

# ALLEGANY COUNTY BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Building Business Leaders of the  
Greater Allegany Region

April 10, 2013

1:30- 7:30 PM

Wellsville Campus of  
Alfred State College

Buffet Dinner  
Business  
Exhibitions  
Workshops

*Keynote Speaker*

*Michael Hess*

Owner & CEO of  
Skooba Design Inc.





Presents

## **Allegany County Business Conference Building Business Leaders of the Southern Tier**

The Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce is committed in providing opportunities and education for small businesses and companies from leading, dynamic experts in their fields.

The Allegany Business County Conference is designed to deliver an unprecedented level of marketing and business development information, providing practical solutions to many challenges businesses and companies face today.

Join fellow Business owners & owners of the Southern Tier by attending this conference. You will tap into valuable, real life lessons and experiences. You will leave our event with a unique mix of practical learning tools & strategies that you can utilize in growing your business.

The Business Conference follows the Allegany County College and Career Readiness Day, held at the same location, from **9:00am to 1:00pm**. High school students will explore career opportunities with local business exhibitors and explore career pathways locally and through video conferencing in locations all over the world. Register as an Exhibitor at no charge to be part of this exciting event also. To sign up for College & Career Readiness Fair, visit <http://lifeready.weebly.com>

**Allegany County Business Conference Register today Register today,  
visit: [Registration](#)**

**Greater Allegany County Chambers members \$40.00 Non-members \$50.00**

**April 10, 2013**

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Wellsville Campus of Alfred State College

2530 River Rd

Wellsville, NY



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Building Business Leaders of the Southern Tier

Buffet Dinner Business Exhibitions Workshops Networking

Michael Hess

Keynote Speaker

Owner & CEO of Skooba Design Inc.

Wellsville Campus of Alfred State College

For more information, visit our [Event Announcement page](#)! Register to-day, visit: [Registration](#)

**Registration covers:**

No Charge for Businesses to exhibit

Buffet Dinner by L'Italia

Keynote Speaker

Workshops

Network with businesses

**Agenda:**

- 1:30-2:15 : Business Exhibitors & Networking
- 2:15-3:30 : Opening Plenary Session:  
"Growing Your Own Employees"
- 3:30-3:45 : Break, move to Workshop Session
- 3:45-5:00 : Workshop Sessions
  - Workshop A: "Making Maximum Impact"
  - Workshop B: "You might be in the Wellness Trap"
  - Workshop C: "Maximize Your Online Presence"
- 5:00-5:30: Networking & Cash Bar with Appetizers
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- 5:30 : Dinner, Catered by L'Italia
- 6:15 : Keynote Speaker—Michael Hess



**Keynote Speaker: Michael Hess, 47, Founder and CEO of Skooba Design, Rochester, NY.**

Michael Hess has over 20 years' experience in consumer product sales and marketing, product development, and executive management. During that time, Michael successfully managed multi-million dollar clothing and other soft goods divisions, and was responsible for product purchasing, merchandising, inventory management, personnel, and profitable sales growth for a major national department store.

In 1990, Michael joined his family's well-known photo equipment manufacturing business, The Saunders Group, which had just purchased a major branded camera bag company. He focused on managing all facets of the company's bag business, designing new products and lines, managing operations, and establishing its overseas sourcing and manufacturing base. Under Michael's leadership, Saunders' bag division grew by more than 300% over a 4-year period. Michael went on to become Vice President of the parent company and its dozen branded lines, which, in addition to camera bags, included products as diverse as photo processing equipment, lighting, book publishing, and imaging accessories. The company's products were leaders in their categories, and Saunders was widely considered among the most respected companies in the industry. In 1998, the family sold the 50 year-old business, which it had grown from 5 to 100 employees.

After aiding in the transition of his family's business to new ownership, Michael left Saunders at the end of 1999 to start RoadWired, the carrying case company which later became **Skooba Design**. He has also founded other companies and brands including travel goods retailer **Journeyware**, which was later sold to a major luggage company. Most recently Michael launched **Hot Dog Yoga Gear**, a new brand offering innovative products, of the company's own design, for the yoga and fitness market. He holds multiple patents and over a dozen product and brand trademarks.

Michael has been interviewed numerous times on television and radio, in publications and online media. He writes the twice-weekly column "Business With Class" for **CBS News**, and his articles are followed by tens of thousands of readers around the world each month. He is also a Certified Expert on the business advice website **focus.com**, and serves as both formal and informal advisor to other entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Michael has a B.A. in Political Science, and is also a graduate of the intensive Textile Executive Management program at the industry-leading Philadelphia College of Textiles. He has traveled extensively, developing close, long-standing relationships with suppliers and customers in over twenty countries. He resides in the Rochester, New York area with his wife and two children.

**BIG PR ON A LITTLE BUDGET**

Michael's speech will focus on Public Relations: How a small business can get big business exposure on the stringiest of shoestrings. Skooba Design has been covered in every significant publication, TV news outlet, major website and influential blog, without using an agency or spending a fortune to do it. This topic makes for a particularly good presentation for people starting and running small companies, as Michael gives a real-world, do-able, proven "step by step" process, from building a press list to writing effective news releases, press distribution, how to work well with writers, editors and bloggers, and effective follow up. He offers concrete strategies with humor and audience perspective. Attendees can walk away and put the process into practice the next day.

