



Connects students, parents and educators to career opportunities through business partnerships, training and resources.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT:



Thank you to **Colonial Life** for its ongoing support of MEBA. The company's recent gift of \$5,000 will help **MEBA** continue its work to strengthen the connection between education and business in the Midlands.

"MEBA's ability to engage students within all grade levels in career awareness, exploration and preparation is a leading factor in Colonial Life's decision to support MEBA," explains **Marie McGehee**, the company's manager of community relations. "MEBA has the opportunity to positively affect high school graduation rates and influence workforce development initiatives - two initiatives that are very important to Colonial Life."

Colonial Life's donation supports the continuation of many of MEBA's programs and services including the *Your Child Is Job #1* program. *Your Child Is Job #1* is offered at local worksites to provide parents and caregivers with the information they need to provide career guidance, academic encouragement and overall support to their students. Recently, **Kay Barlow**, MEBA's community and parent education director, shared information on the important topic of "Conflict Resolution" with parents and caregivers at Colonial Life.

Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company is a market leader in providing insurance benefits for employees and their families through their workplace, along with individual benefits education, advanced yet simple-to-use enrollment technology and quality personal service. Colonial Life's corporate social responsibility investments are designed to enhance the quality of life for Midlands area residents. Nearly 50 percent of the company's charitable giving and employee volunteer efforts are focused on educational initiatives and outreach programs. Colonial Life is based in Columbia, SC, and is a subsidiary of Unum Group. For more information, visit [www.coloniallife.com](http://www.coloniallife.com). ■

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## *We Need You!*

To find out how you can support MEBA with your dollars and sense, [click here](#).



[www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com)

# MEBA's 2009 Orientation

## Celebrating Success. Looking Ahead.

MEBA's 2009 orientation celebrated the many successes of 2008-2009 and kicked off another great school year of events, programs and opportunities.

Held on August 28, 2009, at Midlands Technical College's Northeast Campus, the annual event signifies a passing of the gavel as the previous year's leaders are recognized and new leaders assume their positions. **Dr. Marshall (Sonny) White, Jr.**, president of **Midlands Technical College**, and former chair of MEBA's board of directors was thanked for his service and dedication during the past year, and **Barbara Blau** was applauded as the board's new chair. Blau is the founder and president of **DP Professionals**, a Columbia-based business specializing in placing highly trained IT professionals for contract employment and direct placement in a variety of industries such as banking, healthcare and insurance.

MEBA alliance and committee chairs were recognized and presented with a certificate to thank them for their service to MEBA and our mission of strengthening the connection between education and business in the Midlands.

The meeting also focused on *Personal Pathways to Success* in South Carolina and featured a keynote

presentation by **Lonnie Emard**, executive director of the **Consortium for Enterprise Systems Management**. Emard shared information about how the Information Technology Alliance is working to ensure students are aware of career opportunities, skill requirements and workforce needs related to IT.

Other speakers included **Bill Barlow**, a senior representative with **Kuder**, who spoke about the importance of **Connect 2 Business**; **Mary Lynn Kinley**, public relations director for **Fairfield Memorial Hospital**, who spoke about the importance of MEBA's *Your Child Is Job #1* program; and **Sherry Rivers**, principal, and **Matthew Finethy**, student, **Heyward Career and Technology Center**, who spoke about the positive impacts of the EEDA. ■



*Matthew Finethy, a student at Heyward Career and Technology Center who plans to attend Midlands Technical College, with Dr. Marshall (Sonny) White, president of MTC and immediate past chair of MEBA's board of directors.*

### *Thank you to our 2008-2009 Alliance and Committee Chairs*

Dave McCallister, Total Comfort  
Architecture & Construction

Jennifer Suber, EdVenture  
Arts, AV, Technology & Communications

Cory Chambers, UPS  
Business Management & Administration

Peg Edwards, SC Dept. of Juvenile Justice  
Career Connections

Sue Cirillo Bailey, Richland One  
Career Specialists

Ray Boland, Lexington/Richland Five  
Curriculum Alignment

Donna Lawrence, MTC  
Education & Training

Randy Evans, Heyward Career & Technology Center  
Equal Access

David Highsmith, MTC  
Guidance

Xavier Meier, SC Tourism & Hospitality Education Foundation  
Hospitality & Tourism

Rochelle Tindal, SC Army National Guard  
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security

Tiffanney Conrad, Tyson Foods  
Manufacturing

Charles Ambos, SCANA  
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

Brad Lindsey, UPS  
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

# Faces of MEBA: Barbara Blau

**Barbara Blau**, MEBA's new board of directors chair, is no stranger to education and workforce issues. A former elementary school teacher and the founder and current president of a Columbia-based employment placement firm, Blau is well-suited for the position. Add to that her role as a parent and grandparent as well as her firm belief in giving back, and you have a perfect fit.



