

## **Teaching women to invest in themselves**

*July 27, 2011, 02:58 AM By Yvette Borja Daily Journal correspondent*

The term “investing” involves more than just stocks and bonds, according to the women of the Hewins Financial Group.

The Hewins Financial Advisors, in an effort to help women invest in themselves — both in their personal and financial lives — has begun a series of ongoing luncheons titled “Invest in Yourself.” Hewins is planning on holding the luncheons regularly, about once every three months.

The kickoff luncheon was held on Friday, July 15 and featured three speakers, Colleen Jordan Hallinan, Elena Daciuk and Susan Kokores, each with their own specific skill sets that offered three different angles from which to understand female empowerment.

Susan Kokores, co-founder of the nonprofit Women Achievement Network and Development Alliance gave an overview of the organization, outlining their mission and their accomplishments thus far. WANDA is dedicated to educating low-income single mothers how to effectively invest their money

“We are helping to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty,” Kokores said.

WANDA offers women a three-year long course on smart investing and then matches the savings they accumulate over that time. The funds they acquire can then be used for college for either themselves or their children, as startup money for a business, retirement funds, or, in some cases, for the purchase of a new home.

Glowe Chang, who also works for WANDA, praised the nonprofit for giving resources to those who would otherwise not have access to information about financial investment.

“You can learn something no matter what your education base,” Chang said.

Elena Daciuk, a wardrobe consultant, turns attention toward a different topic: affordable fashion. Daciuk aids her clients in reimagining their current wardrobe to create new outfits without having to spend more money.

“Women love two-thirds of what they buy and one-third of what is in their closet. That just doesn't make sense,” Daciuk said.

For Daciuk, practicality trumps trendiness.

“A classic piece, such as a black blazer, is a much better investment than a funky piece that will only last you one or two seasons,” Daciuk said.

She advises only buying clothing pieces that could be worn in at least three different ways. Creating a new outfit does not necessarily mean buying new pieces, but instead, can simply mean adding an accessory that will give it a different look, she said.

Daciuk explained that a person’s closet should match their lifestyle.

“Whatever percentage a certain activity takes up of your life, that percentage should match up with the amount of clothes you have for that activity in your closet,” Daciuk said.

Colleen Jordan Hallinan, senior vice president of Hewins Financial Advisors, provided tips for smart investing as well as an overview of the services that the company provides for its clients. Hallinan described her approach to investing as straightforward and practical.

“Reacting to the market is like Vegas. It’s a gamble,” Hallinan said.

She explained that people’s impulsive reactions to large economic crises only worsen the existing market.

A way to avoid being impacted by the constantly fluctuating market is simple: a moderate, well-diversified portfolio, she said. Hallinan explained, with this as a starting point, Hewins Financial Advisors will then personalize their client’s investment strategy to best fit their specific needs.

“Listening to over-generalized suggestions is like investment pornography. Mainstream investing isn’t always the answer,” Hallinan said.

Lynn Cole, a luncheon attendee, said she enjoyed the luncheon’s diversity of topics and would definitely recommend the event to her friends.

“It was just enough time, not too technical and lots of fun,” Cole said.