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# 'Speed dating' helps nonprofits connect with media outlets

**Wichita Business Journal - by Josh Heck**

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Fresh off of the Nonprofit Chamber of Service's so-called "speed dating" for reporters event Tuesday afternoon, my collection of business cards grew by about 30.

During the event, area nonprofit representatives took the opportunity for some face time with local members of the media.

It was a chance for nonprofits to talk about their organizations and discuss items that might be of particular interest to the different media.

I was one of about 10 local media invited to participate in the event. I was involved with a similar event in 2008.

Tuesday's media participants represented television stations, magazines, newspapers and radio stations.

Those representing the different nonprofit organizations were asked to give reporters the elevator version of what they do.

But Tuesday's event was more than a chance to collect business cards.

It was a chance to meet new people and generate story ideas as well as reconnect with people I've talked to in the past.

Not only did I leave with a stack of brochures and business cards, I also picked up a few story ideas to consider in the coming weeks.

Nonprofit representatives said they found the event beneficial.

"It was helpful for me to have business cards and put a name to a face," says **Sandy Pickert**, executive director of Pure & Simple Health Education Inc., an organization teaches kids to avoid high-risk behaviors.

**Perry Schuckman**, executive director of the Nonprofit Chamber, says members and media participants alike said they benefited from Tuesday's two-hour networking event.

It was the fourth in a four-part series the Nonprofit Chamber put on to help local organizations understand how to better market themselves and get their message out to a larger audience.

"The bottom line is to increase community engagement with nonprofits," Schuckman says.

The series was the latest in a line of seminars the nonprofit chamber has put on during the past three years.

And more are planned.

The Nonprofit Chamber also is planning a series next year on grant writing and working with funding, Schuckman says.

"We've found that these series are helpful," Pickert says. "The Nonprofit Chamber has had lots of workshops that have really helped me learn."