Entrepreneur Celebrates 10th Anniversary
She gives credit to mentors, friends and building relationships

McConnell Communications Inc., a full-service public relations and marketing firm founded by former journalist, Darci E. McConnell, is celebrating 10 years in business. The Detroit company, housed in Greektown’s International Center, was incorporated May 11, 2004.

“I’m really proud of making it to 10,” said McConnell, 46. “And I had an awful lot of help along the way. That help came in the form of early clients, referrals and mentors who knew me in my former life as a journalist, and who trusted me enough to give me a shot in this new line of work.”

Over the last decade, the company has served clients large and small, ranging from Synagro Corp. to Northwest Airlines to 100 Black Men of Greater Detroit. The firm has also worked on more than a dozen political campaigns, including Gov. Jennifer Granholm’s successful 2006 re-election bid and Lon Johnson’s victory for chair of the Michigan Democratic Party.

“Darci and her company deliver as promised every time,” said John M. Allen, managing member of the Allen Brothers PLLC law firm. “While we might rethink our relationship with other service providers from time to time, McConnell Communications is a constant for us, and we look forward to another 10 years of exceptional representation.”

While McConnell Communications offers nearly every service needed for a full marketing campaign, most of the company’s clients call on the firm for public relations and crisis management.

“When I started my company, I spoke with my cousin, Ed, about what services I would provide, and I hesitated about including crisis management,” McConnell said.

“He said, ‘you used to cause the crisis, so who better than you?’ I guess he had a point.”

Many of her skills as a reporter and writer were transferrable to the PR business. And old habits die hard; McConnell tapped Alex Cruden, former head of the copy desks for the Detroit Free Press, to edit her firm’s written material.

To help build for the next ten years, McConnell applied for and was accepted into Goldman Sachs’ 10,000 Small Businesses program. The course, currently under way, gives participants ways to grow a business and also provides the opportunity for access to capital.

“Most businesses fail not because the service or product was bad, but because the person running the business really didn’t have those skills,” McConnell said. “I’m a firm believer in being a student for life, and anyone who wants to give me free lessons on how to do that better, I’m all in.”

So what do the next ten years look like? “We’ve never wanted to be a big firm, but we definitely believe in staying competitive,” McConnell said. “That means we’ll continue to grow our new media capabilities and find new ways to marry the so-called old and new media.”

*For more about McConnell Communications, visit www.dmconnell.com or call 313.237.0100.*

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It may seem like we are only in the middle of 2014 but in our fiscal year we are almost through the third quarter and beginning our planning for F/Y 2015. It has been a time for awards and rating for our work in 2013 and 2014.

David Broner was selected as the Michigan SBA 2014 Counselor of the Year and David is also receiving the Southwest Detroit Business Association’s Kathy Wendler Award for his commitment to Southwest Detroit small businesses. Jim Muir was awarded the CEED Volunteer of the Year Award. In addition, David Broner’s client, Noam Kimelman, is receiving the SCORE National 2014 Award for Outstanding Young Entrepreneur at the National Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C. in mid-August.

At our Executive Committee Meeting on June 10th, we completed our annual Form 16 review with District Director, Steve Feinman. We received a Gold Chapter rating. This is one level lower than the Platinum Chapter that we received last year but is still an outstanding rating of our overall performance.

We have just received the detailed Volunteer Engagement ratings from the survey that was taken in March. I have forwarded the results to all members but some key numbers are:

Response rate improved to 54% from 46% last year but is still below the National average of 61%.

Engagement Index improved to 4.39 from 4.22 last year and was above the National index of 4.33. The overall rating for Chapter 18 was 80% versus 75% last year and 79% for our Michigan District.

As you know, we have just completed the election of officers for F/Y 2015. I urge all of you to support Jim Muir when he moves into the Chapter Chair position in the fall. I am sure that Jim will provide new ideas and new energy to the Chapter.

However, what the officers and entire chapter needs more than anything is the participation of ALL members in our many activities. We have enough demand for mentoring and workshops that if more of you would sign on to help these activities we could greatly increase our total services. We also need help in committee activities for fundraising, recruiting new members, Chamber of Commerce liaison and our many neighborhood and community activities in Detroit and Oakland and Macomb Counties. Please come to our meetings and get involved.

