



Issaquah Press
November 2, 2010

Business coach starts new mentor program for women

November 2, 2010

By Chantelle Lusebrink

In her mid-20s, Lisa Quast was like many young women, working in a career she enjoyed with her sights on taking the next step up.

She spent several years looking for a mentor to help teach her how to navigate the corporate ladder, she said, but being a young female in a predominately male corporation, most men didn't feel taking her under their wing would be appropriate.

"That was really disheartening as a mid-20s career professional," said Quast, an award-winning author, career coach and CEO of Career Woman Inc.

Today, Quast, an Issaquah resident, is the one providing a helping hand.

In May, she launched a new website, Wing to Wing Women's Mentoring Project. She said she hopes the project will inspire other experienced career women to reach out to younger ones in their companies and their communities.

"I don't think there is any greater feeling in the world than helping another woman reach her dream," she said.

After Quast's early experiences, she took it upon herself to learn the ropes and forge professional relationships with specific people to help advance her career. She took notes, wrote a book — "Your Career, Your Way" — and ultimately became a mentor to dozens of young women at companies she worked for and is still a mentor with the University of Washington.

"A mentor is really helpful, because you can glean from their experience and apply it," said Maria Ehsan, who works in marketing and has been mentored by Quast since 2003. "Mentoring is really useful in that sense, especially when you face a challenge or new situation."

The Wing to Wing website, Quast said, is a way to make a bigger impact and share her passion for mentoring, in the hope it spreads.

On the website, she asks professional women, experienced or beginning their careers, to share their experiences. The stories, she said, are meant to inspire women to help each other, "so they want to become mentors or want to begin looking for mentors themselves," she said. "I think we are at a point in time, in the world and with ourselves, where people want to make a big difference, but they aren't sure how to go about it.

"What I can tell women is, you can make a huge impact by mentoring two women and then asking them to mentor two women," she added. "It grows exponentially and you are part of a huge ripple that makes a big difference in a lot of lives."

Through her own mentorship programs, Quast said she has seen women advance several times within a company or a career, simply because they were able to talk to and get guidance from someone who has walked in her shoes before.

In addition, companies benefit from having mentorship programs that cultivate diverse talents. Companies with diversified workforces — made up of women, men and people of different nationalities — often yield better profits, since multiple ideas come forth to solve problems, she said.

On the Web

Learn more about Wing to Wing Women's Mentoring Project [here](#).