## **General Opening Session: Growing your own Employees**

**Craig Clark, Dean Alfred State, Joe Hart, General Sales Manager Lufkin, Allan Barber, New Vision Teacher BOCES**

The session will discuss how to grow a workforce by a cooperative industry and educational partnership. The issue about attracting students to manufacturing careers is often a challenge because High School students have a misconception of the career path. The best way to expose students to manufacturing careers is with hands on activities through an industry and educational partnerships where students participate in experiences in college facilities and manufacturing facilities. Lufkin RMT, Alfred State, Technical Education at Belmont have cooperated to develop a program where all three work together to have students experience careers in manufacturing with a goal of further college education and employment in Allegany County Manufacturing. This is a model that can be used for developing other career paths.

### **Workshops:**



**Presenter: Pam Witter, Director of Development Houghton College & Chair of Leadership Allegany**

Pamela Witter serves as the Director of Development for Houghton College and as one of the founders and chairperson of Leadership Allegany – a 10-month professional leadership training program for adult professionals. She is a 2001 graduate of St. Bonaventure University and is currently completing her Master's in Business Administration through SUNY Empire State College. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2012 Alumna of the Year award for Leadership Cattaraugus, 2011 Buffalo Business First "40 Under Forty" honoree, and 2012 Outstanding Achiever Award from the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce. Many of Pam's accolades derive from her commitment to serving her community. In addition to her work with Leadership Allegany, she has served as a Resource Leader for Allegany County 4H, a board member for the county chamber, and a patient volunteer for Hospice. Currently she serves as a leadership volunteer in several capacities at Cuba First Baptist Church and secretary for the Houghton College Staff Cabinet. In her spare time Pam is a writer, wife, and mother. She maintains a blog and is set to publish her first book next year through Tate Publishing.

In "**Making Maximum Impact**" you will discover the tried and true leadership techniques that lead to astounding achievement in your life. More importantly, though, you will discover how your passions and values can influence civic engagement and social change where you work and live. Transforming your life, your family, your community, your company, your team - all of this is done through common principles. We will explore a few of those strategies through lecture, story, and group work.



**Presenter: Tesia Woodworth, MPH Director of Employee Health & Productivity of Relph Benefit Advisors**

As Director of Employee Health & Productivity at Relph Benefit Advisors, Tesia and her team are responsible for leading efforts to create a culture of health for Relph Benefit Advisors' clients. In her role, Tesia integrates long-range strategic planning and advice combined with data analysis to drive the wellness message. Tesia was asked to share as the Keynote Speaker at Rochester's 2011 "Wealth of Health Awards Luncheon", based on her experience and Relph Benefit Advisors' success in developing its own

Culture of Health. Relph Benefit Advisors is a two-time past winner of the Wealth of Health Award, and was recently recognized by the American Heart Association as a Gold Start! Fit Friendly Company. Tesia's extensive background in health science and public health management has benefitted many organizations including Johnson & Johnson, where she managed the wellness program for 9 years, and Health Fitness Corporation, where she utilized data mining tools to generate client customized outcomes reports, analyzed health behavior trends and translated key findings to customers such as Bayer Corporation, Toyota Motor Company and Eastman Chemical.

**“You might be in the Wellness Trap”** Despite the overwhelming evidence available to guide high-impact employee wellness programs, many organizations have unwittingly stumbled into...the WELLNESS TRAP! Settled for low employee engagement? See no measurable outcomes? Can't identify your population's top preventable costs? You may be stuck in...The WELLNESS TRAP! Using case studies from NYS agencies maintaining single-digit increases, we alert you to pitfalls, teach realistic strategies for employee accountability, and unlock the secrets to help you achieve the same kind of success! This session will help you learn how to successfully control medical costs by examining high-impact wellness programs and their effectiveness in employee benefit strategy.



**Presenter: David Madison, President equaTEK Interactive, Inc.**

David started his career in the defense industry, working on leading edge, military systems. He then transitioned into the business sector, developing client/server applications and real time systems for medical and imaging solutions. As a certified database administrator, he has developed high-end database applications. In the mid 1990's, Madison started developing a Web-based, e-commerce applications and in 2003, started equaTEK Interactive, a web solutions company which is the founder of Go Buy Rochester.com. Go Buy Rochester.com is now a finalist for the Rochester Business Journal's 2013 Best of the Web for eCommerce.

**Maximize Your Online Presence** Simply having a website for your business is no longer enough today, you have to maximize your online presence to gain the results you desire. We'll explore Search Engine Optimization (SEO), how to effectively engage Social Media, and the various elements of eCommerce and whether it's right for you!

You will learn: How to evaluate and integrate key words and phrases into your website to increase inclusion in organic search results; an overview of Social Media options including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, & others; and the utilization of comparison shopping sites