

2015 RECOGNIZING WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS ON THE GULF COAST | SPECIAL COMPETITION AWARDS MARKETING SECTION

WOMEN **in** BUSINESS

2015

SRQ MAGAZINE

COMMUNITY ★ ★ ★ LEADERSHIP



Recognizing women leaders who have made meaningful contributions to our region in the areas of business, education, entrepreneurship, philanthropy and the arts. Produced by SRQ Magazine President and CEO, Lisl Liang. Photos by Evan Sigmund.



2015 Winners

Mary Dougherty-Slapp, The Gulf Coast Builders Exchange
Kameron Hodgens, The Glasser Schoenbaum Human Services Center
Christine Johnson, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast
Jo Ann Koontz, Koontz & Associates
Denise Kowal, Avenida de Colores

2015 Finalists

Elizabeth Melendez Fisher, Selah Freedom
Mary Forristall, Forristall Enterprises
Kim Hopper, Regions Bank
Tammy Kovar, Biological Tree and Landscape Services
Stefanie Overturf, Overturf's Floor & Fabric Care
Sandra Rios, The Resort at Longboat Key Club
Ocean Properties Hotels and Resorts
Gabriele Vest, Grapevine Communications

Competition Overview

Nominees were asked to share how they utilized innovation in their businesses, how their individual leadership has impacted their communities, what personal experiences inspired their professional successes, their thoughts on a complex community issue that concerns them and the letter they'd send to their younger selves. Our judges scored each nominee based on their responses to the above questions.



Meet our judges.

Samantha Bond **SB Recommend, President and Owner**

Samantha Bond is President and Owner of SB Recommend, an agency focused on fulfilling small business insurance needs. She has represented hundreds of employers and tens of thousands of employees in evaluating needs and providing solutions including employee benefits, employee leasing aka professional employer organizations, and individual products to protect the business owner. She is certified by the Department of Health and Human Services on the Healthcare.Gov Marketplace. Her company is an Associate Member of the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO). She currently serves as President of the Network of Executive Women, a thirty year old organization based in Tampa.



Jill Langford Dame **Leadership Jacksonville, Executive Director**

Jill Dame is a longtime resident of Jacksonville, Florida. A graduate of Episcopal School of Jacksonville, she received a B.A. cum laude (English & History) from Queens College in Charlotte, NC and a J.D. with honors from the University of Florida, College of Law. After law school, Jill returned to Jacksonville to practice law with Mahoney Hadlow & Adams where she became a partner, specializing in real estate and commercial lending law. In 1987 Jill left the practice of law and earned a Master of Arts in Teaching at Jacksonville University while teaching in an independent school. While her children were young Jill devoted considerable time to volunteer work in the nonprofit sector, focusing on children's issues, education, the elderly and leadership training for youth. This work has included hands on service, fundraising, board membership and other leadership. More recently Jill served as a volunteer and consultant to nonprofit organizations focusing on organizational development, fundraising, and strategic planning. Jill has served as president of the Junior League of Jacksonville, PACE Center for Girls Jacksonville, the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, and Willing Hands.



Jo Watson Hackl

Wyche, P.A. Attorney

Jo is an attorney with Wyche, P.A., in Greenville, South Carolina where she concentrates her practice in corporate and securities law. She has helped register over \$1 billion in securities. Jo is past President of the Greenville County Bar Association and was selected by The Best Lawyers in America listing as the 2015 Greenville Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships) "Lawyer of the Year." She is a Liberty Fellow and Riley Fellow and has been recognized as a "Woman of Achievement" by the YWCA. She was the first woman to serve as Chair of the Greenville Area Development Corporation. She also serves on the Boards of the United Way of Greenville County, EMRYS, and Camperdown Academy. She holds a BA from Millsaps College and a J.D. from Yale Law School. Jo is also a writer and outdoor enthusiast. She is the founder of Outdoorosity.org, a web site devoted to providing inspiration and information about the outdoors.



Donna Orender

Orender Unlimited, CEO

Donna Orender is the CEO of Orender Unlimited and is a recognized leader and business executive. The Jacksonville, FL based company assists other companies and people in making transformational impact in their own lives and the marketplace. Donna recently launched GENERATION W, a brand focused on educating, inspiring, and connecting women and girls. She has also assisted with the PGA of America's Connecting with Her Initiative. This initiative focuses on getting females involved and staying in the game of game. Most recently Donna served 6 years as the president of the Women's National Basketball Association. Serving as the leagues 2nd President, her focused management resulted in growth in every business metric, including sponsorship, attendance, television ratings, digital growth, and merchandise sales. Prior to the WNBA, Donna spent 17 years at the PGA TOUR as the executive in charge of global television, production and digital media. Donna grew up in Long Island and was a five sport athlete. She is a graduate of Queens College and pursued graduate studies at Adelphi University. She has been recognized as one of top 10 most powerful women in sports and one of Newsweeks' 100 most Influential people in sports.