Lorne Greenwood
Chapter Chair

Executive Board for FY 2015

The Vote Is In!
The Masses Have Spoken!

We Welcome Our NEW Executive Board of Directors

Jim Muir, Chairperson
Roger Nelson—Vice Chair, Workshops & Training
Dan Mistura—Vice Chair, Marketing
Lorne Greenwood—Vice Chair, Fundraising
Gary Nadlicki—Secretary
David Hennessy—Treasurer
Welcome to SCORE Detroit

Recently Certified
Congratulations!

Donald Betts, Marketing, Sales and Production Management, International Sales Management, Manufacturing Engineer.

David Young, Journalist and Writer, Building Construction, Nursing Home Administration, Real Estate, Insurance

Welcome our New Members-in-Training:
Osmun Jacobson
Jaimon Mappilaparampil
Frank John Roy

The following members continue the process of working through the training system
John Turk, Rhonda Morman, Karim Igeria, Carlotta Tutt Holloway, Atul Kalia, Bernie Willis and Howard Katz,

We look forward to their active participation in the near future

SBA Updates

Loan Performance Update:

SBA Loan Volumes By Lender Through 5-31 (8 mos.)

7a Loans Through 5-31-14 (8 mos.), 7a loan approvals totaled 1,348 totaling $373,664,000 in guaranteed amount. This is 10.4% above FY13 for loans and 9.1% above FY13 for $'s for the same period.

504 Loans For the same period, 504 loan approvals totaled 139 with $60,755,000 in debentures approved. This is 15.2% less than FY13 in number of debentures and 32.4% less in debenture $'s for the same period. Please note: Small Business Administration loan statistics are published monthly. If you'd like to be on the distribution list, please contact one of our Lender Relations staff.

Keep in Touch

Each SBA staff member now has their own direct telephone number

Romy Ancog 313-324-3604
Allen Cook 313-324-3605
Anthony Dunway 313-324-3606
Estmond Kim 313-324-3607
June Foyt 313-324-3608
Cathy Gase 313-324-3609
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Maggie Halley 313-324-3603
Constance Logan 313-324-3602
Tom McFadden 313-324-3611
Gerald Moore 313-324-3601
Tom Vargo 313-324-3617

SCORE ROUNDTABLE

On June 12th, SCORE hosted a Roundtable discussion with the focus on “Funding Early Stage Businesses. This was an invigorating opportunity for SCORE Mentors, business owners and local business resources to come together to share and gain valuable information with an exchange of ideas and insights. Jim Muir was the Moderator. Watch the website for the next scheduled Roundtable.

Our Esteem Guest Panelist included Belinda Turner Dubois Oakland County Loan Officer whose presentation about CEED was very well received as evidenced by the number of questions from members and invitees.

The presentation by Mr. Allen Cook, Assistant District Director for Lender Relations on SBA Loan programs and how the SBA works with Banks was also very well received.

SCORE members and event invitees learned about the importance of working with their local banker From Mr. Warren Morgan (Assistant Vice President – Financial Center Manager) of Fifth Third Bank.

Shawn Grose, CEO Windmill Pointe Brewing Company shared his entrepreneurial efforts with a presentation about Crowd Funding. His material and presentation style really livened up the program. SCORE members and invitees showed a great deal of interest in his experiences.
In this fast pace environment the business world is changing daily. Technology and the way things are done changes daily. It can be overwhelming to a small business owner. Change is never easy, but change is a necessity. It’s inspiring to see business owners responsive to our ever-changing world.

Our summer newsletter issue is highlighting small business owners. Business owners who have made it work by seeking and having a team of knowledgeable individuals to see them through. The buzz in the Detroit business community is inspiring in itself.

Our cover story is on a ten year excursion of Darci E. McConnell and what she attributes her success to – her team of supporters. Congratulations Darci, on your 10th anniversary. No matter your skill level, stellar knowledge, or unlimited financial resources, as a new business owner or a seasoned entrepreneur, it takes a team of supporters to help you build and grow a successful and sustainable business.

Lorne Greenwood salutes the work that our own volunteer mentors have done. They both were honored for contributing support, guidance and hope to individuals at SBA and CEED organizations.

Look for an interview with long time SCORE Detroit volunteer mentor, Jack Caminker on what motivates him to continue mentoring with SCORE Detroit after 20 years.

