

Backing Business: Downtown Oak Park Business Alliance and Triton College Partnership

Downtown Oak Park Business Alliance (DTOPBA) Marketing Director Amelia Dellos describes Triton College as “a hidden gem,” and a business academy created through a partnership between Triton and the DTOPBA is helping the community shine.

Over four workshop sessions, participants in the DTOP Business Academy learn the essentials of communication – building relationships, the art of persuasion, managing interpersonal conflict, and leadership – from a Triton College instructor.

The partnership “allowed us to provide a much-needed service for our members and the community at large,” said Dellos. “To answer our members’ needs in real-time and provide a service that will help them achieve their business goals not only meets but surpasses our mission.”

While crafting the academy, Triton began by listening; working with Oak Park’s Merchant Advisory Committee to learn which topics were most in demand.

The most recent academy took place in May and June 2025. It was free for DTOPBA members and \$10 per session for non-members, and those who attended all four workshops earned a certificate from Triton College’s [School of Continuing Education](#).

“Our organization received such a positive response not only from our members, but from the community,” said Dellos. “We want to build a better community, and what better way to do that than through education in partnership with Triton College?”

Triton will “work with your budget. They will listen to what your organization needs,” added Dellos. “They will find the right professors and instructors to work with you – with real world experience in and out of the classroom. They will craft the right modules.”

While Triton College supports local businesses through programs like the DTOP Business Academy, its School of Business empowers students to become the business leaders of tomorrow.

“I look for instructors that typically have been in the business world at middle level management or higher,” said Business Department Chair Dr. William M. Griffin.

Triton offers both degrees and certificates, and Dr. Griffin mentioned [Entrepreneurship](#) and [Social Media Digital Marketing](#) as two certificates that prepare students to create or promote a business.

Aspiring entrepreneurs learn everything from statistics to setting up a limited liability company (LLC) and can visit DePaul University’s Coleman Entrepreneurship Center for additional guidance.

“If they have a small business idea, they’ll help them nurture and grow and develop that business into something that looks like you can take it to the marketplace,” said Dr. Griffin.

The Social Media Digital Marketing certificate utilizes the expertise of instructors from both the Business and the Visual Communications departments.

“For two semesters at a relatively low cost, you’re going to get an excellent background in the fundamentals and foundations of social media marketing,” Dr. Griffin said.

To learn more about corporate training options for businesses or organizations, contact Laura Fisher, Triton’s Director of Corporate Partnerships and Academic Outreach, at 708-456-0300 Ext. 3768 or laurafisher@triton.edu.