

Leading the Future

The International Coach Federation looks ahead

By Magdalena Mook, ICF CEO and Executive Director

When Thomas Leonard and a group of passionate coaches founded the ICF in 1995, their vision was to provide a space where coaches could support one another and help grow the profession. Many things about ICF changed over the years; we celebrated many of the new things and said difficult goodbyes to others. But one thing remains the same: in service to humanity flourishing, we choose to lead the global advancement of the coaching profession. Our goal is to help position coaching as an integral part of society, with ICF members representing the highest-quality professional coaches.

Today, the ICF is a vibrant organization with more than 20,000 members representing more than 100 countries. In the nearly two decades since ICF's founding, our organization has led an ongoing effort to meet the needs of professional coaches, set high standards for the profession, and raise awareness of coaching's ability to maximize clients' personal and professional potential.

Serving the Profession

Building community and facilitating supportive relationships remain at the forefront of ICF's mission. The 100-plus ICF chapters around the world are central to this endeavor; chapter meetings and events provide opportunities for members to network and develop leadership skills. ICF Global supports chapters' efforts in a variety of ways: by supporting chapter presidents through a peer-coaching partnership with past ICF chapter presidents; curating a library of resources that ICF Chapters can use as they plan and promote events; developing collateral for distribution at conferences and

other events; and much more.

ICF Global also supports members and chapters through its website, Coachfederation.org, which received a facelift in April 2013. The new site was designed with user experience in mind and features a streamlined home page and easier navigation. The website gives professional coaches easy access to the support and tools they need to thrive, and its Coach Referral Service connects ICF-credentialed coaches to prospective clients.

Setting the Standard

The ICF was only two years old when members began discussing the possibility of a credentialing program that would identify skilled, knowledgeable coaches committed to high professional standards and a strong ethical

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code. With the support of nearly 70 volunteers, the credentialing process for Professional Certified Coaches and Master Certified Coaches launched the following year, with the first ICF Credentials awarded at ICF's 1998 conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. Since then, the program has grown exponentially. In 2012, 2,722 coaches applied for an ICF Credential – a 29 percent increase over the previous year – and in 2013, we awarded the 10,000th ICF Credential.

In the 15 years since we awarded the first ICF Credentials, we've continued to advance the art, science and practice of coaching by constructing a global-standards system for professional coaches and coach training providers. In 2012, the ICF finalized a new, web-based



written exam for credential applicants; efforts have also been under way since 2011 to revise the scoring system and assessor training process for oral exams. (The new scoring system is slated for implementation in 2014.) We also continue to make improvements to our

accreditation system for coach-training programs, ensuring that coaches have access to high-quality training and continuing education opportunities rooted in the ICF Code of Ethics and Core Competencies. We believe that ICF's unparalleled success at building the credibility of the profession through high standards is surely something to celebrate!

Spreading the Word

The ICF wants the world to know about the dedication, passion and professionalism that characterize the coaching community. This is why we've embraced the opportunity to be the coaching profession's global voice. The new-and-improved Coachfedera-

Building On A Solid Foundation

The IAC celebrates 10 years of coaching excellence

By Susan R. Meyer, MMC, BCC & Natalie Tucker Miller, MMC, BCC

Just as *choice* magazine celebrates 10 years of operation, so does The International Association of Coaching (IAC). Marker anniversaries often allow us to reflect on our early beginnings, assess where we currently stand, and ponder the possibilities of the future. It is this type of contemplation that will guide the organization into the next 10 years.

Our Beginnings

The IAC® was the brainchild of Thomas J. Leonard, who is often credited as the founder of the modern coaching profession. The organization was conceived as the International Association of Certified Coaches, which reflected the intention of creating a professional coach certification organization. By 2003 the organization, under president Michael “Coop,” was renamed The International Association of Coaches, and was launched on March 11, 2003.

It had taken Thomas Leonard over a year to develop the first international standards for coaching certification. This was based on the 15 Proficiencies, a result of reviewing 20 years worth of best practices in coaching. The result was a rigorous certification process that went beyond just academic or vocational qualifications. Leonard wanted to ensure that this certification embraced universal guidelines, principles, ethics, standards and behaviors that make a coach great, regardless of type of training, profession or geography.

Developing the IAC Masteries™

With the death of its founder just one month before the IAC officially launched, the IAC found itself in a

precarious position with its evaluation material, the 15 Proficiencies. With the intellectual property not having been formally bequeathed to the IAC, the IAC had a big decision to consider: continue, sans the Proficiencies, with Thomas’ legacy of a truly unique certification, or close the doors and let go of the vision.

In 2005, president Barbara Mark and the IAC began the lengthy process of developing its own intellectual property, creating the multi-national process that led to the development of the IAC Masteries™ – a decision that not only kept the doors open, but created a truly international organization.

Beginning in 2006, president Natalie Tucker Miller saw the project through its completion. The team that developed the new IAC Coaching Masteries™, consisting of 36 coaches from five continents, worked diligently for over 24 months, covering the four phases of development, to provide a model of coaching skill that embodied universal sensibilities as well as an evolving understanding of coaching. These standards continue to evolve in response to client requirements and expectations of the industry. The IAC Coaching Masteries were released in 2007 and formally adopted as the IAC’s sole standard in 2008.

