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Orange Envisioned As 'Entrepreneurial Hub'

Five Undergraduate Scholarships To Local Students

Internet Marketing Campaign Planned

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ORANGE—Harvey Kahalas, dean of the Stuart School of Business at Illinois Institute of Technology, has big plans for Orange. Kahalas is a volunteer professional working with town decision-makers to develop a vision for a strong, sustainable economic future. He envisions the town as an entrepreneurial hub with a strong economic foundation, linked by the internet to various univer-



VISITING PROFESSORS — Professor Harvey Kahalas of the Illinois Institute of Technology, left, and Dr. Westlyne Ashton of Yale, stopped at the North Quabbin Community Coalition Annual Luncheon before leaving town. They posed with Town Administrator Rick Kwiatkowski at the Athol-Orange Lodge of Elks.
Photo by Lindsey Washburn

sities, business partners and customers.

On Thursday, Kahalas and Dr. Westlyne Ashton, associate professor at Yale, toured Orange and met with local business owners such as Dave Meausky of House of Wax. The day ended with a meeting at the town hall to greet residents and answer their questions.

Kahalas and Ashton were here as part of the Sustainable Design Assessment Team, a program of the American Institute of Architects, which brings such volunteer professionals to the towns and cities in need of them. Other SDAT towns include Cleveland, Ohio, Portland, Maine, and Hilo, Hawaii.

At the meeting, Kahalas and Ashton described their plans, commitments and assessments of Orange. Ashton discussed the vast amount of natural resources in the area. "You have the wood, you have the water," and "a tremendous resource in the airport here," she said. Much other previous work has been in industry ecology, helping industry and manufacturing work with the environment, rather than against it.

Kahalas talked about IIT's commitment to providing five undergraduate scholarships to local students and plans to partner with local businesses this summer in an internet marketing campaign.

Further plans include sending IIT graduate students to Orange in the fall to work on micro-hydroelectric

dams, so that Orange may provide its own power and even sell electricity to other communities.

Also in the fall, information about IIT and the five \$15,000 per-year scholarships will be made available to Mahar Regional and Franklin Tech students. Two scholarships will be for Orange residents at either school, two will be made available through the Young Entrepreneur's Society, and one will be for a resident of Franklin County. Kahalas' hope is that students will earn degrees from IIT then bring what they have learned back to Orange. Kahalas himself grew up in Massachusetts and graduated from UMass Amherst.

Local business owners such as Noel Vincent of the Orange Innovation Center and Tim Cohen-Mitchell of the Young Entrepreneur's Society were in attendance, as well as members of the SDAT Steering Committee, including Town Administrator Rick Kwiatkowski and steering committee co-chairmen Alec Maeloeod and Jonathan Schwartz.

Also in attendance was Michael Rendulic, area director of the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Program, to talk about grants and loans available for emerging businesses, community facility programs and even projects such as the miniature dams.

The next visit with Kahalas is scheduled for Thursday, July 15, but is subject to change.