

## Helzberg unveils 10th HEMP class

The Helzberg Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program (HEMP) on Tuesday announced its 2005 class.

This year's class includes 10 entrepreneurs from nine companies, HEMP said in a written release.

More than 125 businesspeople have participated in the three-year program, which has about 40 active mentor/mentee pairs. The program seeks to match veteran entrepreneurs with less-experienced mentees.

Christina Blunt, the program's managing director, said the 2005 class officially commenced with an orientation lunch on Sept. 13. Last year's class had 14 entrepreneurs from 11 companies, Blunt said.

"The goal of our program is to promote entrepreneurial success to positively impact owners, employees, families and communities," Walt Rychlewski, president of HEMP's board, said in the release. "We help develop mentor/mentee relationships that emphasize chemistry and expertise rather than specific industry experience. Personal interaction remains the foundation of the program and has become a powerful source of inspiration and success."

The class of 2005 includes:

- Bob and Linda Bennett, [CommWorld of Kansas City](#)
- Davy Hartman Campbell, [Fulfillment Plus](#)
- Skuli Gudmundsson, [OCCU-TEC Inc.](#)
- Jack Hayhow, [Opus Communications](#)
- Mike Pasley, [Central Packaging](#)
- Joe Polo Sr., [Original Juan](#)
- Gary Short, [Sys-Tek Cos. USA Inc.](#)
- Cheryl Smith, [Kansas City Home Care Inc.](#)
- Gina Stuelke, [Kenton Brothers Inc. Systems for Security.](#)

Barnett Helzberg Jr., former owner and president of [Helzberg Diamonds](#), founded the program in 1995. Helzberg was inspired to start the program by his 23-year mentoring relationship with the late Ewing Kauffman.

To be eligible for the program, entrepreneurs must have been in business at least three years and be the company's top decision-maker. The company must generate revenue of \$1 million to \$75 million a year and want to significantly grow the business.