

Alumni Connection

SUMMER 2010

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF SC4

Gerald Kramer
Port Huron Township
Class of 1972



Alumna profile: Carrie Heidemann Charlick Entrepreneur establishes multimillion-dollar business

Self-confidence and an education in business have helped SC4 alumna Carrie Heidemann Charlick turn a bright idea into a multimillion-dollar business.

Charlick of West Bloomfield is chief executive officer of Essential Bodywear, a company she co-founded in 2003 with business partner and company President Marcia Negro.

Essential Bodywear's mission is to revolutionize the way women buy bodywear.

"We started with an idea of bringing bra shopping and underwear shopping to home parties," Charlick said.

The idea began with \$500 contributed by Charlick and Negro. Today, the business has grown to \$4.3 million in annual sales.

It has been featured on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Today Show* and *What Not to Wear*.

In April, Essential Bodywear was named one of the 2010 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch, presented by Michigan Celebrates Small Business.

Charlick was raised in Port Huron and chose SC4 because it was close to home. She earned her associate degree in marketing in 1987.



SC4 alumna Carrie Heidemann Charlick's Essential Bodywear company has been featured on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Today Show* and *What Not to Wear*.

She said SC4 introduced her to valuable business concepts.

"I remember reading a textbook chapter about direct selling," she said. That was the basis of her new business nearly 20 years later.

Charlick's career has included management and leadership roles in business and retail, including a business start-up venture. She was inspired by the entrepreneurship attitude.

"I never want to look back and say, 'woulda, coulda, shoulda,'" she said.

See 'Business,' continued on Page 4

Message from the alumni president

For many people, SC4 is the first step to the rest of their work life achievements. You've been there, as I have.

On Tuesday, Aug. 3, SC4 will ask voters in the college district to renew the college's four-year, 0.4951-mill operating millage.

As an alumnus, you know how important

SC4 is in the lives of people every day. The college is asking for a renewal — not an increase — and that renewal will make a difference in thousands of lives every year.

SC4 will use these funds to:



Denise M. Brooks

○ Maintain and expand the job

training and retraining that is crucial for economic development and maintaining the quality of life for St. Clair County residents.

○ Preserve and expand transfer and occupational programs to meet student and community needs.

○ Expand bachelor's degree and master's degree offerings accessible locally through SC4's University Center partners.

○ Keep pace with and provide the technology, equipment and buildings needed to remain competitive, meet instructional and student needs, and stay ahead of industry trends to keep students well-prepared for the work force.

The millage renewal is even more important in this economy — as the community pulls together to create and implement a regional economic development strategic plan through which the college will play a pivotal role. To do that, it will take the support of the community in this challenging environment.

If you live in the college district, please be sure to vote.

For details, visit www.sc4.edu/millage.



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www.facebook.com/followSC4

Keep up to date with what's happening at SC4 and with the SC4 Alumni Association.

Message from the college president

The first half of 2010 has brought exciting changes to benefit our students and community.

SC4 has been accepted into Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count. This organization will help the college



Dr. Kevin A. Pollock

identify barriers that prevent students from succeeding. Then, Achieving the Dream will assist SC4 in developing creative solutions in removing those barriers.

Achieving the Dream will help SC4 in our responsibility of

educating our community and our role in improving the local economy. SC4 was one of only 26 community colleges across the nation admitted this year. SC4 is among a select group of more than 130 institutions reaching more than 1 million students.

We've also improved students' access to higher education degrees. We signed the St.Clair2Oakland partnership — also known as SC2O — in April. This partnership allows students to take classes at SC4 and Oakland University at the same time.

Students accepted into the program can concurrently take classes at any SC4 location; any Oakland campus; and online from both SC4 and Oakland. This partnership offers other benefits, too, including coordinated financial aid and advising services.

SC4 is preparing students for new futures thanks to three alternative energy associate degrees to debut this fall. The degrees — Architectural Design/Green Building, Facility and Energy Management, and Renewable and Alternative Energy Technology — will prepare our next generation of green worker.

I'd like to welcome the 650 new members of our alumni association who graduated from SC4 in May. They join an association that continues to be active on campus and in the community. This year was no different with work including the annual Golf Classic, which raised money to benefit student scholarships.

Our alumni serve as ambassadors of SC4. We encourage recent and longtime alumni to remain active at SC4, through alumni events or at college events throughout the year.



Lester Killion gives the student keynote address at SC4's 86th Commencement on May 7. More than 650 students were eligible to graduate. Details: www.sc4.edu/commencement2010



Rasha and Dr. Walid Demashkieh of Fort Gratiot enjoy the 2009 SC4 Foundation Red Carpet Affair. The 2010 event, which raises money to support the college, is set for 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6. Details: www.sc4.edu/redcarpet. In addition, the SC4 Foundation has awarded \$54,960 from seven of its scholarship funds to 36 students for the 2010-11 academic year at SC4.