The job of SCORE Detroit’s mentors is to provide education and knowledge to move your business to the next step. We inspirer and motivate those with higher dreams. As mentors extend individual expertise, the business owners gain the needed direction and confidence to meet his/her business goals. The mentors are also inspired to continue the work required to assist the Detroit business region to grow. Every thank you from our business community, gives mentors the inspiration to do more.

As stated in the featured Darci E. McConnell article, the interview with Mr. Caminker, and the Julie Morgenstern story you will see that the key factors for a successful small business owner are vision, motivation and inspiration.

Be Inspired!

Gwendolyn Esco Davis
Editor-in-Chief

Standing Ovations!  Inspiration to us all
Thanks for all you do!!!!!!

David Broner
Gerald Moore, Michigan District Director, presented David Broner, SCORE Mentor with the Michigan SBA Counselor of the Year award at the 2014 Michigan Celebrates Small Business gala held in Lansing on May 6, 2014

Additionaly David serves as an “Ambassador “ to business associations in the Detroit Metro Area.

Jim Muir
CEED 2014 Volunteer of the Year

The Center for Empowerment and Economic Development (CEED) takes pride in recognizing those that have empowered others and demonstrated outstanding commitment while supporting the small business community. CEED saluted Jim Muir April 17, 2014
Meet Jack Caminker

Jack Caminker is currently a volunteer mentor and sits on the executive committee for SCORE Detroit.

Esco Davis, when did you join SCORE Detroit?

Caminker, I joined in early 1991, about 20 years or so.

Esco Davis, What attracted you to SCORE?

Caminker, I had a stock broker that did some work for SCORE and he spoke highly of SCORE. Then I read an article by another gentleman who worked for SCORE and he mentioned the importance of giving back. I kept that in mind, so when it was time, I gave it a try.

Esco Davis, What’s your business background?

Caminker, After spending three years in the Navy, I attended and graduated MSU with two degrees, Engineering and Business. After graduation from MSU I started a real estate company.

Esco Davis, Have you always been a counselor/mentor at SCORE or have you held other positions?

Caminker, Yes. I have held several positions with SCORE. Just to name a few: As treasurer, I started the fundraising committee, this was years ago when the federal government began to reduce our share of their budget. At that time it was somewhat rare, but I approached banks for funding support. I was also the membership chair and the Chapter Chairman on three different times. Whatever the need I was willing to help.

Esco Davis, What has been the highlights of your experience at SCORE?

Caminker, When I see the light in the eyes of clients. When a client just don’t know how to organize his/her ideas and I lead them to an organized way of doing things so that he/her can come closer to their dreams. Such as, what groups to join, who to talk to, to get known in the communities where your focus clients live, shop, and play. As they go through the process of gaining more information their eyes light up.

Esco Davis, Do you recall the first client that inspired you to continue after 20 years, of being a SCORE mentor/counselor?

Caminker, No. There were many over the course of twenty years.

Esco Davis, Can you tell us about your experience mentoring a small business owner over a long period of time, 12 months or more?

Caminker, There was a client who desired to become a real estate investor. He had no experience, no one in his family or friends had been in real estate and he had no knowledge of where to begin. I informed him that each profession has its own vocabulary and he must know it well. He followed my directions and received his realtors license and began selling homes. Getting to know the market. Once he became knowledgeable of the housing market and got to where he could position himself to be a smart investor, he bought a couple of homes. He was my client for three years or so.

Esco Davis, In 20 years, what needs of the client has changed

Caminker, Clients have changed over the years. The difference is that today its more technical. Back when I first came to SCORE most things were done by hand. Example; when buying a office building say 100,000 square feet. We could fill 50% at xx dollar per square footage. I would have to, with pencil and paper figure out what the square footage would cost for the other 50% of the building for the next, say 6 months. If the other 50% were not filled, then I would need to recalculate again. This process would take several days. With todays technology that process would take only a few minutes.

Esco Davis, So is SCORE keeping up with the knowledge base to assist clients with technology?

Caminker, We are getting more and more volunteer mentor who are still working - younger people, who have a good knowledge base in technology. This will continue to grow. That said, we must retain the knowledge base of how to run a business with our more senior volunteer mentors.