Linda O. Simmons

R.R. Simmons Construction Corporation, President and CEO

Linda is the President & CEO of various entities that comprise the R.R. Simmons family of companies, including R.R. Simmons Construction Corporation, a Tampa based Design/Builder of commercial and industrial facilities. A life-long resident of the Bay Area, Linda is a proud 1975 honors graduate of the University of South Florida. Linda also graduated from the ABA's Stonier Graduate School of Banking. She is currently a member of the Tampa Bay Chapter of CREW, and as at the time the youngest and first female President of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce, she founded the Leadership Brandon Program, which continues to thrive today. Linda was the first woman to be elected as Chapter President of the Mid Florida Chapter of Associated General Contractors, a national professional organization of construction service providers. Linda was recruited to and served for five years on the Grow Financial Board of Directors. Lindas served on the United Way of Tampa Bay (now the United Way Suncoast) Board of Directors for several terms, where she served as Campaign Chair, two terms as Chair of the Board of Directors, and was a founder of the UW Women's Leadership Program.



Wanda Lipscomb-Vasquez

Women's Business Center at Florida Institute of Technology, Program Coordinator

As co-owner of Acureach Consulting LLC Wanda helped small to mid-size companies develop effective business models and profit-driven cost structures through a research-based approach to business. By understanding industry trends and evaluating timely market research, clients gained better positioning, pricing and competitive advantage to gain greater market share. Now working with the Women's Business Center at FIT, Ms. Lipscomb-Vásquez consults start-up businesses and works with the Women's Business Center to grow the IGNITE 360TM Mentoring program for second-stage businesses. She also provides program support and focuses on the development of business education and content materials for the center that focus on education and development of corporate training materials and the advancement of new programs that support entrepreneurial development. She has a special interest in program development, health literacy initiatives, and the promotion of cross cultural awareness in the workplace. Wanda earned a Regents BA degree at West Virginia University and a master's degree in Education, and a Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL), at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Wanda is currently working on her master's degree in Computer Information Systems at Florida Tech.



Nancy Whitworth

City of Greenville, Deputy City Manager and Director of Economic Development

Nancy is the deputy city manager and director of economic development for the City of Greenville. In addition to her role as deputy, she is responsible for commercial and neighborhood revitalization, downtown development, business recruitment and retention, planning and zoning and building codes. A native South Carolinian, she has been in Greenville for over thirty years and has played an integral role in Greenville's transformation. She received Master of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees from Clemson University. She is a member of the American Institute for Certified Planners, the International Council of Shopping Centers, International Economic Development Council and Urban Land Institute. Nancy is also a member of The University Center of Greenville, Inc., Board of Trustees, Greenville Professional Women's Forum, Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Upstate and Clemson University Advancement Board for Real Estate Development.



NOMINEES

All 2015 Nominees

Kimberly Barfield Manooshian, Events by Kimberly

Robyn Bell, The Pops Orchestra

Brooke Bello Parker, More Too Life

Kim Bociek, Acupuncture Physician's Group

Veronica Brandon Miller, Goodwill Manasota

Nicole Brooks-Caldwell, Neal Communities

Lee Byron, Michael Saunders & Company

Anne Chauvet, Critical Vet Care of Sarasota

Sheri Clinard, TailsAroundTown.org

Aimee Cogan, Bellwether Group, Morgan Stanley

Taylor Collins, Professional Benefits

Patricia Courtois, C-Suite

Callie Cowan, Pregnancy Solutions

Jennifer Cowan, Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A.

Judy Cuppy, Senior Home Companions

Ashley Danielson, Easter Seals

Jamie Davis, Karen Eber Davis

Charlene DeMers, Coastal Orthopedics

Melanie Denicourt, Indigo West

Lori Devine, Fairway Funding

JoAnne DeVries, Hearing Loss Association

Mary Dougherty-Slapp, Gulf Coast Builders Exchange

Rae Dowling, Florida Power and Light

Beth Ebersole, Kerkering Barberio

Anita Eldridge, Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport

Rosemary Eure, Lancaster & Eure

Shon Ewens, Healthy Start Coalition

Renee Farmer, Goldman Sachs

Iceseas Farrell, NBOA Marine Insurance

Fiona Farrell, Gecko's Hospitality Group

Ping Faulhaber, Suncoast Science Center

Elizabeth Melendez Fisher, Selah Freedom

Mary Forristall, Forristall Enterprises

Dianne Glass, Body Rolling

Maria Gomez, WSRQ Talk Radio

Dana Gourley, Aqua New-Watt-ahh

Leana Greene, Kids in the House

Annette Gueli, Promotions Notions

Michelle Hange, Manatee Sarasota Eye Clinic

Sharon Hillstrom, Bradenton Area Economic Development Corporation

Kameron Hodgins, The Glasser Schoenbaum Human Services Center

Sheri Penxa/Hope Kinney, Painting With a Twist Saraosta

Kimberly Hopper, Regions Bank

Johnette Isham, Realize Bradenton

Molly Jackson, New Balance Sarasota & University Park, Fleet Feet Sarasota, Molly's Boutique

