

Press Release - July 2006

Mendocino Study Club Sponsors West Company Scholarships

The Mendocino Study Club has committed to sponsoring two scholarships allowing local entrepreneurs to attend workshops at West Company, Mendocino's non-profit source for business training and advice. These Building a Better Business Scholarships provide for two potential business owners to go through West Company's core curriculum. Attendees learn the many aspects of business ownership and at a completion produce a well-formulated business plan. Scholarships will be available to coastal residents who have a financial need, "Clarity of Goals" and wish to pursue an "Improvement of Status".

The Mendocino Study Club was founded in 1908 and is the oldest service club on the coast. For many years the club has supported the Mendocino Library. In the 1940's the club began sponsoring scholarships for young women interested in entering nursing school in order to address the nursing shortage in the county. Since then the Study Club has established the Neva Cannon Scholarship Fund to address the teacher shortage. Now the Study Club has is addressing the need for more local business ownership by sponsoring a training opportunity for local entrepreneurs. The Mendocino Study Club is currently formulating big plans in celebration of its one hundred year anniversary in 2008.

West Company is not nearly as old as the Mendocino Study Club but just as committed to serving the community. Since 1988 West Company has been providing training and consulting services for Mendocino's microenterprises. A microenterprise is a business with 5 or fewer employees. In the last three years, West Company has provided over 2000 hours of training and 87 students have graduated from the workshop training series. West Company has offices in Ukiah and Fort Bragg and remains committed to serving the entire county. To that end West Company hosts a bi-weekly radio show on KZYX where entrepreneurs from around the county can call in for assistance. Currently a County of Mendocino community development block grant provides the majority of West Company's funding. This funding is earned on an hour by hour basis with West Company being paid only when county residents use their services. The city of Fort Bragg will fund a similar program for city businesses and residents which will begin later this

summer. These programs are available for those who qualify based on household income and residency. The Mendocino Study Club Scholarships will allow those who might fall outside these parameters but are still financially unable to access West Company services.

West Company's mission of "Assisting microenterprises to grow creating self sufficiency and wealth" dovetails nicely with the Study Club's purpose "to promote the highest spiritual, intellectual and cultural opportunities for its members. To provide for the leadership of women in the community and to provide service to the community". If you are interested in sponsoring or receiving a scholarship you can contact West Company at (707) 964-7571.