Esco Davis, Our last question, what inspires you most about SCORE and their clients

Caminker, First of all, the quality of SCORE mentors; their backgrounds, and the broad expansion of experience he or she brings. They are motivated to help and give back to the community.

Esco Davis, Thank you Jack it was a pleasure.
Julie Morgenstern Enterprises Finds Re-newed Inspiration With SCORE

In June 1999, Julie Morgenstern appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show for Oprah's Spring Cleaning Day. This national appearance reached an audience in excess of 20 million. Julie returned to her office to find 1,100 email messages, numerous phone messages and skyrocketing book sales online.

Julie Morgenstern of New York NY formed her company in 1989 described herself as a "personal disaster area" has turned disorganization into super-organization and a thriving consulting, organizing and speaking career. On April 21 of this year, she celebrated her birthday and the 15th anniversary of her business. Julie is recognized as a national SCORE client. Julie's passion and career were in the theater. Directing off-Broadway shows in New York and attempting to become an organized mother, Morgenstern often dreamt of a "rent-a-mom," someone that she could hire to do all the chores she was too busy or overwhelmed to do. In 1989, Julie's life reached a turning point when she divorced and became a single mother with a three-year-old daughter to support. Realizing she could no longer survive on an income from the theater, she decided it was time for a career change. With a $100 dollar loan from a friend, she purchased an ad for $25 in Big Apple Parents Paper, that read, "Drowning in meaningless busy work?" and included a "to-do" list of services Task Masters offered. Chores on the to-do list included: errands, clutter control, cleaning kids rooms, party planning and moving management. The rest of the loan ($75) business cards and stationery. Julie received a call from her first client, an elderly couple who needed someone to organize and submit years of health insurance claims. She made $500 on this job and re-invested every penny into a half-page ad in Big Apple Parents Paper which paid off: She began to receive about five clients per month. Jobs included food shopping, renewing passports, organizing bedrooms, planning 40th birthday parties and weddings, designing closets and kitchen storage space, and creating photo albums and scrap books. Her eight-year daughter Jessi accepted the role of "Chief Business Advisor." But as a one-person operation, there was a limit to the number of hours she could work with clients and felt the need to expand. "Business is even more gratifying than theater. I can come up with my own ideas and make them happen." With all of the exposure, she gained many high-level clients such as American Express, Cosmopolitan Magazine, the New York City Mayor's Office, Merrill Lynch and NBC Television. In October 1998, Julie released her first book, Organizing From the Inside Out. The book encompasses Julie's entire theory on organization, from the inside out-first analyze, then strategize; finally, attack. It was a New York Times Business Best Seller and an Amazon.com bestseller for 1999. The future looks bright and busy for Julie.

What's Great About My Mentor? In 1993, three years after her original visit to SCORE, she returned frustrated and exhausted for more advice. She met with SCORE mentor Irwin Coplin, an expert in sales and marketing. "After I explained my business to Irwin, he told me that I had extraordinary potential. That validation gave me so much confidence and his encouragement re-energized me." Irwin discussed her options, such as franchising and certifying organizers, and gave her the pros and cons of each decision. Irwin wanted to follow-up regularly. "He got so into it. I felt like I had a partner—a mentor. I wasn't alone anymore." As Julie developed a need for financial advice, Coplin referred her to another mentor, Harry Lowenstein. "I run to either one of them when I am stuck," says Julie. Coplin continued to help Julie generate business and media attention through creative promotional tactics. He developed the idea of holding "the messiest office in New York City contest." The winner was to win an office makeover from Task Masters. Coverage of the contest was so successful that she appeared on CBS this Morning to do an on-air office makeover and on Good Morning America, where she organized the office of the show's weatherman, Spencer Christian. After six years, Julie still turns to Irwin and Harry for help with every new decision. "With Irwin and Harry I feel like I discovered a gold mine of support and wisdom that I've been drawing from ever since."

How SCORE Helped Julie had no business experience nor had she ever held an office job. She made an appointment with SCORE with only one question in mind: How much should she charge for her service? Julie's mentor advised her to charge $10 more per hour than her competitors, explaining that customers would be impressed by a name-brand price tag. According to Julie, this worked like a charm.