Kelli Jaco, Jaco Boxing

Roxie Jerde, Community Foundation of Sarasota County

Christine Johnson, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Michelle Kapreillian, Forty Carrots Family Center

Heather Kasten, Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance

Nicola Kobritz, Youthful Aging Home Health and Sci Brain

Jo Ann Koontz, Koontz & Associates

Tammy Kovar, Biological Tree Service

Denise Kowal, Avenida de Colores

Lynne Koy, Coldwell Banker

Lisa Krouse, FCCI Insurance

Brittany Lamont, Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce

Tiffany Liashek, Studio South Fitness

Kim Livengood, The Eclipse Agency

Stacey Marks, Stacey Marks Photography

Hailey Martin, Charlie We Do Hair

Candice McElyea, ThreeSixOh Public Relations

Sandy McGowan, Sandy's Designer Clothing

Christine Meeker Lange, Suncoast Science Center

Dawn Milhous, Charter One Hotels & Resorts

Monica Miller, Gateway Bank

Linse Miller, JMX Brands/DutchCrafters

Michelle Mohr Hange, Manatee Sarasota Eye Clinics

Lisa Moore, Artisan Hair Design

Taryn Morgan, IMG Academy

Amanda Myhrberg, A Game Sport Psychology Consulting

Deva O'Donnell, Richards FoodPorium

Bibi Ohlsson, Evoking Excellence

Stefanie Overturf, Overturf's Floor and Fabric Care

Amy Phillips, NDC Construction

Betsy Plante, NuSkin and Blessing Bags of Bradenton and St. Pete

Coral Pleas, Cutting Loose Salon

Daniela Poinsett, Loveland Center

Tanya Poppa, Real Fitness Sarasota

Carol Probstfeld, State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota

Liz Pugh, Women with Class

Kat Quast, Sublime Events

Eva Rey, Lakewood Ranch IDA

Sandra Rios, The Resort at Longboat Key Club

AnneMarie Rizzo, Finebloo Haenel and Higgins

Lori Rodgers, Bert Rodgers Schools

Maria Rosabal, Health Living Organic and Natural Market

Kay Rosaire, Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary

Marissa Rossnagle, CS&L CPAs

Diane Rudd, Rudd International

Karen Rushing, Sarasota County Clerk of the Court

Michelle Sampson, Cool Today

Amy Sankes, Hand and Stone Massage and Facial Spa

Michael Saunders, Michael Saunders and Company

Sally Schule, Saks Fifth Avenue

Lisa Seidensticker, The Francis, Libby's Cafe + Bar, Louies Modern

Christine Sensenig, Hultman, Sensenig + Joshi, PA

Britney Serbin, Serbin Printing

Deborah Shuck, Women Owners of Florida

Lisa Silvestri, Silvestri Travel

June Simmons, June Simmons

Kimberlie Slade, Sarasota Real Estate Group / SarasotaOne.com

LeeAnne Swor, L.Boutique & L.Spa

Nikki Taylor, Sarasota Memorial Healthcare Foundation

Adora Thompson, I Do Diamond Ring Boutique

Cindy Thompson, Thompson Academy and AMI Community Center

Alana Tomasso, Midnight Cove

Gabriele Vest, Grapevine Communications

Lisa Jayne Wallace, Stateside International Realty

Janet Walter, Michael Saunders and Company

Melissa Wandall, M3 Motivational Concepts

Barbara Wheatley, ICEpodz

Lori White, Superintendent of Sarasota County Schools

Suzy Wilburn, Southeastern Guide Dogs

Judith Williams, FIFI's Fine Resale Apparel and Furniture

Susanne Wise, Take Care Private Duty Home Health

Bridget Ziegler, Al Purmort Insurance / Sarasota County School Board

Jackie Zumba, Jackie Z Style Co.

"I am living my dream job as president of Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. I'm a fifth generation Floridian from Ellenton and grew up on the Manatee River playing outside in wide-open fields and old growth forests. Utilizing my MBA and business experience to save the lands we love so that our children and grandchildren can have the same childhood I did is enormously fulfilling. Our natural environment is intrinsic to our lifestyle here on the Gulf Coast of Florida, everything from recreation and relaxation to water quality and our economy. Preserving natural lands protects our quality of life and keeps our economy vibrant and strong." **Christine Johnson**