Barbara Blau

"I've always been driven by the fact that we do not live in a vacuum," explains Blau. "Part of being alive is looking beyond what's right in front of you to see how we fit into a grander scheme and how we can make a difference. We are all connected, and it's our responsibility to help repair the world."

Blau became involved with MEBA through her work with the **Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce**. She was immediately impressed with MEBA's mission and work, seeing it as an exciting and innovative way to impact students, parents, educators and the business community. From **MEBA's Midlands Middle College** to career development resources to *Your Child Is Job #1* sessions, Blau is proud of the guidance MEBA is able to provide to the community and the way in which MEBA helps students reach their full potential. "We have to make sure students are aware of the opportunities out there for them, and the earlier we do this, the better," emphasizes Blau. "MEBA helps students find their direction and succeed, and that benefits everyone."

Blau credits the strong partnership with **Midlands Technical College**, the involvement of the business community and school districts, as well as the tireless

efforts from a practiced staff as three of the main reasons for MEBA's success. Still, Blau knows there is more work to be done. As board chair, one of her primary goals is to increase awareness of MEBA. "We are one of the Midlands best kept secrets, and it shouldn't be that way," asserts Blau. "MEBA is an incredible organization doing amazing things, and we need to broadcast that so more people, and the community as a whole, can benefit from our work."

A graduate of **Carnegie Mellon University**, Blau has served South Carolina's IT personnel market for more than two decades. Founder and president of **DP Professionals**, Blau also serves on the executive committee and board of advisors for the **Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce** and the board of **EngenuitySC**. ■

*Faces of MEBA is a monthly feature designed to highlight those individuals who exemplify MEBA's mission. If you know of someone who we should feature, please email Ashley Thomas at [athomas@mebasc.com](mailto:athomas@mebasc.com).*

## MEBA Board of Directors 2009-2010 Leadership:

**Barbara Blau, Chair**  
President and Founder, DP  
Professionals

**George Zara, Vice Chair**  
President & Chief Executive  
Officer, Sisters of Charity  
Providence Hospitals

## Newly Appointed Members

**Harold Cecil**  
Michelin

**Dr. Allen Coles**  
Benedict College

**Dr. Chester Floyd**  
Interim Superintendent  
Lexington School District 3

**Marie Milam**  
Acting Superintendent  
Fairfield County Schools

## 44th Annual NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION POETRY & POSTER CONTEST

November is **National Career Development Month**, and MEBA is assisting the **NCDA** in promoting its annual Poster and Poetry Contest. This year's theme is "Inspire Your Career - Empower Your Life." Please make sure your students know of this opportunity and encourage them to participate. Contest rules and applications are available on the "Resources" section of MEBA's Web site or by [clicking here](#).

Please send the top three winners in each category your students/adults are eligible to enter to MEBA's Stacey Westberry at 1106 12th Street, Cayce, SC 29033, no later than December 4, 2009.

## Your Child Is Job #1: Back to School Basics

It's that time of year again when students leave the leisure of summer behind to join new and old friends in the classroom. Whether your child is a preschooler or a senior, MEBA's **Kay Barlow** offers the following "Back to School Basics" to help get the year off to a great start.

- ✓ Emphasize the importance of a good education. Set a good example and model a love of learning.
- ✓ Start early with curfews and expectations. Let your student know the plan early and go over the rules before they need to be enforced.
- ✓ Encourage three meals a day. A hungry student cannot focus.
- ✓ Make certain transportation and emergency procedures are clearly outlined and understood. Help younger students memorize bus number, location and stop.

- ✓ Have clothes ready and bookbags packed the night before.
- ✓ Be an encourager and let your student of any age know your love for them is unconditional.

