

**In The  
Spotlight**

**WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES GROWING –  
REPRESENT VITAL COMPONENT OF U.S. ECONOMY**

When it comes to the world of small business, it is no longer a man's world. Women have come a very long way in a very short time, according to the study *Women-Owned Businesses in 2004: Trends in the U.S. and 50 States*.

The study funded by Wells Fargo and published by the Center for Women's Business Research, represents the most comprehensive report in more than a decade on the critical and substantive role women play throughout the small business community and the overall U.S. economy. According to the findings:

- ★ Women are involved in every facet and segment of U.S. industry including services, retail, finance, insurance, real estate, and construction. The greatest growth has been in

nontraditional industries such as transportation, public utilities, and agriculture.



- ★ Nearly half of all privately held firms in the United States are 50% or more women-owned.
- ★ These firms generate \$2.46 trillion in sales and employ 19.1 million people.
- ★ Women-owned firms spend

\$103 billion annually on such items as information technology, telecommunications, human resources, and shipping.

Maura Donahue, VP, Donahue-Favret Contractors, Inc. and Chair of the US Chamber's Small Business Council applauds the recent and ongoing success of women in business. "Women-owned businesses have been making a vital contribution to the U.S. economy for years, so their level of success is not as surprising as it is heartening." She continues, "The competence level of business women has always been high. It is good to see that the confidence level has obviously caught up."

This month, the Job Force Board is spotlighting some of our region's outstanding women in business.

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**August 20  
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00)**  
Select Realty  
Call Select Realty for more information  
(906) 228-2772

**August 20  
Lunch with the Governor**  
U.P. State Fairgrounds  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

**August 25  
Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)**  
Gelina and Associates  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

**September 13  
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00)**  
Marquette County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Call the Lake Superior Community Partnership for more information  
(906) 226-6591

**September 28  
Business After Hours (5:00-6:30) C.T.**  
Michigan Works! The Job Force Board  
Locations: Riverside Country Club  
Call River Cities Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 863-2679

**September 29  
Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)**  
Michigan Works! The Job Force Board  
Location: Log Cabin  
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information  
(906) 786-2192

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**COMMITMENT TO QUALITY:  
THE SECRET TO SUCCESS OF M. TAVERNINI & ASSOCIATES**

Like many of the clients she represents, Mary Tavernini's advertising and public relations firm is a success story.

Started five years ago in a small Marquette apartment, M. Tavernini & Associates, "At Your Service!" was just



*Mary Tavernini, front, with three employees she recently hired through Michigan Works!: April Vivian, Graphic Designer; Shawn Curtin, Graphic Designer; and Steve Gonyou, Web Application Developer.*

Tavernini at first. The firm now boasts a staff of nine serving the needs of more than 600 clients throughout the Upper Peninsula and beyond.

The kinds of services the agency offers has expanded as well, to include business consulting, graphic design, printing, research, e-commerce solutions, Web design and marketing management. An in-house video production company, La Dolce Video, creates televi-

sion advertisements and full-feature videos.

Despite success that might leave others satisfied, Tavernini constantly strives to offer her clients more. "As our business grows, we don't just stop and say we have as much business as we need," Tavernini said. "I want this to be as far reaching as possible."

Beginning her career as an entrepreneur in her hometown of Marquette, and later drawn to the burgeoning world of telecommunications, Tavernini realized that helping other businesses achieve their goals was the work she was destined to do.

Tavernini surrounds herself with employees who share her vision of customer satisfaction and attention to detail. As our Web business and our design team grew, we needed people right away and we needed the best," Tavernini said. "We turned to Michigan Works! and found amazing people."

Tavernini said her team's work has

always drawn compliments from clients. As her business has matured, the compliments just get better and better. "If it's absolutely critical, if it has to be the best and if it has to be given to someone who won't drop the ball, they're turning to us," she explains. "They say, 'call the MTA team,' and they know it will be done right."

## DR. TAWNI FERRARINI GROWS THE U.P. ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT!



**Tawni Ferrarini**, an Associate Professor of Economics, serves as the Director for the Center for Economic Education at Northern Michigan University (NMU-CEE). Her NMU-CEE charges include developing, coordinating, implementing and evaluating programs intended to advance the understanding of marketplace economics and entrepreneurship. The 2004-2005 programs include graduate credit courses on how to integrate economics across the K-12 curriculum; online workshops for K-12 educators on Virtual Economics™; professional development offerings on how to meet Michigan Social Studies Standards and Benchmarks through Marketplace Economics and Entrepreneurship and the Stock Market Game™.