Christine P. Johnson

CONSERVATION FOUNDATION OF
THE GULF COAST, PRESIDENT



LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE

The powerful combination of passion and savvy business experience gives Christine P. Johnson the unique edge to lead Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast in its bold goal to save land, forever. Since 2011, she has steered this locally grown, nationally accredited land trust in its mission to protect the character, natural integrity and biodiversity of our bays, beaches, barrier islands and their watersheds on Florida's Gulf Coast. Nonprofit land trusts have existed in our nation for over a century, helping communities preserve natural lands and waterways for the greater good of people and nature. Conservation Foundation works with willing landowners and in collaboration with other organizations, to ensure the properties with the highest conservation value and public benefit are protected. To date, Conservation Foundation has conserved nearly 8,600 acres across Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte and Lee Counties, including an addition to Robinson Preserve in Manatee County and more than 200 acres on Pine Island in Lee County. One of their current projects is an ambitious initiative of great impact, the Myakka Island Conservation Corridor, which will permanently conserve more than 7,500 acres on three ranches adjacent to other conserved lands in the Myakka River basin. When complete, Manatee, Sarasota and Charlotte Counties will benefit from improved water quality and flood protection, preservation of working ranchlands, increased wildlife habitat, support for eco-tourism and the ability to expand recreational areas along the Myakka River. Conservation Foundation's work requires a skilled team, strong leadership, authentic relationships, willing collaborative partners and a community inspired by conservation. To be part of this conservation community call 941-918-2100 or visit www.conservation-foundation.com. 400 Palmetto Avenue, PO Box 902 | 941-918-2100 | conservationfoundation.com





LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE

"The best advice I have ever received was to become indispensable. Don't just excel at the job you were hired for – gain a working knowledge of all the roles that support your function in the company. It's the best way to grow professionally and develop a range of capabilities. Your commitment will not go unnoticed, and other employees will see you as a leader in the organization." **Gabriele Vest**

Gabriele Vest

GRAPEVINE COMMUNICATIONS,
VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Gabriele Vest is the Vice President of Business Development for Grapevine Communications, the most award-winning advertising, marketing and public relations agency in Sarasota and the surrounding areas. Gabriele began her tenure at Grapevine with an internship during the summers of 2005 and 2006. In 2007, she joined the agency full-time as an account executive upon earning a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Tennessee. At the end of 2013, Gabriele was promoted to Vice President of Business Development, which expanded her responsibilities with potential and existing clients, and allowed a greater role in cultivating new business. Today, she manages more than 30 accounts for the firm. Grapevine emphasizes the importance of growth and development for its team. As such, Gabriele has continued her business education and graduated from the Leadership Sarasota County program in 2013 and the Leadership Manatee County program in 2015. She maintains active roles with both of these organizations, and serves on planning committees for the current classes. Gabriele also remains dedicated to Grapevine's longstanding tradition of involvement with charitable organizations in the Sarasota-Bradenton area. She is on the Board of Directors and serves as the Communication Chair for the Young Leaders Alliance of Lakewood Ranch, and is on the Board of Directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sarasota. A part of the local business community, Gabriele serves on the Leadership Committee for the Manatee Young Professionals, Membership Committee for the Gulf Coast Builders Xchange, and is a member of Designing Daughters. Since joining the ranks of Grapevine Communications, Gabriele has boosted her presence in the professional community. In 2012, she received recognition as "40 Under 40" by the Business Observer, and has been acknowledged as a finalist for both the 2013 and 2014 Young Professional of the Year for the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce. Gabriele was also honored as a finalist for the 2014 Young Professional of the Year for the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance. 5201 Paylor Lane, Sarasota, FL 34240 | 941-351-0024 | www.grapeinc.com





"Devotion to worthy causes and raising money for organizations who support those in need is not just what I do for a living – it defines me as a person."

Veronica Brandon Miller

Veronica Brandon Miller

GOODWILL MANASOTA FOUNDATION,
VICE PRESIDENT

Veronica has devoted herself to worthy causes professionally and personally. For more than 25 years she has helped nonprofits enhance and advance their mission, such as leading ShelterBox USA and helped them increase their donations by 1,000 percent, the Boys & Girls Club where she founded the Women's Leadership Council, and the Smithsonian Institution where she helped complete the campaign for the National Museum of the American Indian. Currently, Veronica is focusing her considerable capabilities on building philanthropic support for Goodwill Manasota. In her current role with Goodwill she gets to use her talents in re-branding their image, creating an award-winning Goodwill Ambassador program and helping to raise significant funds to help provide more mission programs. While already contributing \$81 million in economic impact to the local job market, Veronica wants people to understand the scope of what Goodwill does with their donated goods. Its mission is to help people be self-sufficient through employment, which means addressing any barriers such as disabilities, inability to read, transportation issues or even posttraumatic stress disorder affecting many returning veterans. In addition to the time devoted to Goodwill, Veronica is an active Rotarian and serves on the boards of the Child Protection Center and Ave Maria Preparatory School. 2705 51st Avenue E., Bradenton, FL 34203 | 941-355-2721 | www.experiencegoodwill.org





NOMINEE



"While this nomination as a woman leader in business is such a privilege, my greatest honor is hugging my kids and my husband tight every night before bed knowing I was able to impact the lives of pregnant women, families, and babies throughout Sarasota County in some kind of way each day!" **Shon Ewens**