### In Numbers...

School was out for the summer, but Kay Barlow still connected with many parents and caregivers. Check out the many places and people she reached with her informative and entertaining presentations on topics ranging from summer learning to single parenting to health and science careers:

City of Columbia -- 4  
Department of Juvenile Justice -- 45  
Ben Arnold Beverage Company -- 153  
Colonial Life -- 30  
Fairfield County School District -- 3200  
Richland One Television -- 10,000

**Summer Total: 13,432 People Reached!**

## ISAAC RECOGNIZED AS 2009 MIDLANDS TECHNOLOGY CHAMPION

**Mitchell Isaac** of **Spring Valley High School** was publicly recognized as one of the state's "Technology Champions" on June 21 at a special celebration kicking off the **South Carolina Department of Education's 2009 Education and**

**Business Summit** in Greenville. The Technology Champion Celebration was presented by the **South Carolina Education and Business Alliance** and sponsored by the **Silver Crescent Foundation**. Selection is based on outstanding academic performance, dedication and commitment to a career goal.

As one of South Carolina's 2009 Technology Champions, Isaac received a \$500 Savings Bond from the **South Carolina Army National Guard**. Host schools, business partners who provided internships, and parents were also recognized for their important roles in supporting these individuals. ■



*Top Photo: Mitchell Isaac, center, is pictured with his parents, and Mary Morgan (far left), work-based learning coordinator at Spring Valley High School, and Stacey Westberry (far right), professional development director and regional career specialist for MEBA, at the Technology Champions celebration at the 2009 Education and Business Summit. Bottom Photo: Isaac is presented with a \$500 Savings Bond from the South Carolina Army National Guard by Captain Dwight Bradham.*

## Midlands Career Fairs

Career Fairs provide a great way for students to learn about various careers, educational requirements and opportunities. Industry representatives can share their career experience and expertise, helping not only participating students but also the Midlands workforce. Check out these upcoming Midlands career fairs and see how you can get involved.

### **Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Career Fair**

September 29, 2009, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Contact Mark Ready at 896-6740 (o) or 466-2316 (m).

### **Lexington District 2 Career Fair for 7th Graders**

November 6, 2009, 8:00 am - 12:30 pm

Granby Education Center, Cayce

Contact Kade Chapman at 955-3752 or  
kchapman@lex2.org.

### **Dutch Fork Middle School Career Fair**

November 18, 2009, 8:10 - 11:05 am

Contact Kama Staton at 732-8167 ext. 302 or  
kstaton@lex5.k12.sc.us.

### **Dent Middle School Annual Career Fair**

November 20, 2009, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Contact Trina Newborn at 699-2750 ext. 726167 or  
tnewborn@richland2.org or Joyce Simons at 699-2750  
ext 72198 or jsimons@richland2.org.

### **Chapin Middle School Career Day**

February 26, 2010, 8:00 - 11:00 am

Contact Katie Yeoman at 345-1466 ext 164 or  
kyeoman@lex5.k12.sc.us.

### **Webber Elementary School Career Day**

April 1, 2010

Contact Mrs. Thera Leonard at 353-4005 or tkinsler-  
leonard@richlandone.org.

For information on how to hold a successful career fair, check out MEBA's career fair "How To" guide online at [www.mebasc.com/resources](http://www.mebasc.com/resources). ■

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Equal Access Committee**

September 25, 2009, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm  
SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department

### **Global Career Development Facilitator Workshop**

September 28, 2009, 9:00 - 11:00 am  
SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department

### **Healthcare Educator Field Study**

September 30, 2009, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

### **National Career Pathways Annual Conference**

September 30 - October 3, 2009  
Hyatt Regency - Atlanta, GA  
[www.npcn.info](http://www.npcn.info)

### **Executive Committee**

October 9, 2009, 7:45 - 9:00 am  
MTC Beltline Campus, President's Conference Room

### **Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Student Career Day**

*"Blueprint for Your Future"*  
October 12, 2009  
MTC Airport Campus

### **Healthcare Student Career Day "Prescription for Your Future"**

October 13, 2009  
MTC Airport Campus

### **Global Career Development Facilitator Professional Development Workshop**

October 20, 2009, 9:00 - 11:00 am  
MTC Airport Campus, AC Room 143

### **Hospitality & Tourism Educator Field Study**

October 28, 2009



[www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com)

Midlands Education and Business Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its programs and activities.

EConnections is an electronic publication of Midlands Education and Business Alliance. For more information, please contact Ashley Thomas at [ashleythomas@mebasc.com](mailto:ashleythomas@mebasc.com).