



Vision truly turned into action when 405 members and prospective members of the Illinois, Iowa-Nebraska, Minnesota-Dakotas and Wisconsin Chapters gathered in Bloomington, Minnesota for the Third Annual Midwest ESOP Regional Conference in September.

In just three years the conference has built a reputation of offering a variety of quality breakout sessions over the course of one and a half days plus the valuable opportunity to network at informal evening activities. The tremendous success of the event is the result of a collaborative effort of a 20-member planning committee, the remarkable support of 33 sponsor companies, and the willingness of 75 speakers to share their expertise with attendees. The event continues to grow, not only in attendance, but in offerings as well.



Kathi Heller, Holden Industries, Inc.

**New this year:** a Communications Fair, giving company members the opportunity to share educational and appreciation materials, an "I Spy With My ESOP Eye" game encouraging attendees to meet and get to know conference sponsors, and an after-hours dessert reception hosted by conference sponsors featuring Boogie Wonderland Band.



Sandy Paavola, ESI; Lynn Seeger, CC-N; Sherri McDermott, Sentry Equipment Corp.

**Interactive sessions were conference favorites.**



Attendees were treated to a unique experience. Three National Award Winners: Missy McManigle, Walman Optical, Employee Owner of the Year; Art Miller, President, Illinois ESOP Chapter of the Year; and Tracey Myers, Van Meter Company of the Year teamed up to present a "How To Win" Roundtable session.



Attendees walked away with some fabulous prizes and at the same time raised \$2,475 for the Employee Ownership Foundation.

Pictured: Jim Winterscheid, IANE Chapter President awarding Sharon Schultz, Park Manor, with an iPad 3 (left). Kevin Ritz, Winona Agency, Inc. wins an RCI Vacation Get-Away Package compliments of Al Ryerson, BCC Advisers. (right)



When asked for feedback about the conference, this is what some attendees had to say:

- "This was my first conference as a rep from my company. I found it quite a learning experience. Truly 'eye opening'! I recommend all of our employees come to one of these conferences."
- "Keep it up! This is the best thing we've found to immerse our new Communication Committee members without overloading them and at a reasonable cost."
- "Nice and structured, valued topics, short sessions really kept it moving."
- "Great flow. Great exhibits."
- "This conference has everything you need."

**Planning is already underway for the Fourth Annual Midwest Regional Conference. Stay tuned!**

*(View more conference photos in the gallery on your chapter's website.)*