the ophthalmic industry through networking and peer support remains the goal as the group expands and evolves.

Do you know the founding members of the OWA?

The first 13 members were: Linda Little formerly of WECO International; Marge Axelrad, Vision Monday Group; Jean Scott, formerly of Luxottica Group; Lorinda Fraboni, Walman Optical; Christie Constanzo Walker, Frames Data; Audrey Reed, Essilor;

Sonja Hendriks, Optical Software, Lisa Sarbach, (consultant); Val Manso, Optical Dynamics, Susan Elliot, Jobson; Stephanie, DeLong, Eyecare Business; and Susan Polson, National Optronics.

Next time you see one of these ladies, let them know you appreciate their efforts!

Do you know any of the founders who may not be in the optical industry any more? Do you have a story about your experiences with the group that you would like to share? We'd love to include you in the history of the OWA. Please send your thoughts to Amy Spiezio at spiezioaj@lwwvisioncare.com.

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