

PRESS RELEASE

Entrepreneurs Address Pioneer Student Leadership Academy Interns, Throw Out Challenge

Interns see and hear how business is done, learn importance of good customer service and relationships

HOUSTON, June 17, 2004—Three Washington, D.C. region business owners brought the face of the 21st century workplace to the 46 interns at the Pioneer Student Leadership Academy today. Each having started their own business in the last 10 years, they represent a fast-growing segment of corporate America.

Rosalind “Roz” Jeffries, President of Performance Enhancement Group, which specializes in employee recognition and retention, presented “Make Them Happy, Make Them Return—How to Deliver Excellent Customer Service.” Jeffries named five companies—Disney, DuPont, EXXON-Mobil, Lockheed Martin, and Pioneer Hybrid—and tasked each group of interns with developing a 2-minute commercial for one of the companies.

Antwanye Ford and Andre Rogers, owners of Enlightened, Inc., presented “Entrepreneurship: What You Really Need to Know.” Together, Ford and Rogers, long-time college friends and business partners for five years, led the interns through the basics of entrepreneurship—from making the decision to start a business to identifying opportunities to financing and starting a business.

“We’re offering a \$2500 scholarship for the best entrepreneurship concept submitted by a Pioneer Leadership Academy intern,” said Ford, to wild applause. Enlightened and the Pioneer leadership team will review the submissions, and the final award will be given before September 1, 2004.

Ford shared clues to the “entrepreneurship” personality, and noted the pros and cons of owning a business. Rogers compared owning a business to having a baby, saying, “sometimes it cries all night long, and other times it runs up and gives you an unexpected hug.”

The pair closed by taking questions from the interns, who fired them nonstop until Ford and Rogers had to leave for an interview and the flight home. “Our day isn’t over when we get back tonight at 10,” said Ford. “We have a proposal to finish writing.” It underlined the points he had made about being an entrepreneur: hard work, long hours, commitment.

About the Pioneers in Education Alliance

The Pioneers in Education Alliance was formed to promote literacy in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, increase diversity participation in these fields, and promote awareness of and interest in nontraditional applications and career paths for the sciences. Alliance partners include DuPont, NASA-SEMAA, NMUSA, and SECME, Inc.

About the Pioneer Student Leadership Academy

The Pioneer Student Leadership Academy, an outgrowth of the Pioneers in Education Alliance, will run concurrently each summer with the SECME Summer Institute, a nationally acclaimed resident program for educators. Academy participants get hands-on experience in managing all aspects of a conference; attend educational workshops; and are taught and mentored by skilled professionals as they produce a daily conference newsletter, conference videos, and other communications vehicles.

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