

Carlisle

Chamber seeking young professionals

■ New organization will provide networking opportunities for younger chamber members.

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The Greater Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce has had a young professionals committee for more than year, but is now making a move to help establish an independent young professionals organization.

In the coming months, with the support of the chamber, Michael Wilson, president of the new Carlisle Young Professionals, hopes to build the organization and its membership from the ground up, kicking things off Thursday with a mixer at the Midway Bowling Center on Carlisle Pike.

Breaking out

Carlisle Young Professionals began to take shape early this year, when Wilson and his wife decided to move to the area.

"I was vice president of Harrisburg Young Professionals," he said. "When I found out I was moving down here, I was really excited about having a young professionals group here."

For the chamber, Wilson's appearance was a welcome one.

"I was happy to take on the young professionals, but I was kind of torn between ... I want to give the young professionals attention but, at the same time, there's all this chamber stuff go-



Michael Bupp/The Sentinel

Mike Wilson bowls during the Greater Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce's night of fun for young professionals at Midway Bowling Center in South Middleton Township.

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ing on," said Megan Kraemer, events director for the Carlisle Chamber of Commerce. "I am ecstatic that Mike's around now!"

Now, after months of working together and planning, the chamber and Wilson are making their move.

"The chamber hopes it becomes a stand-alone entity," Kraemer said.

"We have a proposed board structure, and we have everything that we want to do," Wilson said.

In the coming months, Wilson and the chamber hope to build membership and find candidates for a board, and they started things off with Thursday's mixer.

"This is us now breaking out as a start-up organization," Wilson said.

Mixing it up

A half-dozen or so people at the kick-off mixer may not seem that impressive, but Wilson thinks Carlisle Young Professionals is off to a great start.

"I have responded to at least 50-plus inquiries, which is a great starting point," he said. "When we started in Harrisburg, that's about the number that we started with."

Of course, he wasn't the only one at the mixer op-

timistic about the organization's future. Those who attended were looking forward to what a young professionals group might have to offer.

"It was a nice chance to network with people my own age and get to make connections throughout the community," said Carrie Zywiec of Carlisle, who works for Signs by Tomorrow.

"(I'm) just interested in meeting new people, networking, especially with people our age," said Shannon Fahnestock of Newville, who works for the Strickler Agency. "If you go to a lot of the chamber events, it's the older generation that shows up.

"It's nice to get to know them too, but we're not going to go out with them on a Saturday night and hang out."

"I think it will be fun," said Angela Mackey of Mt. Holly, also a Strickler Agency employee.

"And it sounds like they're going to do a lot of different ... events," Fahnestock added. "It's nice because you don't have to go to every one, just kind of go when you can and when it's something that appeals to you."

Even local businesses, who are already showing support, like what they see. Midway Bowling Center and



Michael Bupp/The Sentinel

Shannon Fahnestock bowls during the Greater Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce's night of fun for young professionals at Midway Bowling Center in South Middleton Township.

West Pomfret Street's Gaia young professionals.

Fresh Food Cafe both provided munchies for the mixer, and the bowling center opened a few lanes for the

For more information on Carlisle Young Professionals, email cyp@carlisle-chamber.org.