Broadening Our Mission

As more people come to realize that coaching can make a significant difference in their lives, the marketplace has responded with more coaches from all walks of life and more professionals incorporating coaching skills into their work. Academic and vocational training for coaches has also become a growing field. In 2007, to better

tion.org is an important piece of this puzzle, as is ICF Global and Chapter social media messaging.

Since 2005, the ICF has celebrated the power of coaching within businesses and organizations with the International Prism Award, honoring organizations that have achieved a standard of excellence in the implementation of coaching programs for culture change, leadership development, productivity and performance improvement. We also celebrate the ability of coaching to promote humanity’s flourishing during International Coaching Week.

Looking to the Future

For ICF and the coaching profession, the future is bright. According to the 2012 ICF Global Coaching Study, there are approximately 47,500 professional coaches worldwide bringing in total annual revenue of close to \$2 billion. Coaches surveyed for the Global Coaching Study were also more likely to report an increase than a decrease in fees, hours, clients and revenues over the last 12 months. These positive indicators point clearly to the profession’s continued growth. As the profession continues to evolve, ICF will grow in tandem, promoting the profession to the public and advancing the art, science and practice of professional coaching.

There has never been a better time to be a coach. The scope and depth of the coaching influence in the world is amazing, and it grows with every client coached. Our vision, our push for humanity flourishing and our insistence on global standards make the potential impact of this profession truly limitless. Let’s celebrate our growth and reach and share the joy in remaining a connected community!

reflect the influence of coaching skills throughout many professions, the IAC changed its name to International Association of Coaching.

In 2008, president Angela Spaxman's efforts included creating a process for licensing schools teaching the Masteries, as a way to expand the breadth and scope of masterful coaching.

Bob Tschannen-Moran became the IAC's fifth president in 2010. During his

“The IAC brand is clear: coaches who have embraced coaching mastery and have pledged to uphold professional ethics and standards.”

tenure, in response to the IAC's desire to document lifelong learning with the Masteries as a roadmap, the Certification Committee created the Learning Agreement Process and developed a research initiative.

In 2012, Susan R. Meyer became the sixth and current president. Under her leadership, the IAC completed the implementation of the innovative Learning Agreements, and works to promote the Masteries in business and academic circles. The Masteries are so potently and universally transformative, the IAC leadership is determined to expand the Masteries' breadth and influence within and beyond the coaching field.

Additionally, new designations have also been created as a result of member input and market needs. These include Masteries Practitioner, for professionals who may not be coaches but who use the Masteries in their work, or as a progressive stepping stone for coaches who are working toward certification. A second level of certification was also introduced, recognizing the many highly skilled coaches who were not yet at the level of mastery required to earn the IAC's master level certification (Master Masteries Coach, or MMC). Certified

Masteries Coaches (CC) reflects this high level of skill.

Why is the IAC Important?

Some of the IAC's lifetime members have answered that question for us. Julia Stewart, MMC, one of the founding members who has operated her own coach training school for several years, said, “IAC coach certification offers a simple, powerful pathway to

the coach who wants to do great work and have a credential that represents that. The IAC brand is clear: coaches who have embraced coaching mastery and have pledged to uphold professional ethics and standards.”

Donna Steinhorn, MMC, founding member and tour de force in the coaching world, notes that, “I appreciate the IAC because it is the only coaching organization that is an ‘open tent,’ embracing and certifying coaches who meet (coaching) principles and standards regardless of what kind of

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training they've had ... We must recognize that there are talented individuals who have been coaching for longer than coach training has existed. They are experienced and masterful, and need to be included in the ‘open tent’

of coaches, in addition to individuals who have specialized training outside of coaching, who embrace the coaching profession.”

The Future

Last year, the IAC was part of a group of professional coaching associations that met for the Future of Coaching Summit. As we all move forward in this wonderful profession, it is our vision that these discussions continue and that strong links are established among all who have a role in shaping our joint future. Marker anniversaries aside, this is exactly the kind of reflection in which IAC members engage on a regular basis. ●

October 25-26, 2013

The Cultural Competence Event

Washington, D.C., USA
www.coachfederation.org/events

December 5, 2013

9th Annual Massachusetts Conference for Women

Boston, Massachusetts, USA
www.maconferenceforwomen.org/conference/

April 10-12, 2014

Global Co-Active Summit

Napa, California, USA
www.CoactiveSummit.com

May 1-4, 2014

Gay Coaches Alliance 3rd Annual Conference

Easton Mountain, New York, USA
www.conference.thegaycoaches.com

June 5, 2014

Capital Coaches Conference

Fairview Park Marriott
Falls Church, Virginia, USA
www.capitalcoachesconference.org

June 19-21, 2014

Coaching Rocks! 2014 ICF Midwest Regional Coaching Conference

Cleveland, Ohio, USA
icf-midwest.com