

Shelton woman chosen by Valley Chamber to receive grant

By Susan Pensanti Hellwell
Weekly Correspondent

Mary Jane Paris of Shelton, was one of two Valley recipients awarded a \$500 grant through the Greater Valley Chamber Women in Networking (WIN) Entrepreneurial Grant program. Accepting her award at a luncheon held on Dec. 12 at Homewood Suites by Hilton in Stratford, Paris thanked the board members and staff of the Chamber for their support, encouragement, and assistance during the past year.

"This is just amazing," said Paris. "When my last job was eliminated in February, I became a 'corporate refugee.' I have more than 25 years in sales management, retail banking, training, recruiting, project management, event planning and community leadership. I decided the time was right to develop my own business. One month later I started Positive Impact Consulting Services, LLC, a consulting business that specializes in seminars to build and strengthen leadership skills for front-line managers, supervisors, team leaders and employees."

Paris currently serves as president and executive board member of the Fairfield County Chapter of Financial Women International, is a member of the Foundation's Paragon Circle as a workshop design team member and volunteer seminar leader. Paris also is an adjunct professor in the Business Administration Department at Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, and a member of the Business Office Technology Advisory Board and is a member of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce Leadership and Ambassador programs.

Paris recognized networking would be crucial to building a successful business, and with the encouragement of friends and family, she joined the Chamber.

"Joining the Chamber is one of the best things I've ever done in my life," she said.

Shortly after becoming a Chamber member Paris became involved in WIN, one of the groups within the organization. Members of the group encouraged Paris to apply for their annual

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Submitted photo

The Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce Women in Networking Group presented the 2006 Women's Entrepreneurial Grant Recipients at their recent Holiday Luncheon. Committee Members and recipients pictured L-R: Lorraine Bellico, Anray Lithographers; Kellie Newman, Newman and Company; Cara MocarSKI, Cutting Edge Communications; Jennifer Bull, Dworken, Hillman, LaMorte & Sterczala PC and Chair of the WIN Group; Grant Recipient Therese Kennett, R-Way Signs; Grant Recipient Mary Jane Paris, Positive Impact Consulting Services; Barbara Hayslip, LTCI Partners; Annie Hathway, New Wave Technologies; Sharon Massafra, Home Instead Senior Care; and Bill Purcell, Greater Valley Chamber President.