Today's Inspirational Thought
Having a purpose is the key to life. If you are committed in what you do, you will work longer and work harder because you love it! Business is something that you love and, if you love it, you will do it well!
The stretch of 2008 through 2010 was a rough time on many people personally and also on companies, both large and small. It seemed as though the sky was some ways it was) and many people responded drastically to avoid damage. They ran into a proverbial bomb shelter, closed the lid, and locked themselves in tight, waiting for the air to clear. Now, in 2014, the rays of light have started to come through (and stay). The toxic levels in the air are acceptable to breathe again, the dust has settled. So many companies are opening that hatch, crawling back into the light. But, much like the scene in those post-apocalyptic sci-fi movies, the landscape has completely changed since 2008, and the whole world looks different. Media has changed, social media has matured, and consumption has become drastically more democratized, throwing a number of companies off kilter. Many want to crawl back into the shelter and wait it out, but it’s no longer a smart option.

**The Brave New World**

When the fallout started, they started cutting. Laying off staff, reducing or canceling marketing initiatives, pulling back technology investment, staying cautious in a safe way in a typically sheltered area of their market. Now the clouds have cleared, it’s a brave new world. Markets have changed, consumers have changed, technology has changed, and it has brought with it paralyzing confusion for those companies looking to re-enter the marketing fray. No longer are typical publicity initiatives gaining attention, no longer is that direct mail piece even worth it. Social media has changed drastically from “should be there” to “how integrated should we be (and on what channels)?”

Mobile technology in some ways has become a disruptive technology advance for the marketer. People interact very differently with your digital presence than ever before, and just having a website up and running is no longer good enough (and in some markets, applications are booming). Modern advertising is no longer simply migrating the same old traditional ad plan to a new medium or digital platform. Ads have gone native (and if you don’t know what “native advertising,” you’d better look it up). So many companies have had similar reactions to this new landscape. Fear and paralysis. Not moving for not understanding where or how (or why) they should be messaging and engaging with these new customers.

**One Step At A Time**

So how should a company move forward? Take the time to understand what is different since coming out of the hatch. Relearn about your market and target clients. Audit your current message, delivery message and technology and make sure it still fits the needs of your clients (and SEO, and mobile, and content, etc). Put a plan together to start taking a step at a time to realign your message, your target and your delivery. Change will be needed. Understand that before you start anything and it may make your leadership team uncomfortable, yet it still needs to take place.

Unfortunately, the companies that are not understanding the world they sit in, still doing things like they did seven or eight years ago are just getting farther behind by the minute (and dollar spent).

Generally these changes happen on a regular basis in marketing, but it feels gradual (since companies adapt on a regular basis as things arise). It’s different when you have been in a holding pattern for half a decade and the world moved on without you. A major step is needed to get back in alignment, as painful and scary as that may feel.

Brent Eastman serves as Chief Brand Alchemist with Alchemy, a Troy, Mich.-based brand strategy and market
Please submit articles for the SCORED Quarterly’s next issue by 10/15/14

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Mission
SCORE strengthens small businesses, local communities, and America by supporting our nation’s proud heritage of entrepreneurs seeking opportunities and

Executive Officers FY 2014:

Chapter Chair  Lorne Greenwood  General Management
              Liaison with SCORE Headquarters
Vice Chair     Thomas Raymond   Marketing / Communications
Vice Chair     Jim Muir         Workshop Coordinator
Vice Chair     Gwendolyn Esco Davis  Fund Raising
Secretary     Mike Berger       Secretary
Treasurer     David Hennessy   Treasury Management
Office Manager Verna Adams    Mentor Support Assistant

IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING BACK
A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL MENTORS THAT RESPONDED TO THE REQUEST FOR PERSONAL DONATIONS

The Intel Foundation matches the time that Intel employees and U.S. retirees spend volunteering with a cash donation once the individual has volunteered at one organization for at least 20 hours in one year. Any donations made to SCORE through this program will be allocated to the volunteer's chapter by the SCORE Foundation. So if you, or someone you know, is a current or former Intel employee please pass along this message.

The SCORE Foundation account number is: 22873

Corporate Sponsors

Mark Your Calendar

SBA: Orientation—8(a) Business Development Program
First Wednesday of Each Month
9:00 am 11:00 am
MMSDC HQ
100 River Place Drive, Suite 300  Detroit, MI 48207
(for directions call 313-873-3200)

SCORE: Meet & Greet (Meet-Up)
November 2014
(Location and Time TBA)