

Girls-Lead

FLIC, YMCA launch a program to develop middle and high-school females into the titans of tomorrow

SPECIAL TO THE BUZZ

The Westborough-based Female Leadership Interest Council (FLIC) announced on March 14th that it is partnering with the YMCA of Central Massachusetts to launch a Girls-Lead Program to empower and mentor middle and high school girls to develop strong leadership skills.

The exciting new pilot program offers both FLIC and the YMCA the opportunity to utilize their combined resources to inspire young women in our region.

"FLIC is thrilled to develop this important program in collaboration with the YMCA is an effort to reach out to our future female leaders and encourage them with mentoring and job shadowing experiences through the volunteer commitment of our Advisory Board and membership," Deborah Penta, FLIC Founder and CEO, said.

"**THE ESTABLISHMENT** of the Girls-Lead Program will focus on experiential education, successful modeling of female career role models and empowering girls with confidence-building skills," Penta said.

"Deborah Penta has put together a strong, dynamic leadership team at FLIC and the staff and volunteers at the YMCA are so excited about our new partnership. It will allow us to really reach out a helping hand to the young girls in our community," the Y's Betsy Moquin said. The YMCA offers successful youth leadership programs and through the hard work of its staff and volunteers has empowered hundreds of kids over the years. It was when the organization began to see increased female enrollments in its leadership programs, and reviewed the most recent class ratios—which had substantially more females than males participating—that the YMCA began discussions with FLIC which resulted in collaboration between the two groups. This fostered a unique initiative designed to inspire future leadership for girls; as a result, a new and exciting program emerged.

FLIC ADVISORY BOARD members Carol Sexton, Area VP of Sovereign Bank, Diane Power, Executive Director of Mirick O'Connell, Deborah Penta of PENTA Communications Inc. and Betsy Moquin and her team at the YMCA will serve as the Steering Committee for this partnership initiative. The Girls-Lead Program will kick off at the start of the new academic year in September 2008. Girls-Lead will present future female leaders with tours of companies where women are at the helm or in leadership positions. It will include speakers from a myriad of industries: women who have crashed through the glass ceiling or who can speak to the challenges they've overcome in becom-

ing a female leader.

There will be programs that will prepare the girls for job interviews and where they'll learn image-enhancing skills.

"This is a true 'win-win' situation for both the volunteers and the program participants as the Girls-Lead Program will provide a wonderful opportunity for community members to mentor our young people. What better way to give back than to watch a young girl grow and prosper," Moquin said.

"It's an exciting partnership," Penta said. "We look forward to seeing what a difference this will make to inspire those future leaders right here in our local communities."

New & Different



YMCA Staff Members Ashley, left, and Nicole, right, are pictured volunteering in the lobby of the Y's Boroughs Family Branch in Westborough. They were helping with the Y's annual Strong Kids campaign.