In June of 2004, the NMU-CEE, the Job Force Board, Northern Initiatives and Marquette Alger Regional Educational Services (MARESA) brought twenty six individuals into a summer institute to develop plans to infuse marketplace economics and entrepreneurship

into classrooms, community activities, 4H programs and local businesses throughout the 2004-5 academic year. As the academic year progresses, Dr. Ferrarini will meet with the NMU-CEE Advisory Board to report on program progress, seek advice on to best meet the needs of educators and members of the U.P. community and solicit ideas on how to improve the Center.

Dr. Ferrarini recruits and coordinates the efforts of Developmental Economic Education Partners (DEEP) – a network designed to inform K - 1 2 schools about opportunities in economic education in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, the state of Michigan, the U.S. and other countries. In 2002-2003, the National Association of Economic Educators and the National Council on Economic Education honored Dr. Ferrarini with the "Rookie of the Year Award." She was recognized for "hitting the ground run-



ning and taking up the challenge of providing economic education program or services" in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan – an area rich in natural resources but challenged by rural-oriented markets. Her NMU-CEE efforts and academic research in economic education and the diffusion of technology then and now are targeted to assist various educational, professional, and community groups in identifying and seizing those opportunities promising to grow and develop their schools, organizations, communities and local economies. Parties interested in learning more about the NMU-CEE network can contact her by email at [cee@nmu.edu](mailto:cee@nmu.edu), by telephone NMU-CEE, 1401 Presque Isle Avenue, at 906.227.1218, or by postal mail at Marquette, MI 49855.



*Tawni Ferrarini, an Associate Professor of Economics, serves as the Director for the Center for Economic Education at Northern Michigan University (NMU-CEE).*

## KAREN WIDMAR EXCELS AT CLIENT CENTERED MARKETING SOLUTIONS

There was a time when Chatham, Michigan was known primarily for its co-op store. That all started to change in 1997 when **Karen and Scott Widmar** opened

Geoglyphics. Since then Chatham has been headquarters to one of the largest full service advertising and marketing firms servicing not only the Upper Peninsula, but it also boasts a portfolio of clients from around the world!

The Widmar's firm is actually made up of three distinct divisions, which are integrated to meet their client's needs. *Productsbygeo.com* offers etched glass and crystal products as well as customized embroidery, screen printing, and banners. *Adventures in Advertising* provides imprinted promotional materials to build brand identity and for tradeshows. Finally, *Boomerang Marketing* according to Karen is "a full-service integrated marketing communications firm. We conduct market research, create the strategy to hit our client's target audience, and implement the strategy."

Karen Widmar brings her years of experience in non-profit healthcare and retail marketing to her clients as she travels across the Upper Peninsula. In larger

markets, the client typically comes to the advertising firm. However, her door-to-door service provides valuable insight into the firm, which allows Boomerang Marketing to develop an appropriate marketing strategy. "I really like getting out and being in our clients' environments. It gives us a better perspective. I get to listen to their employees and experience what their customers experience when they walk in," according to Widmar.

Even though Karen, Scott, and their staff of marketing professionals are often focused on their clients needs, they still value community service and have made a corporate commitment to be involved in the communities in which they work and live. According to Karen, "many of us serve on boards for local governments, nonprofit or community groups. We volunteer and support as many causes as possible."

One of Karen's passions is being involved with community and economic development. Karen has been involved with local Chambers of Commerce since she started her career in retail marketing. Today she is involved in economic development across the Upper Peninsula. She is currently the vice president of the Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alli-

ance. The Job Force Board is a member and active supporter of UPEDA. The UPEDA is hosting the Cool UP Summit in August. "I believe the U.P. economy can grow with a well planned mix of tourism, retail and manufacturing. The upcoming Cool UP Summit is going to bring all three of these industries together, as well as other community stakeholders. Hopefully everyone will be able to walk away saying, 'Hey, we can have a cool community in the U.P.'", according to Widmar.

When Karen and her husband Scott can get away from their business for awhile, they truly enjoy the Upper Peninsula lifestyle. They operate a small hobby farm in Chatham, which is known for its llamas, and she is pursuing a new perennial garden. However, due to the amount of time on the road, she often finds time to mix business with pleasure. "With all the traveling I do, I get to play a lot of the U.P. golf courses. Someday I will be able to say I've played them all, but I think I need a few more years."

To learn more about Boomerang Marketing and Adventures in Advertising visit them on the web at [www.aiaboomerang.com](http://www.aiaboomerang.com), and to learn more about Geoglyphics visit them at [Productsbygeo.com](http://Productsbygeo.com) or call (888) 878-5920.



