

Connections to Success Graduate Gives Back



By: Amie Bossi

Five years ago, Anne Murray found herself experiencing legal issues due to poor choices she had made. "I was at a really low point in my life. My life was out of control and like a whirlwind. I was mentally, physically and emotionally stressed and felt only hopelessness," she says. "Then Connections to Success (CtS) came into my life."

Anne began participating in all of the programs that CtS had to offer. "I was in the right place at the right time," Anne says at being introduced to CtS. "It was just the push I needed to make a change in my life."

Anne's first experience was through the Personal and Professional Development class where she explored topics such as communication skills, resume writing, positive first impressions and more. She then worked closely with a CtS Resource Specialist to land employment. "I was thrilled to get a job. I couldn't have done it without CtS' support," she says. She was matched with a mentor team that provided guidance and encouragement along her journey.

When the opportunity arose for Anne to participate in an entrepreneurship class, she eagerly signed up. She plans to start her own business – a men's only medical clothing line.

A big obstacle for Anne was transportation. When she received a car through the Wheels for Success program, it proved to be a lifesaver. "I was finally able to make it to and from work, get my kids to school and also take them to other fun places."

The financial education she received through the Wise Up program proved invaluable to Anne. She learned about saving money, budgeting and planning for her future. After being a Professional Women's Group (PWG) member for four years, she enrolled in the Leading Ladies Leadership program, which enabled her to learn and perfect her leadership skills.

Anne is experiencing the opportunity to practice these leadership skills as a member of the H.O.P.E. – Helping Others Pursue Excellence - Leadership Summit. She regularly attends planning meetings and serves on many subcommittees. She'll also model in

other women who have recently transitioned into the workforce.

This year's theme is a High Tea and will be held at the Ritz Carlton on Saturday, July 18th 2009 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The women are encouraged to bring their own special tea cup for "tea time" where they'll enjoy various tea cakes, scones and a variety of different teas. Guest speakers will present interactive workshops covering topics ranging from stress relief to balancing life and family. The featured speaker for the day is Lethia Owens of Lethia Owens International.

The day culminates in a fashion show, "Hatitude with an Attitude" and is being led by Sandra McClendon, PWG member and Leading Lady graduate. Fellow Leading Ladies will model hats for every occasion. The fashion show subcommittee consists of PWG members, and mentorship is provided by Lethia Owens.

"This year's H.O.P.E. Summit is going to be very special. We are proud that PWG members are such a critical part of the planning process and are working alongside other community volunteers to help us put on this event," says Kathy Lambert, CtS Co-Director.

There are only 150 tickets available for this event. Sponsorship opportunities are still available at all levels.

Contact Amie at (314)333-4490, ext. 110 or abossi@connectionsto-success.org for more information regarding the event.

In addition to volunteering for CtS, Anne recently became a mentor for CWIT (Center for Women in Transit) to women that are in the judicial system for nonviolent crimes.

The H.O.P.E. Summit planning committee is the perfect opportunity for Anne to give back to the organization that has been instrumental in changing her life. She says, "CtS is so inspirational and encouraging. I feel that I am unique and that anything I set my mind to do I can achieve. CtS gives you that special feeling that it's all about YOU regardless of your past mistakes and setbacks in life. CtS has proven that I AM POWERFUL BEYOND MEASURE. My life today is manageable and worth living. I no longer feel like a basket case. I have grown so much with the guidance of CtS. I look back at where I started to where I am now and I honestly don't know where or what my life would be like today if CtS had not been there."



Anne Murray graduating from the Wise Up Program.

the fashion show that occurs at the end of the event.

The H.O.P.E. Summit is the third annual event designed as a day of encouragement, inspiration, support, skills training and networking gathering for CtS clients, PWG members and



PWG Members

CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS
Break the cycle of poverty one family at a time
(314)333-4490

