

## SUPERHERO SITES EDUCATION AS A KEY TO BUSINESS GROWTH

(ALPHARETTA, GA) Sonya Beam, co-owner of the superhero themed promotions firm, The P.O.P. Shop, cites executive education as a key to business growth. Mrs. Beam received the Certified Advertising Specialist (CAS) designation, among other opportunities to participate in executive education. She says, "My husband, Brian, and I started our business like many entrepreneurs, lots of long hours, hard work and a heavy concentration of working "in" the business. Beginning in 2006, one education opportunity led to another and executive education became a priority. It has given us both focus and accountability to work 'on' the business. We have made a variety of changes to our business and have seen a positive improvement in our sales, brand and our corporate environment."



After acquiring over 100 education hours and many years experience in the promotional products industry, Sonya Beam passed a certification examination administered by Promotional Products Association

International ([www.PPAI.org](http://www.PPAI.org)) to receive the Certified Advertising Specialist (CAS) industry certification. Mrs. Beam is on schedule to test for the Master Advertising Specialist (MAS) designation in 2009, at which time her husband Brian Beam will test for the CAS designation.

Individuals with CAS/MAS certification designation are recognized as industry leaders—those who have attained a superior standard of professionalism, knowledge and experience. "These individuals are committed to professional success. Making the commitment to pursue CAS/MAS is a benchmark of the effort individuals are willing to make to ensure their future business success and the overall professionalism of the industry," said Steve Slagle, CAE, PPAI president and CEO.

One of the ways Sonya Beam accumulated hours toward CAS education, included her involvement in the TUCK-WBENC Executive Education Program, presented by IBM ([www.wbenc.org](http://www.wbenc.org)). Mrs. Beam was one of 50 certified Women Business Enterprises selected to attend the week long Ivy League executive education experience provided by Dartmouth College. The primary case study was the participant's own business, and the intensive learning experience focused primarily on increasing the competitive advantage of these 50 WBE companies. Participants took away a wealth of knowledge that is immediately applicable, plus a strong network of relationships.

The P.O.P. Shop ([www.thepopshop.com](http://www.thepopshop.com)) is a superhero-themed promotions firm that blends creative printing, packaging, promotions and branded products to build respected brands. The P.O.P. Shop is certified as a Women's Business Enterprise, and has previously been named one of Atlanta's Top Ten Promotions Firms by the Atlanta Business Chronicle.