

Aspire Higher: Coaching For All Types Of Businesses

Following a career in sales, Regina Bonolo was looking for a change that would enable her to help others and decided to go into life and business coaching, eventually opening Aspire Higher in 1999.

"I was in corporate sales for 12 years and I realized that I needed to do something to make a difference in people's lives," said Bonolo, a resident of Hollis Hills.

While pregnant with her first child, Bonolo asked a coach she knew through another organization to mentor her. For three months, she acted as a coach to 12 people free of charge. When the three months were up, seven of those people hired her.

"I knew I found my passion," she said. "I really, really love what I do."

Bonolo formed Aspire Higher, which focuses on business coaching. She also does career and life coaching on a referral basis. Her clients range from small, entrepreneurial businesses to large corporate ones.

"The benefit of business coaching is you have an optimistic advocate who's always going to be there to support your endeavors," Bonolo said.

Among the many other benefits, Bonolo said that some of the ways coaching assists is by accelerating success, providing clarity about priorities, helping to leverage resources, teaching how to delegate and showing how to

create balance in their life.

Along with providing coaching services, Aspire Higher also conducts customized business skills workshops. Some of the topics that have been discussed in the past include unique marketing strategies, sales training and telemarketing.

"I think it really comes down to what the client needs," Bonolo said.

When first working with a business, Bonolo said that she performs an assessment to see where a person is with their business, what their issues are and what improvements they want to make. She also determines if they want coaching or workshops. A strategy is also created.

Although much of the coaching is done by the phone or through e-mail, Bonolo said that in person coaching is also available.

Bonolo recently rejoined the Queens Chamber of Commerce last June, saying that it helps to building relationships and that it allows her to create a network of resources that she can refer her clients to.

"It's a very robust, diverse membership," Bonolo said. "It's a wonderful community of people."

For more information on Aspire Higher, visit www.aspire-highercoach.com or contact Bonolo by calling 718-465-0865 (office) or 646-262-5418 (cell). She can also be reached by e-mailing regina@aspirehigher.com.



Regina Bonolo

American Red Cross in Greater New York: Responding To The Needs Of The Community

The American Red Cross in Greater New York (ARC/GNY) is a humanitarian partner and a key participant in New York's plans and programs to help the 9 million people in New York City and Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan counties prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The largest Red Cross Chapter in the U.S., ARC/GNY provides immediate aid to more than 100,000 people affected by more than 3,000 emergencies a year, including fires, floods, building collapses and blackouts.

The chapter continually works with partner agencies to plan and prepare for major natural and man-made disasters. It helps New York residents and businesses prepare for emergencies by offering hundreds of courses in first aid, CPR and aquatics and free emergency preparedness training programs and resources.

"Through October, the Red Cross has responded to 687 fires and other emergencies in Queens this year, and we have assisted 2,613 adults and children with food, shelter or counseling," said Joan Foley, who is the Director of the Queens Chapter. "In addition to our daily responses to help the people of Queens who are affected by emergencies, over the summer our volunteers and staff mobilized quickly to help residents through the summer blackout, which to date is the largest Red Cross response in New York City this year."

For more than a week after the first lights flickered, 217 volunteers and staff provided residents of Astoria, Woodside, Sunnyside and other communities with more than 130,000 bottles of water and juice along with more than 100,000 hot meals and sandwiches. Fresh fruit, snacks and even baby formula were provided during this local relief effort. The Red



Joan Foley

Cross allocated more than \$600,000 to assist Queens and even help Brooklyn and The Bronx during summer power outages.

In addition to providing assistance for emergency responses, every day the Red Cross teaches lifesaving skills and offers individual/family preparedness information and training.

Each year close to 100,000 New Yorkers enroll in one of more than 30 lifesaving skills courses such as infant/child/adult CPR, first aid and lifeguard instruction. With regular sessions offered at the Queens

office. Customized courses are prepared and delivered to organizations for employees, volunteers and members.

More than 100,000 adults and children annually receive free preparedness training at presentations, special events, customized programs, and through CD's, printed materials and the chapter website (www.nyredcross.org).

The Queens office of ARC/GNY has blanketed the borough with community outreach programs that deliver important safety and emergency preparedness information to the diverse cultural, ethnic and religious population. These have included:

- Junta Hispana @ Flushing Meadows Corona Park, where Red Cross volunteers distributed safety and preparedness information in Spanish to more than 3,000 people.

- The First Annual Family Day/Banner Day sponsored by New York City Council Member Thomas White at Baisley Pond Park in Jamaica. More than 1,000 residents received information about Red Cross programs.

- Community Partnership Day in Forest Hills sponsored by New York City Council Member Melinda Katz and the Forest Hills Civic Association at P.S. 174. Red Cross youth volunteers distributed emergency preparedness information.

- The Charles B. Wang Community Health Center in Flushing, a non-profit health care facility providing health care to the Asian community, hosted its annual Good Health Day Fair where the Red Cross distributed emergency preparedness information in Mandarin and English.

In Queens, the Red Cross is located at 138-02 Queens Boulevard in Briarwood, and for more information call 718-558-0053.