

Simmons set to lead DABA in new year

by: Sarah Melton w/ The Lincoln Times

Brad Simmons has several goals for the Denver Area Business Association (DABA) in 2010.

As incoming president, effective Jan. 1, Simmons wants to make sure the organization's Board of Directors and Ambassadors are able to directly communicate with members.

Through the Web site, members will be contacted multiple times prior to events, hopefully increasing attendance to the Networking Luncheons, Coffee Connections and Business After Hours. Simmons wants to increase the contact list from one to member to three members for each company.

In addition, Simmons wants the Ambassadors to help members get the most out of DABA.

"They will be equipped with the knowledge to help our members as well as businesses that are interested in joining this great organization," he said.

"I also want to develop a mentoring program that our newest members will have an ambassador or board member help them get introduced to the membership and get involved in the organization."

Members also need more opportunities to do business with each other. "It seems that all organizations have created a Shop Local Campaign, as do we," Simmons said.

"I want to see that type of campaign flourish in Denver, N.C."

"I believe we can accomplish that by awarding our members opportunities to showcase their businesses to each other as well as the general public through events, such as the Fireworks Show or Taste of Denver event."

Outgoing president Denis Bilodeau said the Taste of Denver and Fourth of July Fireworks Show will hopefully become DABA's signature events. DABA sold 700 tickets for Taste of Denver, which allowed members to exhibit their services and products this spring.

The third annual Fireworks Show attracted 10,000–12,000 people, the largest crowd ever.

Bilodeau, who has been involved with DABA since 2006, is certain Simmons will continue to make the two events successful.

"Brad has been a leader in DABA over the years," Bilodeau said.

"He has been very visible in DABA. It was natural for the DABA board to think of him as the next president, to take them into the next decade of DABA's existence."

Simmons began participating in DABA when he started working with Carolina Trust Bank, where he is now vice president, in 2004. Simmons decided to be involved in the organization, taking on the role of vice president, and heading up the Fireworks Show.

"I have taken great pride with my involvement with DABA through the years and have been able to make invaluable contacts and friendships in the five years I have been involved," Simmons said.

"I have learned a great deal from our members that I will be able to use throughout my life and professional career."

Simmons also learned a great deal from Bilodeau, president of Aquesta Insurance Services, formerly Oswald, Trippe and Co. of the Carolinas.

"(Denis) has been a great mentor," Simmons said. "He had great challenges in 2009 and seemed to work right through them and move on to what was most important, our membership."

Keeping that membership strong, as the economy tries to bounce back from a recession, will be challenge that Simmon's looks forward to winning.

“I want to reiterate that we are here for our members and their success is our success,” he said.

“Our events are centered around our businesses and affording every opportunity for them to increase exposure and increase knowledge through special guest speakers and events.”

To learn more about DABA, visit www.dabanc.org.