

Career support network for women

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Altered Possibilities offers a variety of services for women looking to enter the working world.

After initial consultations, a client will work with an image coach, a career coach and a life coach.

The image coach, Brandner, will help prepare them by selecting an appropriate outfit for a job interview. A career coach helps refine their interview skills and a life coach teaches women how to maintain a job and balance it with the responsibilities of home life, Milec said.

Brandner and Milec are joined by a small team of

volunteers who help with co-ordinating events, secretarial jobs and preparing for life skills classes, which will be offered in January.

"We're still building the team," Milec said.

Milec said a client will start by participating in an existing program available to women in the community providing basic support to help find jobs.

"Altered Possibilities basically picks up where those programs stop," Milec said. "We're involved in the refining of skills. We're just helping them get that one-up as an opportunity to go into a potential employer and present themselves in a manner that may give them

an advantage over another candidate for the job."

Once a client has obtained a job, they will receive a five-day wardrobe from Brandner.

The program held a suit drive last month where businesses and residents in Kingsville were asked to donate outfits.

Currently, Altered Possibilities is available to women in Essex County, but Milec says the program will be looking into outside areas as well.

"I found that the county has less than Windsor in terms of services available," Milec said. "So, we see the bigger need to be first in the county to provide the service."

Brandner says the program helps to boost women's self-image and provide confidence.

"It better their lifestyles to be more positive and influential," she said. "Women can make huge differences if they're confident in who they are and in what they're doing."

To find out more about Altered Possibilities, call Monica Brandner at 519-919-1327.

Recycling less effective in the workplace

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Many people who regularly recycle at home make less of an effort to carry on the habit at work, said Heather Taylor of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority.

During a demonstration for Essex Town Hall employees Nov. 2, Taylor, EWSWA's special projects co-ordinator, made a number of suggestions to help improve recycling in the workplace.

"We find people at work are throwing pop cans and recyclables into the garbage, where they'd never do that at home," Taylor said.

The theme of the workshop was, "You do it at home, so don't stop just because you are at work."

It was the third of four workshops EWSWA has organized for municipal employees.

In the summer, EWSWA supplied several municipal buildings with smaller blue and red recycling boxes meant to be kept near desks or garbage cans.

Now, employees of Memorial Arena, Essex Town Hall and the local fire stations have the tools to improve their recycling habits, Taylor said.

The next step is to ensure employees are putting the right things into each blue and red box.

"Recycling comes down to education, awareness and keeping up to date with what can go in the box," Taylor said during the demonstration. "People are



Heather Taylor, special projects co-ordinator for the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority, demonstrates the "check the neck" recycling exercise during a workshop at Essex Town Hall Nov. 2. Taylor said if the neck of a plastic bottle is smaller than its base, it's recyclable.

trying to participate but they're not sure what can go in."

Taylor said 75 percent of Essex County residents recycle, but not all recyclables are finding their way to the boxes and much of it ends up in the garbage.

"Very little office waste is actual garbage," Taylor said. She added that there are common misconceptions that materials such as window envelopes and stapled paper aren't recyclable. "If you're throwing

paper into the garbage, you might as well be throwing a tree away," she said.

Taylor has even added a fourth 'R' to the reduce, reuse and recycle philosophy - refuse.

"It's an easy thing we can all do," she said. "For example, if you're buying an item from the store - the clerk doesn't need to put it in a bag. If everybody in Essex did that, there'd be a huge reduction in waste."

Last year, EWSWA recycled more than 50,000 tonnes of materials, Taylor noted. But there is still more educating to be done, she said.

"We have to get out of the idea that some of these things are garbage," Taylor said of various paper materials that are often not recycled. "They're resources. The definition of garbage is something that is no longer usable."

The province has introduced regulations for a 60 percent diversion rate among recyclables in each municipality.

Currently, Windsor-Essex County has about a 30 to 35 percent rate, Taylor said.

To increase rates, Taylor suggests creating a waste audit and recycling guideline in workplaces.

Town of Essex Director of Parks and Recreation Doug Sweet was on hand for the demonstration.

"We're trying to be leaders of the recycling program in the municipality," he said.

The next EWSWA workshop will take place Nov. 15 at the Harrow Arena.

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