

The administration has no contingency plan if attorneys for OPEN prevail in

the director of educational services, told *The Sun Press* after Monday's school board meeting.

recognized as complete adherence to the requirements of the Sunshine Law." See PLAN, page A15



Lee Bienstock, left, receives the official Beachwood logo pin from Mayor Merle Gorden.

SUN PHOTO COURTESY OF KAREN CARMEN

'Apprentice' finalist all fired up

Bienstock trumps chamber at its annual banquet

By Marie Catanese
Staff Writer

BEACHWOOD — Within hours of arriving here, two simple things really impressed Lee Bienstock — an airport where you don't get trampled and a kosher Subway.

Bienstock, a Brooklyn native who was almost Donald Trump's final pick on season five of "The Apprentice," came to town Monday to speak at the annual Beachwood Chamber of Commerce dinner.

"When I was on the show, the guys would eat Subway every day and I couldn't eat anything," Bienstock said. "Kosher Subway is like my dream."

Despite hearing "You're Fired!" during the show's live finale last June, Bienstock, 24, landed a job as associate vice president for corporate development for the newly created Trump Mortgage business.

Over the past year, the Cornell University graduate with a perfect GPA has been working on the Trump Ocean

Club project in Panama City.

"If that building doesn't get built," he said, half-kidding, "I'm finished!"

Right from the beginning of the intense Apprentice selection process, Bienstock said he differentiated himself by just being himself.

He recalled when he was asked about the balance of his bank account.

"I thought, should I lie and tell them I have millions of dollars? I was just out of school and I had \$216.37 in my bank account," he said.

The truth got Bienstock another call from the producers.

He also stood out when he mentioned up-front that he would not be able to work on Jewish holidays if selected for the show.

"When I gave them a list of the days I couldn't work, I thought they'd say, 'Move along, pal.'"

But again, even with a million candidates to choose from, they didn't, and fans praised Bienstock for staying true to his religion.

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Later, some even called him the "Sandy Koufax of television" because he refused to work on Yom Kippur.

Three months and 150 references later, Bienstock was finally on the show.

"The show is really real and some people are just very, very intense. The producers never tell you to say or do anything," he said. "You get four or five days to wrap up your life and you can't tell anyone where you're going."

Fortunately, Bienstock was able to hold it together while pulling two or three all-nighters a week. That's where being the youngest finalist ever, just 22 at the time, came in handy.

As for career advice, Bienstock said that his network of contacts — business and otherwise — has been his most important asset.

He said the show even called his ex-girlfriends, so taking care never to burn bridges is key.

"It's also important to put yourself in a (work) environment that defers to talent, not to age," he said.

While on the show, Bien-



Lee Bienstock

stock said he lost 20 pounds from the sheer stress and effort, but that the experience was "absolutely incredible."

One highlight of his "Apprentice" fame was an invite to the annual Hanukkah party at the White House.

"My father had never been to Washington, and I got to take him to meet the President," Bienstock said.

He also took a golf lesson from Vijay Singh and flew in a private jet to do a voice-over for a DreamWorks film.

And as for working for "America's Boss," Bienstock said Trump is "a fair and down-to-Earth guy."

"If he likes you, he's really, really good to you," he said. "But if he doesn't like you, you're finished."

In response to the ever-present questions about Trump's hair, Bienstock said with a smile, "it's definitely real."

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