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business briefs



Jay Lifson

Orinda Chemist Elected 2013 President of ACS

Marinda Li Wu was elected last month the 2013 American Chemist Society (ACS) President. The long time Orinda resident will serve as president-elect in 2012, president in 2013, and immediate past-president in 2014 of the ACS Board of Directors. ACS, with 163,000 members, is the world's largest scientific society. Wu was elected after what she considered a fierce battle in which her main rival was a scientist from the National Research Center (NRC) in Washington D.C. "Scientists are not used to running campaigns," said Wu, "but after I was asked by many different people to run for president and I decided to start a campaign last year."

Wu is known in Lamorinda for her advocacy for scientific education. "I started the Family Science Night at OIS in 1997," explains the woman who's raised two kids in Orinda, "there are so many labs and scientists in the Bay Area-it is easy to find volunteers ready to help." The chemist also started the Science Cafe geared for adults in Orinda that is now operating every month in Lafayette through a partnership with the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation.

Wu believes that kids should be introduced to science at an early age. She launched the non-profit Science Is Fun! that conducts after-school and summer camp science education in Lamorinda. With her new global responsibilities (Wu wants to increase ACS ties around the world), she will not have a lot of time for local advocacy, but she wants to continue supporting on-going science awareness.

Chamber's Jay Lifson is Lafayette's Business Person of the Year

The Marquis Business Person of the Year award is given to an individual who supports the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce's mission: To promote and maintain the healthy business climate and to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Lafayette. The 2012 awardee is none other than Jay Lifson, the Chamber's Executive Director. "Jay took over the helm of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce in 2005 as the Executive Director and his leadership has been exceptional" says Steve Cortese, Chamber past president and board member. "Since 2005, the Chamber's revenue has increased 65 percent and membership has increased 42 percent. This success has been vital in allowing the Chamber to continue its role of promoting business and enhancing the quality of life in our great City." Cortese points out that Lifson's involvement with the Chamber and the city goes way beyond expectations, "There are few Planning Commission or City Council meetings that Jay doesn't attend," says Cortese. "In the early morning hours you might not recognize the guy fixing the strand of twinkle lights on Mt. Diablo Blvd. that went out the night before, but that's also Jay. And if you're a business needing help with a governmental matter, or a government official needing assistance solving a particular problem for a business, it seems Jay is the one to call." The celebration for Lifson will be on Friday, January 20th at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa. Cocktails at 6:00 p.m. and dinner at 7:00 p.m. To register, please visit www.lafayettechamber.org.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce will be back next time.

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