SC4 President Dr. Kevin A. Pollock talks to reporters in April after announcing the St.Clair2Oakland (SC2O) concurrent enrollment program with Oakland University. Details: www.oakland.edu/sc2o



From left, Jennifer Doumanian of Canton and Lynn Alexander of St. Clair watch Shirley Dankow of Trenton tee off during the 22nd annual SC4 Alumni Association Golf Classic in June. The event raised more than \$22,000 for alumni projects, including scholarships. Details: www.sc4.edu/golfclassic



SC4 Alumni Association members enjoy dinner in Stratford, Ontario, in 2009. Seats are available for the annual bus trip Saturday, Sept. 11. The trip includes a theatre performance of *Evita* and dinner. Cost is \$110 per person. Tickets: Debbie Sta Cruz, (810) 989-5760 or dstacruz@sc4.edu



SC4 in April was accepted into Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count. The organization will help SC4 identify and remove barriers that prevent students from succeeding.

SC4 Professor Don Reuba, left, explains one of SC4's new green roofs. SC4 this fall is debuting three new alternative energy associate degrees. Details: www.sc4.edu/energy



The SC4 Alumni Association in 2009-10 granted \$1,000 scholarships to seven SC4 students, including Shelby Righenburg of Kimball Township.



SC4 Alumni Association members are encouraged to submit nominees for the Distinguished Alumni of the Year award. The 2009 winner was Tom Coleman of Fort Gratiot, pictured here with wife Nanci Jane. This year's award will be presented at the 2010 alumni annual meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, at Quay Street Brewing Co. in Port Huron. Details: www.sc4.edu/alumni



Mark your calendar

September

11 - Alumni Stratford trip:

Evita

16 - Free Noon Concert

October

15-17 - Theatre:

Almost, Maine

19 - College Night

21 - Free Noon Concert

23 - SC4 Symphonic Band Concert

November

6 - SC4 Foundation Red Carpet Affair

18 - Free Noon Concert

18 - Alumni annual meeting

December

3-5 - Theatre:

The Gifts of the Magi

9 - Free Noon Concert

18 - SC4 Symphonic Band Concert

January

17 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration

27 - Free Noon Concert

February

5 - Regional High School Quiz Bowl

12 - Jazz & Dessert

19 - SC4 Symphonic Band Concert

24 - Free Noon Concert

March

25-27 - Theatre: *Beau Jest*

31 - Free Noon Concert

April

2 - Free College Day

14 - Free Noon Concert

16 - SC4 Symphonic Band Concert

21 - Free Noon Concert

24 - *Patterns* Reception

May

6 - Commencement

21 - Children's theatre: *The Trial of Goldilocks*

Details:

www.sc4.edu/events

Tell us how you're doing

We'd love to hear about new appointments, degrees earned, job promotions and other events in your life. You also can complete this form, and attach digital photographs, at www.sc4.edu/alumni.

Name _____

Name while at SC4 (if different) _____

Home address _____

City, state, ZIP _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____

E-mail address _____ Work phone _____

What's new? (use a separate sheet if necessary) _____

I would like to (check as many you wish):

- Help out at alumni events.
- Get information about becoming a mentor for an SC4 student.
- Financially support the alumni association.

Mail to:

Debbie Sta Cruz
Advancement and Alumni Specialist
St. Clair County Community College
P.O. Box 5015
Port Huron, MI 48061-5015

From Page 1: Business

She said many women wear undergarments that don't fit properly because of poor customer service. They don't enjoy shopping for bras and panties, Charlick said, because the experience in stores isn't enjoyable or supportive.

Essential Bodywear's formula is to provide trained representatives offering undergarment sales in people's homes.

"This is what people are craving," Charlick said. "They want the customer service; they want the attention."

The business did \$60,000 in sales in the first six months and has increased every year since.

"Women want to feel good," Charlick said. "We give them the star treatment."

Essential Bodywear is headquartered in Oakland County's Commerce Township and employs 12 office staff. The business has more than 300 representatives throughout the United States selling products through in-home parties.

Charlick said SC4 students and graduates should jump at opportunities and have confidence in their decisions.

"If you see a need and you think you can fill it, go for it," she said. "Move forward. Take a chance. With the job market we have right now, entrepreneurship is a great option."

Charlick and her husband, Peter, have two sons, Alex, 16, and Matthew, 14, and a daughter, Katie Rose, 9.

To read more stories about SC4 alumni, visit www.sc4.edu/alumniprofiles.

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St. Clair County Community College

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Alumni Connection is a publication of the SC4 Alumni Association and SC4's Office of College Advancement and Alumni Relations. For details, call Shawn Starkey at (810) 989-5767.



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