*Karen Widmar of Geoglyphics with her puppy Bocha.*

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# JULIE BISHOP'S PROSERV: PROFESSIONALS SERVING BUSINESS

**Julie Bishop**, established her business ProServ, Inc in January of 1995. The word ProServ is derived from the phrase "Professionals Serving Business". The organization was created to provide a variety of services to the business customer. These services include temporary placement, temporary to direct hire, direct hire, vacation and maternity relief, contract service, targeted training, along with other company/labor related services.

Julie Bishop, owner of ProServ, Inc. has a total of 30 years experience in the industrial and manufacturing industry. Harnischfeger Corporation employed her in the Information Technologies department where she acquired an understand-

ing for assembly type manufacturing in the heavy crane industry. She also worked for Mead Corporation both as a Mead employee and as a contractor. Bishop ventured into the staffing business while working



at the Mead facility in Escanaba, Michigan. From there she branched out and started contracting personnel to other companies in the Central Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

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ProServ's relationship with the client is a crucial facet of their business. They recognize that searching for a quality employee requires more time than most clients have. With time always being a priority, it can be very difficult to make a refined selection. Julie states, "ProServ can make that refined selection for

directly, the only expense that the client incurs is a one-time finder's fee. This fee is waived if the client keeps the employee on ProServ's payroll for a minimum of 13 weeks.

ProServ works with existing agencies in the area with the same goal in mind as Michigan Works! The Job Force Board. The main objective is satisfying the business client's needs. ProServ will fill any position no matter how large or small. The Michigan Works! Service Centers across the region work closely with ProServ in meeting business human resource needs.

ProServ has gone from a small home office with two employees in 1995 to currently having an office staff of six employees and average payroll of sixty employees a week. ProServ has now expanded by opening a complete office in Iron Mountain, Michigan.

"By opening and staffing a location in Iron Mountain, we are able respond quicker and more efficiently to our customer's needs in that region", says Julie Bishop.

ProServ maintains an extensive database of quali-



Julie Bishop, owner, with Tiffany Milligan, Manager of ProServ Iron Mountain offices.

the client in a much more efficient and effective manner. This is what we do, so we have become good at it."

"ProServ understands my needs, provides the right candidates and minimizes my involvement. Our hiring process is efficient.. They are my Human Resources Department," says Paul Miller, Director of Software R&D for Quality Measurement Control, Inc.

If a client prefers the applicant to be on ProServ's payroll, ProServ can be responsible for Workman's Compensation Insurance, SUTA, FUTA and all other payroll expenses. If the client prefers to hire the applicant

As well as filling a business client's employment needs, ProServ offers a variety of software training for prospective and existing employees. ProServ offers training in Computer Basics, a complete compliment of Microsoft Office Application trainings, Quick Books and more. ProServ's six workstation training center allows for an interactive classroom environment.

If you are interested in learning more about the services ProServ has available, you can contact them at 906.786.1699 in Escanaba, 906.779.7600 in Iron Mountain or visit their website at [www.ProServ-inc.com](http://www.ProServ-inc.com).

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## DR. JUNE SCHAEFER: AN EMPOWERED WOMAN IN HIGH-GEAR!



*Marquette Alger*  
Regional Educational Service Agency

leader in bringing the Rural Entrepreneurship for Action Learning (REAL) to Marquette County. Working with Aspen Ridge Middle School, Dr. Schaefer helped to shape an entrepreneurial enriched curriculum where

lesson plans that bring the world of work experience back to their classrooms.

Serving on the Executive Board of the Lake Superior Community Partnership, Dr. Schaefer was instrumental in recruiting UBEC (Utilities Business and Education Coalition) to come to Marquette/

Alger to review the educational community. UBEC provided technical assistance to community members that resulted in the formation of the Lake Superior Partners in Education that serves as the education committee to the Lake Superior Partnership.

Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! Did you see the little Subaru station wagon zip by? That's probably Dr. June Schaefer, tireless in her efforts and dedication to bringing excellence to education. From sunrise to sunset, one can see Dr. Schaefer driving Upper Peninsula roads to attend meetings in her pursuit to increase the economic viability of the U.P.

As Superintendent of MARESA, Dr. Schaefer is known for her tireless efforts in preparing our youth for the workplace and ultimately, life-long learning opportunities. For the Job Force Board, she has actively participated in sub-committee work focusing on "Why Teach Employability Skills?" to our educators. She also serves as an advisor to the Job Force Board on entrepreneurial activities for the region's youth.