Shon Ewens

HEALTHY START COALITION
OF SARASOTA COUNTY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pregnancy and childbirth are major life events and Shon Ewens, the Executive Director for the Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County, Inc., knows this firsthand. A full-time working mom of three (Gracie, Jackson, and Harper), Shon started working for the Healthy Start Coalition after the birth of her youngest, now one year. In fact she interviewed for the position only weeks after giving birth, breaking part-way through the three hour long interview to nurse her newborn. Babies are commonplace at the Healthy Start Coalition offices. Pregnant women and infants are often seen attending any number of classes or counseling sessions held at the coalition office, from childbirth education to pre or postnatal yoga. The Healthy Start Coalition oversees several programs that provide assistance to pregnant women, families, and infants in Sarasota County, ensuring they receive needed care and services. From getting healthy before pregnancy to parenting classes, smoking cessation to psychosocial counseling, Healthy Start provides a variety of free, high-quality services to ensure that every baby has the opportunity for a healthy start in life.

A background in Human Development and Family Studies, Shon has worked supporting families for almost 20 years. Demonstrating her dynamic energy, she brings a new vitality to the organization, encouraging others to donate their time, money, and resources to help our most vulnerable community members. Honored for her work with the Save My Life Program, she was awarded one of the 2015 Unity Awards by Biz(941) and LaGuia Magazines. The Save My Life Program strives to reduce birth and health disparities in our Newtown community, providing free prenatal and postpartum support for African-American families. Although most Healthy Start Coalition programs are government funded, Save My Life depends entirely on private contributions. Shon and her husband John balance their careers and their family by relying on teamwork and their wonderful support system. "It takes a village," states Ewens. 1750 17th St., Sarasota, FL 34234 | 941-373-7070 | www.healthystartsarasota.org



"The best advice I've ever received came from my Father: Always run faster than the other guy." **Iceseas Farrell**

Iceseas Farrell

NBOA MARINE INSURANCE, VICE PRESIDENT

A graduate from the University of Miami and a Sarasota native, Iceseas Farrell is second-generation owner and VP of the National Boat Owners Association (NBOA) Marine Insurance. Specializing in recreational boat insurance, NBOA is one of the largest agencies in the country and serves as the preferred insurance provider to well-known boat brands like Sea Ray, Meridian Yachts, Contender and Yellowfin. Alongside her brother and husband, she's spent the last decade growing the company and expanding into other areas of the marine world. At 26, she worked with Progressive Insurance Company to develop "Sign&Glide," an insurance product for on-water towing. She now serves as President to Compass Marine Services - a company that provides 24/7 on-water towing and claims services to NBOA, Liberty Mutual, Safeco and Progressive Insurance customers (almost 600,000 boat owners nationwide). "I tend to hesitate when people ask me what I do. Especially now." Expanding operations again last Spring, Iceseas orchestrated the purchase of the Southern Kingfish Association and now helps to oversee the organization. The SKA sanctions over 40 King Mackerel tournaments each year, serving an ardent membership base of competitive anglers across the Southeast. "It's the largest Saltwater Tournament Trail in the country. We've got a National Championship, a Professional Tour sponsored by Mercury Motors and an 11-issue magazine. It's definitely been a wild addition to my daily duties so now I just say, 'I'm in the boating business.' No need to complicate things any more!" With Marketing and Program Development as her favored areas of focus at work – outside of the office she spends her time on the water, practicing yoga, and grabbing Thai food with friends. She lives in Lakewood Ranch with her husband, Patrick and their Boston Terrier Hemingway. 4404 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34234 | 941-360-6777 | www.nboat.com





"The combination of knowledge and connection is a powerful tool for the growth of our community." **Jo Ann Koontz**

Jo Ann Koontz

KOONTZ & ASSOCIATES, PL,
PRINCIPAL ATTORNEY

Early in my legal career, I was given the opportunity to open a satellite office for the firm I worked with. Through this experience, I learned a lot about the way I wanted to practice law — and, by equal measure, the way I did not want to practice. At Koontz and Associates, we offer legal services in plain English to make law accessible and understandable so our clients can make informed decisions and feel confident about the way they run their life or business. It's important to me that my clients don't feel intimidated by the legal process. I host a weekly radio show on WSRQ Radio called "It's Your Business" that teaches Sarasota area residents about how to run their businesses more effectively and make productive decisions. I've found that the information on the show isn't the only benefit: the guests I interview on the show create strong connections and often do business together. I also speak regularly in the community about topics related to business, tax, and real estate law. The combination of knowledge and connection is a powerful one. Each of us — business or individual — has a responsibility to seek out knowledge and connections, and offer it to others whenever possible. This is how we continue to make Sarasota the growing, thriving, amazing community that it is. I'm honored and humbled to be nominated as a business and community leader among these other incredible women. I look forward to the future of our city, our culture, and our potential.
1819 Main Street, Sarasota, FL 34236 | 941-225-2615 | <http://koontzassociates.com>



