

2016 InnovateHER Challenge

Statement of Support

Alison Martin-Books, owner of Integrated Mentoring Solutions (IMS) is the winner of the Fort Wayne and Northeast Indiana 2016 InnovateHER local event.

Alison is a very impressive and accomplished young woman having been chosen at 29 years of age, as the Executive Director of the American Heart Association in Indianapolis, Indiana; and four years later in 2011 as Executive Director of the American Lung Association.

She achieved this lofty success not only through her hard and diligent efforts, but also through the helping hands of experienced and skilled professionals that were mentoring her life personally and professionally

As she executed her leadership duties, she recognized and appreciated how mentoring from experienced professionals had been an important factor in her rise to the top and a significant impact on her ability to achieve this level of success.

The help one receives along the way in life is a very common story often heard among successful people that rise to the senior management levels in a business; or become successful starting and owning their own businesses and lead fulfilling personal lives.

Alison's recognition of the help and mentoring she received aided her to more fully understand and realize that opportunities for this type of business personal relationships were severely limited to women in most businesses; particularly in perspective to the mentoring men often received in just the "natural" course of business culture.

As Alison has observed, many organizations are not even cognizant of this lack of equal opportunity for women, as they tend to harbor a culture that is steeped in paradigms from the past. With the advent of more and more talented, skilled and highly capable women entering the workforce, Alison recognized the market need for a business offering, that would make mentoring more inclusive, broader based, and effective; and directed her attention to companies wishing to diversify their workplace and provide more growth opportunities for women. Her consulting approach and software scheduling product have allowed women to gain more access to ideas, people, and senior management that might have been beyond their reach in the past.

For those among us that can attribute some of our personal or professional success to another person; a mentor per se, who took us under their wing; we can readily associate with Alison's vision and recognize that she has uncovered a much needed addition to the tools a business can access to grow employees; retain quality management; and improve overall performance. It is also worthy of note, that this service of mentoring, provided by IMS also in a one on one situation, can greatly enrich a person's personal or professional life.

Mentoring is not something frequently studied in academia, nor is it a common topic of normal business conversation. As such, the value and worth of this simple human exchange is often forgotten or understated. Even if an organization recognizes the value of mentoring, it may often be viewed as too complicated or expensive to formalize.

For those forward thinking companies, either as a result of the nature and insight of the management, or from assistance from a trained professional like Alison, IMS offers a relatively easy solution to any organization by helping formalize a mentoring program resulting in enhanced opportunities for women to grow, achieve, and obtain more responsible and accountable positions of influence in an organization.

The 2015 Sales and Profits reflected in the financial schedules indicate just the tip of the iceberg for commercialization and growth of this type of consulting business. The forecasts look even more promising, especially with additional capital to train mentors and coaches to expand the IMS approach, that could come from winning the InnovateHER

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The approach IMS utilizes in its customized mentoring programs for men and women, or the broader program focused strictly on women, utilizes hands on support, training videos, and access to the scheduling software. In addition, IMS offers a train the trainer program for organizations that wish to have a continued presence beyond just a project oriented approach.

Because the training and scheduling is web based, IMS has the ability to quickly extend the area it serves beyond the regional Indianapolis area.

More and more women are becoming college educated. They are proving to be highly capable and talented individuals and are choosing professional careers making major contributions to the businesses and charitable organizations in our country. The personal relationships that can accrue through the mentoring process as addressed by IMS, having access to information, experience, nuances, and know will make a significant difference in the level of success in both professional and personal lives of many women in future years.

Steven O. Rinehart

Fort Wayne SCORE