

THE BEACON

The monthly newsletter of Leadership Cattaraugus

Human Services, Casino topics of discussion

Cattaraugus County Community Action was the scene for the class of 2006's Human Services Day session in October and the Casino played host to Critical Issue Day in November.

The Human Services class made the most of their Halloween date, showering classmates with doughnuts, candy, a jack-o-lantern and a Halloween trivia quiz. The group did an outstanding job of lining up presentations that spanned the spectrum of human service issues from poverty and hunger to disability and disenfranchisement.

The day started with a discussion of poverty in our region from **Cattaraugus County Community Action's CEO Tina Zerbian**. She shared some sobering statistics with the group, including the fact that more than 11,000 of the 83,000 people in this county live in poverty. Tina dispelled several myths about poverty, pointing out that more than half of the people her organization serves are employed, but still in poverty.

During a **tour of Community Action's facility**, class members went through an exercise that gave them an "identity" to role play. Each character represented an individual who may very well live in our community, and who had a unique background and set of circumstances. The exercise put each character through a long series of incidents and situations that necessitated that he/she navigate the various service agencies and public services that are designed to help those in need. The exercise left many in the group feeling exhausted, frustrated, and – in some cases, hopeless.

A rapid-fire "Community Services Presentation" give a broad overview of what is available in the community.

The class heard from **The ReHAbilitation Center's Community Services director Roxanne Padlo**, **Interfaith Caregivers' executive director Julie Wolfe**, **Executive director Linda Riggs from the Center for Family Unity**, the **Department of Social Services' Wendy Bourgeois** and **Gwen Sommerville**, a customer of Community Action's, who provided an in-



Discussing the impact of the Seneca-Allegany Casino on the community are Matt Bull, Rick Moore, Dave Paoletta, Bryan VanBuren, Louis Magnano and Joe Roosa.

valuable insight into how circumstances can conspire to necessitate that average, hard-working citizens sometimes need some temporary assistance.

After a leadership reflection by Kathy Welch, the Critical Issue day began with a talk by **Seneca Nation representative Bob Pierce** on the casino from a native perspective. **Seneca Gaming Corporation PR manager Phil Pantano** and **Seneca Allegany Casino marketing assistant director Bryan VanBuren** gave a comprehensive overview of all three Seneca casino operations and plans, and led an informative tour of the casino facilities.

After lunch at the casino's renowned buffet, an animated and informative **Dr. Joe Kelly** gave a legal and academic talk on "Gambling & Casinos in New York."

The group's final panel discussion featured **Salamanca School Superintendent Rick Moore**, **Matt Bull from the Salamanca IDA**, local business developers **Louis Magnano** and **Joe Roosa**, **Bryan VanBuren**, and **Salamanca city planner Dave Paoletta**.



Help us identify future leaders

Jay Sorokes, marketing chairperson



As my feet straddled the faded yellow centerlines of North Union Street amidst the swarm of grade school eyes peering at THE MAN, Santa Claus, with visions of a Best Buy or Wal-Mart store under their tree; I realized that my fellow leadership graduate John Sayegh and his GOACC team had pulled off another Christmas spectacular for the kids of the Olean Area. It also brought to my mind that even the most disenchanting holiday grinch would find a little larger heart just by walking around Lincoln Park this holiday season. It has been several years since I had the opportunity to witness the lights come on in Olean. Typically, the lights of Washington D.C. or more recently Huntsville, Alabama are part of my Thanksgiving tradition, but it was actually a pleasant opportunity for my family to spend time in Olean.

The last two months of the year are a great opportunity for entertaining family, friends, and neighbors, and it's a good time to reflect on the previous year. For the class of 2006, it's an occasion to enjoy the final session and anticipate graduation. December is also a time to prepare for the new year, and with a new calendar year an opportunity to fill in an ambitious set of resolutions. As a member of the class of 2004, and the chairman of the LC Marketing Committee, December is a key month for LC to establish membership for the class of 2007.

As LC graduates and alumni you have a strong understanding of the critical issues that face Cattaraugus County. There are probably a few items on the critical issue list that you are already involved with. As quick as you are to work to improve the quality of life in Cattaraugus County, you also recognize the amount of work associated with improving the issues in front of us. You understand the steps that need to be taken, but you know we will all need a few additional quality leaders to help us attain our goals.

The most important step to attaining these quality leaders is by soliciting those people around us that might be willing to join Leadership Cattaraugus in 2007. Just as you were tapped on the shoulder, or awakened to the prospect of becoming a Leadership Cattaraugus participant; it is now your turn to look at your friends, co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances and family as members of the next LC class. So as you write and fill your holiday lists, make one more list of five people you feel would be a positive influence on our area as a graduate of Leadership Cattaraugus. Send them a quick e-mail with a link to the LC website. Bring it up in the next conversation you have with them. Together, we can spread the news that the best resolution a person can make is not to relinquish a bad habit, but to enrich his or herself as a leader on a mission to make Cattaraugus County appealing to future business development and community enhancements.

Enjoy your holidays, and enjoy the treasures of Cattaraugus County.

Class / Alumni news

Congratulations to Brian Carlson, CEO of the Olean Medical Group, and Leadership Cattaraugus alum from the Class of 2005. Brian was named to *Business First's* Top 40 leaders under 40 in Western New York, and was honored at a luncheon in November.



If you have some news or information you'd like to share with your Leadership Cattaraugus colleagues in The Beacon, please use the contact information on the bottom of the newsletter.

Class of 2006

- Dan Antonioli
Cutco Cutlery Corporation
 - Jill Ballard
Jamestown Community College
 - Scott Brechbuehl
Community Bank, NA
 - Jeanne Finch
Jamestown Community College
 - Robert Forness
Olean General Hospital
 - Jodi Fuller
Cattaraugus Community Action
 - Jill Gray
St. Bonaventure University
 - Emily Hunt
Dresser Rand Company
 - Ryan Hunt
Dresser Rand Company
 - Robin Hurlburt
St. Bonaventure University
 - Lugene Inzana
Olean General Hospital
 - Darrell Klute
The ReHAbilitation Center
 - Scott Kruse
Alcas Corporation
 - Risa Michienzi
Alcas Corporation
 - Jackie Norton
Meridian Professional Services
 - Nancy Phillips
Catt Co. Council on Alcoholism
 - Pam Witter
Home Care & Hospice
 - Joni Simcick
Cattaraugus County Bank
 - Robert Smith
MJW Technical Services
 - Judy Styles
The Chuckwagon Restaurant
 - Melody Zampogna
Home Care & Hospice
- Darrell Klute, editor