Nicole Brooks-Caldwell

NEAL COMMUNITIES, DIRECTOR OF SALES



NOMINEE

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Nicole Brooks is an experienced sales director, licensed Florida Broker and Realtor. As Neal Communities' Director of Sales, Nicole is a strong asset to the team, who epitomizes our philosophy of superior customer service. With a consistent emphasis on quality customer interactions while adjusting strategy to follow the market, Nicole has effectively assisted in motivating and leading the Neal sales team to record setting success. Brooks joined Neal Communities as the Area Sales Manager in February 2012. As Director of Sales, she leads a team of more than 30 people, plus two area sales managers, and three online sales counselors, from South Hillsborough County to Englewood. Her role focuses on strategic planning for sales, enhancing the sales process, and continuing to ensure a structure to help reach goals each month. Before joining Neal Communities in 2012, Brooks was a sales manager for a national home builder as well as a sales and marketing director for a developer. Nicole grew up in South Florida and considers this home. I grew up in an Italian family with 2 brothers and 15 boy cousins, and 5 uncles. I grew up trying to keep up with the "boys" and often times found myself in very precarious situations. I wasn't the oldest, the fastest, the strongest or the tallest, but I never wanted to be left behind or told I couldn't do something because I was a girl. I was challenged everyday to be a better person. That became the foundation of who I am today. 5800 Lakewood Ranch Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34240 | 888-293-7076

The best advice I received came from my mother. Her words replay in my head whenever I feel like I am given an impossible task "There are no boundaries to what you will accomplish in your life. The only boundaries you have on success are the boundaries that you place on yourself." In the end, I may have to work harder, I may have to find something to make me taller (you won't catch me in flats!), I may have to study longer, and I may have to find support for the things that are too heavy, but there is always a way. **Nicole Brooks-Caldwell**



LeeAnne Swor

L. BOUTIQUE AND L.SPA, OWNER

L. Boutique & L. Spa began 20 years ago in a quaint little cottage in the Buckhead neighborhood of Atlanta. Owner LeeAnne Swor took a chance and opened a small boutique in 1994. With a \$30,000 loan, she opened her doors and learned the ropes of retail in her small Atlanta store that she owned for 12 years. After a visit to Sarasota and a memorable lunch on Pineapple Avenue (perfect weather, nice people and a son that loved the beach)...the rest is history! In the same weekend, LeeAnne found a store space, a small house, a babysitter and an employee - all with a 2 year old on her hip! LeeAnne attributes everything falling into place to "divine intervention," remarking that if even one element had fallen through, the move to Sarasota would not have happened. The Burns Court area immediately felt like home. "Sarasota offers the perfect mix of a small town feel combined with a cosmopolitan energy and of course, the most beautiful beaches. What's not to love?" Recognizing the need in this new market, L. Boutique provided more options for shopping. "L. Boutique caters to the local clientele. Because of our beautiful weather, buying for a store here is very different from other parts of the country. We need 'summer' merchandise all year long. Sarasota also has a big black tie social season. I took a big risk and thankfully, L. Boutique was busy from the day I opened. I only knew about 5 people in the whole town, but word spread quickly, and the support was overwhelming. I expanded my store 1,500 square feet after one year, and then 2 years later opened L. Kids in the building next door. When my 5-year lease expired, I purchased the building next door and merged the women's and kids stores. Six months later I opened L. Spa, which was a natural expansion based on my mission to make women feel beautiful inside and out. I was new to the spa industry, but just modeled it after my boutique and wanted the same comfortable friendly feeling. Here we are 10 years later and I am blessed to say I now employ a staff of 25 and I still love coming to work!" L. Boutique features over 50 different clothing lines--everything from t-shirts to gowns. Every client can enjoy the experience of her own personal shopper who excels in creating a personalized dream wardrobe. 556 S. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236 | Boutique 941-906-1350 / Spa 941-906-1358 | www.lboutiques.com/ www.lspasarasota.com





NOMINEE

The L. Boutique and L. Spa staff are special to LeeAnne. "They are what make 5516 Pineapple Avenue a place that people want to visit, a destination. We aren't in a mall, we don't get a lot of walk by traffic. People have to make a special trip to see us. My staff really cares about making sure each client has a wonderful experience, whether that be choosing a special dress for an event, getting on a skin care regimen that works for them or just sharing something special that happened in their day. We know people's names. We know their lifestyle. They trust us to dress them for special events - a first date or their daughter's wedding. We call, email or send notes when we find a special item for them. We send a thank you note. It's our customer service that sets us apart, no question." **LeeAnne Swor**





"To be nominated alongside the many incredible candidates for SRQ's Women in Business is quite an honor. It has been my life's work and passion to help people feel better in their bodies." **Dianne Glass**

