



## JCI United Kingdom Case Study

*Developing tomorrow's leaders .....today*

### **Sally-Anne Greenfield, Chief Executive, Leeds Community Foundation**

In 1990 I moved to Leeds from the Lake District to take up a new position fundraising for Leeds General Infirmary. I knew no one at all and would work all day and spend some rather dull evenings in the nurses' home until I found somewhere to live.

Quite by chance I came across an article about an organisation called Leeds Junior Chamber of Commerce and went along to a meeting. I was amazed by the warm and friendly welcome I received, by the fact that they were all of a similar age (membership is open to people in their 20s and 30s) and that they all had tremendous energy and enthusiasm. They were busy planning their major community event of the year, the Lord Mayor's Parade and I was drafted on to help with the preparations as soon as I had signed my membership form.

My fundraising experience put me in good stead to help with the project planning but on the day of the parade, I was put in charge of logistics. This meant I had to guide the articulated lorries into position in the holding car park and ensure that they left in the correct order so that the Parade could proceed without the lorries running down the majorettes and allowing the walking bands the chance to play without being drowned out by the other music. It was all a bit nerve-wracking and it passed without mishap - I was soon hooked as a member.

Since then I have gone on to do things I never would have dreamt of doing: eating at a Gala Dinner in Japan with 6,500 other members of Junior Chamber; watching delegates walk on hot coals and get to the other side un-harmed; approach drinks suppliers for in-kind donations of wine and beer for a conference I helped to run for over 2,000 delegates from all over Europe.

I have increased my own skills base 10-fold by attending over 100 different seminars and training sessions from handwriting analysis, how to dress to impress, Neuro-linguistic programming to a range of management, communication and leadership sessions.

My project management skills have been greatly enhanced by being involved in many community and business projects. On a personal level I have had the opportunity to address groups of people from 5 to 500. I can now speak, with confidence, on a variety of subjects and have even been invited to be the funny after dinner speaker. I have represented British Junior Chamber in the World Debating Competition and have come second on two occasions, with my finest hour being the debate, "A condom is a man's best friend."

Over the past 10 years I have met people who I know will be friends for life. This was proved in December 2003 when I was elected National President and Matthew Hall (one of the people I first met when I joined in 1992) made a surprise visit back from China where he is on a 12-month round-the-world trip just to be there to see the ceremony. That's what I call friendship.

It was his membership that gave him the travel bug and I can testify to that having been to conferences in: Hawaii, Las Vegas, Cannes, Greece, Ostend, Copenhagen and Japan, as well as frequent trips to other European countries to visit fellow Junior Chamber members. I can now pick up the phone or send an email to 43 different countries and know I am guaranteed a warm response.

The benefits of membership go beyond the activities in Junior Chamber. When I first joined, I was an Assistant in a fundraising appeal in Leeds. I went on to take on other roles in fundraising, usually at management level. In 1998, decided to set up my own fundraising consultancy and it has flourished. Whilst my work-life gave me the skills I needed to fundraise effectively, my Junior Chamber experience gave me the confidence to set up my own business, the skills to manage and market it effectively and the leadership ability to go out and challenge what people were doing and provide an alternative for them to consider.

My personal effectiveness has been significantly increased by my involvement in Junior Chamber. This is part of the "magic" of Junior Chamber for me now – that I can stand and watch the tremendously positive effects that membership has on people. I have seen new members shake with fear at the mere thought of having to stand up and speak for 2 minutes. These same people are now delivering presentations to groups of 200 and doing it confidently. People have met and married, have changed jobs, been promoted, set up their own business. They have stepped outside their comfort zone and responded to the many challenges that membership offers.

You may be in your 20s or 30s. If not, you certainly know someone who is. Beyond that all you need is a willingness to develop, a desire to succeed and a telephone or email access to contact us for more information.

**For more information please look on our website: [www.jciuk.org.uk](http://www.jciuk.org.uk)  
Or contact: JCI UK Head Office on 01476 404005.**