Building the entrepreneurial spirit is a passion of Dr. Schaefer. Dr. Schaefer was a

teachers instruct students to develop a business from learning about finances to marketing and ultimately, selling the created product.

Dr. Schaefer partners with Northern Michigan University's Center for Economic Education to present opportunities for students K-12 to learn about marketplace economics and entrepreneurship across curriculum. Dr. Schaefer co-sponsors Northern's Summer Institute. This Institute provides teachers with opportunities to build their capacity during a 3 day seminar. MARESA is also a leader in arranging teacher externships during the summer institute called "Careers About Town." in "Careers About Town," teachers intern or job shadow with a local business or industry. The experience allows teachers to see first hand how a business operates, with the end result of developing



*Dr. June Schaefer, Superintendent of MARESA and a member of the Job Force Board's Career Connections Group.*

As an active member of the Job Force Board's Career Connections Group, Dr. Schaefer advocates life-long learning opportunities. Recently committee members visited industry worksites to learn more about the occupational skills needed in manufacturing. With an educational perspective, Dr. Schaefer commented, "The tours are wonderful. I grew up on a farm then went to school and have worked in education, never experiencing the manufacturing environment. I am excited to take what I have learned back to teachers!"

Kel Smyth, MeadWestvaco and co-chair of the Career Connections Group states, "June brings a great educational perspective but, even more importantly, a lifetime of real world experience. With the educational perspective, June always looks to what education can do to meet business needs. We have been fortunate to be able to draw on that."

## ILENE KOTAJARVI, BUILDING ONE SUCCESS AT A TIME IN SCHOOLCRAFT COUNTY



*Ilene Kotajarvi, executive director of the Schoolcraft County Economic Development Corporation (EDC).*

nated various community-based projects such as the Ludington Park Gazebo, and recruiting the Michigan Downtown & Financing Association conference to Delta County.

Ilene has brought this experience and passion for community development to Schoolcraft County, where she directs and administers the county's economic, housing, and community development activities. These varied activities are coordinated to achieve the EDC's mission to "facilitate the growth of Schoolcraft County's economy." If coordinating this three-point approach to economic development isn't enough of a challenge, Ilene must also focus her efforts in a sparsely populated rural county of about 8,800 people, which also happens to be Michigan's fourth largest county in land area.

Since October 2001, Ilene Kotajarvi has been building upon one success at a time as the Executive Director of the Schoolcraft County Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Before joining Schoolcraft EDC, Ilene served as the director of the Escanaba Downtown Development Authority. With the DDA she coordi-

However, Ilene's efforts have helped to bring together the county, city, and township municipal governments. This is evidenced by the sustaining partners for the EDC which include the county, city, and five of the surrounding townships. In addition, the accomplishment to date the Ilene is most proud of is a county-wide

economic study completed by the Anderson Economic Group based in Lansing, Michigan. The study was funded in part by a Michigan Economic Development Corporation planning grant, with matching funds from municipalities throughout Schoolcraft County and the EDC.

As the economic development director, Ilene is now charged with leading a volunteer board called L.E.A.D. (Leadership for Economic Action and Development), and its working committees to put the plan's recommendations into action. The study and plan focused on downtown Manistique, two industrial areas; as well as the counties industrial, retail, tourism, and housing assets. According to Ilene, "one of the most important things that has come from this project is that the community has truly come together and is in support."

Ilene also believes that partnerships developed by the EDC has also been beneficial to Schoolcraft County. Schoolcraft County EDC is a founding member of the Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance, which is a cooperative effort of EDC's, business, industry, transportation, utilities and workforce development boards across the Upper Peninsula to actively promote the Upper Peninsula for business development. In addition, the EDC is a satellite counseling center for

First Step, Inc based in Escanaba, Michigan. First Step, Inc. provides free and confidential small business counseling to Schoolcraft County's existing businesses as well as entrepreneurs interested in starting a business there. The EDC also works closely with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, and the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development agency.

Another partnership the EDC has developed is with the Schoolcraft County Chamber of Commerce. Last year, the EDC partnered with the Chamber to develop a full color multi-page community profile. This was one of the EDC's projects to increase their marketing efforts, and improve the quality of marketing materials available. According to Ilene, "the biggest challenge is getting the word out about the benefits of living here and bringing jobs to the community." The EDC has also published their promotional video to DVD, updated their web site, and the board adopted a new logo and vision statement: "Building Schoolcraft County One Success at a Time".

To learn more about Schoolcraft County Economic Development Corporation, or to view their economic development study and action plan - visit them at [www.SchoolcraftEDC.com](http://www.SchoolcraftEDC.com).

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