
Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update
March, 2002

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1. A Message from the President

Hello and welcome to this month's Minnesota Council for Quality newsletter. To this edition I would like to welcome many of the Council's past stakeholders. We have been mining our databases to try to locate those that have had a stake in the Council's successful past: customers who have purchased our services, Evaluators who have contributed their expertise and volunteer time, partner organizations who have collaborated on services and events. I firmly believe in the value of relationships; in fact, our future success is dependent on it. So if you know of a stakeholder that may be interested in following the progress of the Council and might be interested in receiving this newsletter, please submit their name and email to mc4quality@aol.com. Thank you.

And please watch for additional updates on the progress of our vision. Next month, we will highlight some of the changes we are making in 2002 with our core service, the assessment/Award process.

Sincerely, Brian Lassiter, President

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2. Announcing 2001 Minnesota Quality Awards

The Minnesota Council for Quality recently announced the 2001 Minnesota Quality Awards in private ceremonies. This year's Award participants were Chanhassen-based DRIASI and the General Chemistry class of Chaska High School.

DRIASI, a third party administrator that specializes in administrative services for the financial services industry, received the Commitment level of the Award. DRIASI has been on an improvement journey since Mr. Dick Votel, CEO, joined the firm more than two years ago. Under Mr. Votel's

leadership, financial performance and other business results have seen noticeable improvements. "We believed that getting an outside assessment of our improvement efforts would help us continue to build upon the performance levels we had already attained." The Award was presented at an employee appreciation meeting on March 7th.

Chaska General Chemistry, taught by James Crannell and Chris Lenius, received the Advancement level of the Award. Though use of the Criteria and framework is growing in the education sector, Chaska Chemistry's use of the Criteria in a classroom setting is unique and may be first application of its type in the country. And with two employees, it may also be the smallest organization to have applied for a quality award. Mr. Crannell states: "This assessment has proven to be useful at understanding our processes at the classroom level. But the real value is in improved quality of instruction and results. I believe that any educational organization could benefit from that." Chaska Chemistry's award was presented in a School Board meeting last month.

The Minnesota Council for Quality would like to congratulate both organizations on their achievements and wish them continued success in the future.

3. Seeking 2002 Board of Evaluators

As mentioned in the February newsletter, we are moving to a rolling assessment/Award cycle to accommodate our customers' and Evaluators' needs. As such, we are providing training twice a year. We invite all new and returning Evaluators to make application to join this year's Board of Evaluators.

Please note the new dates!

For new Evaluators, applications are due April 12 and one-day training on the Baldrige/MQA Criteria will be conducted April 26. Three-day Evaluator training is May 29-31.

For previous Evaluators, applications (updates to your previous application) are due May 17 and three-day training is May 29-31.

Pricing has been reduced (and in some cases eliminated) to encourage participation, particularly from our more senior, experienced Evaluators. We are also exempting current Baldrige Examiners from the training requirement, as training is provided in Washington.

For more information on the benefits of becoming an Evaluator or if you need

an application, please email Kathryn at mc4quality@aol.com.

4. Quest for Excellence

The Quest for Excellence is scheduled for April 7-10 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. As many of you know, the Quest for Excellence is a great opportunity to learn from -- and network with -- last year's Baldrige Award winners. This year, executives and managers from five companies will be featured: Clarke American Checks (manufacturing), Pal's Sudden Service (small business), Chugach School District (education), Pearl River School District (education), and the University of Wisconsin-Stout (education).

If you have questions, please visit the Baldrige website at www.quality.nist.gov or contact the Council at mc4quality@aol.com.

5. Dealing with the Stress of Change

Occasionally, the Council will announce opportunities and events that we feel might benefit our members and stakeholders. The Performance Improvement Network (PIN) is a non-profit professional association that provides a forum for participants to share information on principles, processes, and practices that improve organizational performance and/or competitiveness. Since the Council's and PIN's missions are so closely aligned, we would like to announce the next public PIN discussion, scheduled for April 4, on the topic of managing stress.

These are stressful times. The events of September 11, the sluggish economy, and the continuous cycle of corporate lay-offs all serve to elevate anxiety in our professional and personal lives. To be at one's best under these conditions requires self-management skills. The next PIN meeting will feature Mr. Bill Murray, co-founder of Eagle Learning Center. Mr. Murray will describe the two sides each of us has within: a natural high-performer and a low performer. One side never lacks courage, always encourages others, and always strives to achieve; the other side is the deficient, defensive side of each of us – the one that puts forth the minimum effort required to keep his/her job. How we ultimately perform as individuals at work – or at home – is dependent on with which part of our personality we are using.

The discussion is Thursday, April 4. Networking begins at 7:30 am, the discussion lasts from 8:00-9:00. The location is Mill Place: 111 3rd Ave S, Suite 400, Minneapolis. Cost is \$15.

If you are interested in attending the PIN discussion or would like more information, please visit the PIn website at www.improvementnetwork.org.
Eeference you are involved with the Minnesota Council for Quality.