

Women in business need strong support network



Arundi Venkayya Cox

SuperMom is a myth, a girlfriend reminded me shortly after I had my daughters.

It's an impossible status to achieve, she said. If things are going well at work, then they aren't running smoothly at home. If they are running well at home, then it's difficult to

stay caught up at work, was her assessment.

I was surprised to hear her comments. But I've fallen back on them — and more importantly on her and many other friends — while trying to balance work and home responsibilities.

And while I'm fortunate to have a strong support network, not all women in business have that.

It's a need that Jeanne Porter identified after going through the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute a few years ago.

The Davidson institute was dedicated to getting women leaders in politics. But Porter, whose day job is director of the Warren County Court Appointed Special Advocate program, saw a broader application for women in business.

"I watched during that time the camaraderie, the bonding between women," she said. "I thought this would be great for women in general in business.

"So we would have a group of women who would support women. It's not just women in leadership. It's women from the home-based business to the CEO. It's a group that would reach the whole scale of women."

Porter said she wanted to start a group that would help women, "Believe in who they are and what they do."

Porter, who has five children and eight grandchildren, has been underwriting the expenses of the group since starting it last spring. The group has monthly lunch gatherings at the Dayton Women's Club, which include speakers and networking. Recently, they have added Hot Topics — informal, business roundtable discussions over coffee. The group also offers "Winstitutes," which are leadership educational pieces four times a year.

On June 17, Women in Business Networking will present its second annual leadership conference. The conference will feature workshops and a women of success panel.

"I really like empowering women," Porter said. "I want them to walk away feeling good about themselves and what they are doing.

"It's been a joy for me. It's amazing — some of the women who are out there and what they do."

For more information about the Women in Business Networking Leadership Conference, visit www.wibnleadership.com. For more information about Women in Business Networking, visit www.womeninbusinessnetworking.com.

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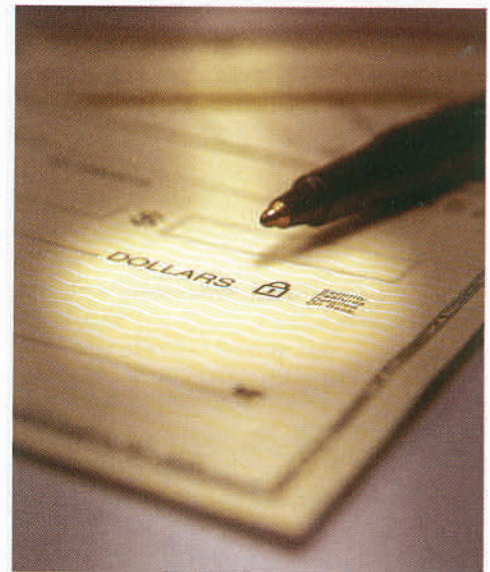
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