

Jewish Federation's Women's Professional Network Celebrates Its Inaugural Year

"Forging relationships, building community" is the tagline for the Jewish Federation's Women's Professional Network, launched in August 2008.

Under the inspired leadership of chair Fern Ingber Epley, and outstanding Steering Committee members Cary Bernstein, Kelly Gaines, Pam Levy, Jenny Meiselman, Gale Osborne, Jane Rabinovitz and Linda Seigel, the vision and concept for the group was formed. An informal first meeting at The Light Factory brought 46 women together,

many who had never been to a federation function before, to talk about why they were there. You could feel the excitement in the room, as women shared their feelings about having the opportunity to meet like-minded women after work in an informal setting to share a glass of wine and make new friends. Erica Henning attended the August meeting and said, "Seven weeks after giving birth to my twins, I was desperate to have an intelligent conversation with a woman that didn't involve my babies' eating or

sleeping habits. After rummaging through my closet, I found a pair of pants that fit, dusted off my purse that had been tossed aside in favor of a diaper bag, and headed to the first WPN meeting. At this meeting, I found a great group of professional Jewish women. As a relative newcomer to Charlotte at the time, I was thrilled to meet other women that shared my background and interests. Through the WPN, I've made



Kelly Gaines with her sister Pat.



Fern Ingber Epley with Arlene Goldstein.



new professional contacts, as well as friends. Going forward, I'm excited to serve as a member of the WPN's Steering Committee and continue to help make this such a successful group."

Over 80 women were on hand when The Women's Professional Network was officially launched in September 2008 with a fabulous event sponsored by Belk SouthPark. After a wine and cheese reception, Arlene Goldstein, Vice President Trend Merchandising/Fashion Director Belk, Inc., talked about "The Most Wanted Looks for Fall." A dessert reception, drawing for free suits and goody bags for each guest

rounded out the fantastic evening.

Jennifer Golynsky, Director of Human Resources NovaQuest LLC, facilitated the December program "Business is Personal." In a Speed Networking format, women connected over such topics Jewish Geography, Dinner for Two, Dream vs. Reality and Join the Club. A woman could connect with others because she hailed from the Mid-west, wanted to have dinner with Sheryl Crow, dreamed of owning her own business, or wanted to join a hiking club. During each rotation, women exchanged business cards and made new friends. "I enjoyed

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