

## Women in Leadership Seminar

March 31, 2007  
Highlights



**Guest speaker: Stacey Mayo: "Visionary Women: Lessons from Remarkable People" – Celebrating Women's History Month – Ms. Mayo, founder of the Center for Balanced Living, sought after consultant and speaker. Profiled on CBS Evening News, in Forbes & the WSJ; Author of "I Can't Believe I Get Paid to Do This." AKA "The Dream Queen."**

Stacey:

"My goal for myself and others: to live authentically. This is an evolutionary process which comes as you explore and change and grow ... and as you come to understand what is right for you. Start by looking at where you are now."

Personal story: "I was raised with one brother. My family instilled achievement in both of us – almost to the point of overdrive."

"In my early career, I was in the Human Resources role in a corporate environment. I had a life-altering experience when I attended a Stephen Covey program and later, became certified as a "7 Habits of Highly Successful People" facilitator. All of this training helped me to get clearer on what's really important to me. I realized that I wanted something different for myself and I wanted to help others achieve the same for themselves."

"For years my goal was to become VP of HR, it was my dream. I got the promotion and then began to realize, it actually wasn't my real dream. I then worked myself out of the corporate world and into my own world – in order to create the Center for Balanced Living. That was 12 years ago....and now I never want another (corporate) job!"

"It was 1995 when I conceived and birthed the Center. I also entered my second (and last!) marriage and made my husband my #1 priority ...in addition to our 2 golden retrievers! The role that I have now, personally and professionally, is completely fulfilling. Professionally, I coach others to achieve their dreams as well."

"For a long time, I knew I wanted to write a book, but it took 3 versions to get it right. The premise is that I would interview people around the country about how they had achieved their dreams, overcome obstacles, and become successful in their own terms. I didn't focus on people who hadn't made it ("starving artists") because I didn't want to be like them. I wanted to thrive and prosper. So I identified people who excelled at what they did. From these interviews and the experiences of these individuals, I identified a number of common factors, success principles."

"For example - All of them were living a life that's true for them, not about what they're doing, but being true to who they are. All had courage in the face of obstacles. All fit their life around their priorities, not the other way around".

"In the book are many examples including Stacy Allison: the first woman to climb Mt. Everest...who knew what she must do after first experiencing utter exhilaration the very first time she went climbing. For her, scaling the highest mountains in the world was almost a spiritual calling."

"Another example in the book: a single mom who went from welfare to millionaire. She had plenty of obstacles, but decided there were no 'Yeah buts' for her. Zero blocks is what I call getting rid of the obstacles."

"As I reflect on my life now, there's no doubt where the desire to coach others to achieve their dreams comes from. It's from my own early life experiences, my mother and father. My father was always the type person who provided for his family but he didn't necessarily love what he did for a living. My mother always encouraged him to stick to it, though, because the family needed the income. I will always remember him calling me when I was older, and saying, 'Stacey, I have X number of days before I retire.' He had put aside his passion to raise a family."

"When he actually retired, something happened. At 65, he rediscovered a talent, a passion for 3 dimensional carvings. His happiness returned and he did very well. Unfortunately a few years later he became ill and passed away. At least I know he found happiness, his true calling, at the end of his life and that has been an inspiration to me."

**Group Discussion:** Stacey: "What are the circumstances that may be keeping you from something? Your dream? As we think about Women's History Month, and our SHEroes, I'd like to also ask the question: What does that mean to you?"

Participant 1: "SHEroes are the women who created the paths that we (all women) have benefited from."

Participant 2: "A SHEro is a 'go to person' - a person who connects others."

Participant 3: "I think of a SHEro as a kind of educator, a guide, a mentor."

Participant 4: "A SHEro is someone who pursues a non-traditional role."

Participant 5: A SHEro is someone who overcomes obstacles, almost insurmountable obstacles. They're the people who put in 'all in the game.'"

Participant 6: Marcia Taylor, founder and CEO of Bennett International Group – the number 1 woman-owned business in Georgia – is a definite SHEro. As a leader, she's compassionate yet tough; she's got heart & soul; she's empathetic. She's not afraid to say to her employees, 'I love you.'

Participant 7: "Some of my SHEros are the people who do things behind the scenes or help others do what they do, etc."

Participant 8: My mother is my SHEro. I've had so many more advantages than she ever had and she always told me, 'There's nothing you can't accomplish if you go for it.'

Participant 9: "Actually, I've had men who supported and mentored me who were my "SHEros" or heros too."

Participant 10: "I think of women who step out on faith as SHEros...women who start their own businesses or enterprises without a safety net. I used to start a new business everyday ...in my head! So many of us are too fearful...not of failure, but of success! "

Stacey Mayo: "There's also the tendency to think you should figure it all out yourself. Not true. There are lots of people, other women, etc. – coaches like me – who can help you figure it out and learn from their experiences and expertise."

Participant 11: "I guess you could say that – I've begun to look at myself as a SHEro. I grew up in a family where there wasn't much encouragement for achieving dreams or even for getting a good education. I also was molested by a family member. Leaving home after high school, I went into the military. While I had some good experiences, I was raped twice during my 8 years of service. These are some of the obstacles I have had to / am still working to overcome. But now, I have a position with a growing company, I've completed both my undergraduate and my masters degree and ... I'm working on my doctorate in international business. It isn't easy for me to share my story, but I think it's part of the healing process. It gives me greater confidence to go forward and be my own SHEro!"