Dianne Glass

BODY ROLLING BY DIANNE GLASS, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATOR FOR YAMUNA® BODY ROLLING

In today's society, we see so much chronic pain and disease that it can feel like an epidemic. I aim to inspire people to take the steps to a better way of life. By providing empowering tools for self-care and healing, I hope to contribute to a healthier Sarasota. As a lead practitioner and educator of the Yamuna method of body work, I have led thousands to understand how to address and relieve pain that stems from breakdowns of the body. Anyone can learn Yamuna Body Rolling and use its small balls of varying sizes to literally roll through tension. By bearing weight into the balls, you directly lengthen, stretch, and tone your muscles, encourage joint mobility, and as a result, stand taller and move with greater ease. As a non-impact exercise for bone health, this practice is appropriate for folks with previous injuries or ailments. I invite you to one of my local Yamuna Body Rolling classes to experience relaxation, freedom of movement and relief from pain. Then, take the journey further at a weekend wellness immersion or a lifestyle retreat in Mexico, Italy, or beyond. Enjoy a sense of wellness and vitality. Feel comfortable in your body. Relish the pleasure of movement and pure release.

www.BodyRollingDianneGlass.com



NOMINEE



Deva O'Donnell

RICHARDS FOODPORIUM, ASSET MANAGER

As the daughter of John Rorer, current proprietor of Richard's Foodporium, a locally owned and family operated natural and specialty food store, I've watched and admired my father's ability to build a brand, taking a small operation of 6 stores and turning them into 17 corporate stores, 2 franchise locations, and a 22,000 sq. ft. warehouse complex. For as long as I can remember, my father has dreamt of passing on Richard's to me and growing it into a generational business. As a Sarasota native, I've watched Sarasota grow into the cosmopolitan community that it has now become. I have a deep appreciation and love for this city, and take pride in getting involved and giving back. But after earning my bachelor's in Event Management at the University of Central Florida I felt the itch to try living elsewhere before I jumped into moving back home and taking over the family business. I spent a few years in San Francisco prior to finally moving back to my hometown to work alongside my father when I learned he had been diagnosed with cancer.

My first job at 16 years old was a Team Member and cashier at the original Richard's store off Tuttle and Ringling. Even during college I came back and worked summers and interned with the marketing department. Luckily my father is fine today and over the last year and a half of being back in Sarasota, I've been working on developing a new position at Richard's as PR & Marketing Coordinator under the Director of Marketing. I was promoted to Asset Manager and spend time with each department to learn every aspect of the business's operations, as well as managing my father's rental properties and other investments. The future will continue to challenge me, as I aspire to work with my father at Richard's Foodporium and in other operations as they come to fruition as well. Headquarters: 8125 25th Court East, Sarasota, FL 34243 | 941-355-6838 | www.richardsfoodporium.com

"I'm fortunate to have two parents that are both successful entrepreneurs and have taught me that if you're willing to pour yourself into being an entrepreneur/successful and sacrifice certain pleasures, indulgences, and distractions along the way, you will find that your success is only limited by your thoughts and choices." **Deva O'Donnell**



"Author Kevin Eikenberry, who writes about leadership has a quote that I love and try to live by: 'Focusing on others will give you more influence and power than focusing on yourself.'" **Christine Meeker Lange**

Christine Meeker Lange

SUNCOAST SCIENCE CENTER,
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICE

A native New Yorker from birth, Christine Meeker Lange grew up largely in Akron, Ohio, graduating from Kent State University with a degree in broadcasting. After working in production at a local ABC-TV affiliate, she moved onto news marketing and promotion for Knight-Ridder's Akron Beacon Journal and relocated to Sarasota in 1988 to work for the Tampa Bay Times. Following that she landed a job in global technology marketing for Arthur Anderson Technology Solutions. In 2000 she joined Ringling College of Art and Design, most notably holding the position as Special Assistant to the college's President Larry R. Thompson until late 2014. She defines herself as an Innovative Idea Strategist, Entrepreneurial Agent, Education Advocate, and Creative Problem-Solver focusing on creative ideation and oversight of complex, innovative programs and project management including relationship development, operational process, change management, strategic communications, business strategy and articulation, and brand positioning. My passion is to create new ideas, programs, and relationships through transparency, integrity, diversity, perseverance and collaboration. I love new beginnings and work diligently toward achieving results that are scalable, sustainable and life-changing. I believe the Suncoast Science Center offers an unbridled opportunity to establish a transformational approach to the convergence of STEM education, innovation and community outreach which can be used someday as a model for similar centers across the nation. It is truly inspiring to imagine the connection between children and professionals, young adults and budding entrepreneurs – all for the ultimate benefit of enriching the way knowledge is shared and enabling multi-generational experiential learning to thrive. 4452 S. Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL 34233 | www.suncoastscience.org

"My business mission is to champion fundraising and marketing efforts that relate to healthcare. This also happens to be my personal mission as my father died of a rare illness in 2010. To improve the healthcare for Sarasota through engagement and philanthropy changes so many things and in my case, the "patient" was my Dad. When it happens to you, this all becomes very real. Having world renowned physicians, facilities and clinicians in our backyard makes for an ongoing effort." **Nikki Taylor**



