



ADVISORY LINK

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Advisory Link Named as Finalist in 2005 Stevie® Awards for Women Entrepreneurs**

Dallas, TX – December 21, 2005 – Advisory Link, Inc. was named as a Finalist in the 2005 Stevie Awards for Women Entrepreneurs in both the **Women Helping Women** category [recognizing businesses and individuals who supported and contributed to the development of women in business] and the **Community Involvement Program of the Year** [recognizing best practices in corporate social responsibility and community activities]. They were selected from more than 470 entries.

Advisory Link (AL) focuses on helping organizations increase their number of female employees, managers, executives and customers. Partners Gerry Myers and Taunee Besson enable their clients to achieve these goals by developing and facilitating external Women's Advisory Boards (WAB) and Exec-U-Link (EUL) peer-coaching groups.

Myers illustrates how their alliance with MassMutual Financial Group (MMFG) has worked to help women in communities across the country by creating and consulting with 12 Women's Advisory Boards (WAB).

“The WABs have assisted MMFG in educating women about career opportunities, marketing and product needs important to women,” said Myers. “We are proud that all the boards spearhead community outreach programs that focus on the needs of women and girls in their local areas. Additionally, we have created a database of more than 300 WAB members nationally who can network with each other to do business, provide contacts and share best practices.”

One mission of WABs is improving financial literacy for women and girls in their communities. In Vienna, VA, Capitol Financial Partners, its WAB, and Advisory Link partner Taunee Besson, developed a proposal for a Financial Education Center for Women (FEC) in Fairfax County. The proposal secured financing from MMFG and others for its three initial years. Collaborating with the county's Community Business Partnership and its Women's Business Center, this new agency has provided financial planning seminars and counseling for hundreds of women since its inception in April, 2005.

Another community program is *Game Face: What Does a Female Athlete Look Like?* Several of the WABs have participated in this program, which has a traveling photograph exhibit and middle-school curriculum component.

“The experience provides self-esteem to young women, and broadens their thoughts on how athletics can enrich their lives,” said Myers. “These are just two examples of how Advisory Link is providing a long-term, positive impact on numerous communities, women’s and girls’ lives and sponsoring corporations.”

“Women’s Advisory Boards and Exec-U-Links peer-coaching groups embody the spirit of **Women Helping Women**,” said Taunee Besson, chairman of Advisory Link. “Both groups are composed of members who are successful in their careers, highly-respected and well-connected in their communities.”

“Aside from providing counsel, revenue-generating ideas, support and best practices to each other, the women in the Women Executive and Business Owners EUL have formed alliances to create joint projects that are beneficial to both their companies’ bottom line and their women customers,” Besson said.

The Stevie Awards for Women Entrepreneurs, [www.stevieawards.com/women](http://www.stevieawards.com/women), is an international awards competition recognizing the accomplishments of women executives and business owners. The awards are produced by the creators of the prestigious American Business Awards, hailed as “the business world’s own Oscars” by the New York Post (April 27, 2005).

“The Winners and Finalists in the 2005 Stevie Awards for Women Entrepreneurs comprise the most dynamic women in business today. These executives and entrepreneurs have accomplished innovative and extraordinary things while building their businesses and serving their communities,” said Michael Gallagher, president of The Stevie Awards. “We congratulate all of them on their achievement.”

Details about The Stevie Awards for Women Entrepreneurs and the full list of Finalists are available at <http://www.stevieawards.com/women/>.

### **About Advisory Link**

Advisory Link ([www.advisorylink-dfw.com](http://www.advisorylink-dfw.com)) provides its clients with customized Women’s Advisory Boards and Exec-U-Link peer-coaching groups to solve their marketing, recruitment, retention and succession challenges. The company recognizes the value women bring to the economy and individual businesses as both talented employees and savvy consumers.

Gerry Myers has spent years working with corporations on successfully marketing to women. Active in community and civic organizations, Myers is past president of NAWBO and the Automotive Women Network in Dallas/Fort Worth. She has served on the advisory boards of Women's Leadership Exchange, Women's Resource Center of the Dallas Metropolitan YWCA, Women's Link, Girls Inc., and UNT Department of Marketing & Logistics, to name a few. In addition, she is a graduate of both Leadership America and Leadership Dallas.

Myers has written articles and been featured or quoted in numerous national publications including *The New York Times*, *American Demographics*, *The Financial Post*, *The Dallas Business Journal*, *Honolulu Weekly*, *Toronto Star* and *Marketing News*. In addition, She is the author of *Targeting the New Professional Woman: How to Market and Sell to Today's 57 Million Working Women*.

Taunee Besson has been a business owner since 1979. An alumna of Leadership Dallas, she has served on nonprofit boards and committees including Girls Inc., Women's Center of Dallas, Girl Scouts, Dallas Women's Foundation and Mortarboard, among others. She is an alumna of the Leadership America Class of 2003.

Besson is a director of the World Council of the Association of Career Management Professionals International, for whom she is developing a global advisory board of distinguished professionals in her field. She is an award-winning columnist for *The Wall Street Journal's* CareerJournal.com (formerly NBEW). She has authored three editions each of *NBEW's Premier Guide to Resumes* and *NBEW's Premier Guide to Cover Letters*, as well as a variety of articles for trade and business journals.

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