NOMINEE

Nikki Taylor

SARASOTA MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION,
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Nikki Taylor arrived in Sarasota in 2000 from Palm Beach, Florida. Since her arrival she has actively pursued her passion of helping people within the community and working to develop strategic partnerships and business alliances as it relates to her passions. Her success in these areas has led to her becoming one of the most well-known and respected businesswomen and philanthropists in the Greater Sarasota Area. Nikki is Director of Marketing at SMHF. In this executive position she is responsible for marketing and online conversions as it relates to fundraising. To accomplish these goals Nikki develops and leverages her vast professional and personal network. Some would say it's not what you know, it is who you know. Nikki prefers to think her success is based on both. Nikki's ability to put together networking groups and overall connectivity is what uniquely qualifies her and has led to her successes within the Sarasota executive scene. She builds friendships and client growth based on integrity and retains these same clients through long-term business relationships. Nominated Women Business leaders of the year 2015, and one of the "40 Under 40" by the Gulf Coast Business Review in 2005, Nikki has Chaired more than two dozen charity events that have raised more than \$5 million dollars to better the Sarasota community. Nikki was runner up for Young Professional of the Year for Sarasota County by the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 2013. Current board involvement includes: PTO Board for Southside School, FRPA Board, and Designing Daughters Executive Council. Nikki's passions include: healthcare, empowering women in business, mentoring young women to become future leaders, and helping connect those who are new to Sarasota find their passions. 1515 S. Osprey Avenue, Suite B4, Sarasota, FL 34239 | 941-917-1286 | www.smhf.org



"I am so proud of our students and their determination to succeed. I have the privilege of working with dedicated faculty and staff who take tremendous satisfaction in helping our students reach their goals. SCF continues to uphold its high standards of providing a quality education at an excellent value."

Dr. Carol Probstfeld



NOMINEE

Dr. Carol Probstfeld

STATE COLLEGE OF FLORIDA, MANATEE-SARASOTA, PRESIDENT

Dr. Carol Probstfeld is the president of State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota (SCF), the area's oldest and largest public college with more than 44,000 graduates. Under Carol's leadership, SCF has strengthened its position as a leader in providing quality education and contributing to the community's prosperity. SCF provides a full-college experience for students to excel in areas from academics to athletics to the arts. Recently, SCF students proved they are among the brightest minds in the country when the Brain Bowl team won the 2015 National Community College Championship Tournament. The caliber of SCF's Music Program was showcased again this year at the Florida College System Activities Association Winter Music Symposium, where SCF students represented eight of the 16 musicians selected for the All-State Orchestra. Before Carol's appointment as president, she served 10 years as SCF's vice president of business and administrative services and uses her business savvy to lead the \$100 million enterprise and major regional economic driver. Carol is a member of the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce board of directors and is active in several business and community organizations, including serving on the executive committee of the Bradenton Area Economic Development Corporation. She is currently the Policy and Advocacy Chair of the Florida Council of Presidents, working on funding measures among the system's diverse 28 state colleges and raising the profile of the State College System among decision makers in Tallahassee. Carol has a proven track record of fostering strong relationships with the community through collaboration and partnerships. She has ensured the college is responsive to the community's economic needs by working with employers to create and adapt workforce degrees to fill local needs and by fostering partnerships to ensure SCF graduates are not just employable, but employed. For locations and phone numbers, visit: www.scf.edu.





NOMINEE



"Congratulations to all the Women in Business nominees; I'm honored to be included in this prestigious list. I feel so fortunate to work in an environment where I am valued, respected and supported, and we are all privileged to live in a community that fosters growth and collaboration."

Marissa Rossnagle

CS&L CPAs, MARKETING DIRECTOR

A dynamic career is important to me, as is working for a company that matches my values. As CS&L's Marketing Director, I've created concepts that challenge the way traditional accounting firms present themselves and in some areas, even operate. Instead of resistance, I've received appreciation for the perspective I bring and a willingness to explore new initiatives. This past year, I had the opportunity to lead significant projects including establishing our new CS&L CAREs community impact initiative, revamping our digital strategy, and developing a strategic, multi-faceted plan for our Tampa market expansion. On a personal level, I appreciate that I am encouraged and empowered to donate my time and talent to local organizations I'm passionate about. I'm grateful to live and work in such a vibrant, connected community, where I'm inspired on a daily basis by the remarkable people around me and the exponential growth happening here. 1515 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34236 | Phone: 941-954-4040 | www.cslcpa.com



NOMINEE

"I truly believe that each of us have a personal calling that is unique to us. In order to discover that calling you must explore different avenues and find your path. Once discovered, use your life experiences and the team of people you have by your side to give the very best you can possibly give. My team inspires me, drives me to do better and uphold the values of what our company was built on. It is an honor to be nominated and recognized for the SRQ Women in Business."

Fiona Farrell

GECKO'S HOSPITALITY GROUP, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Gecko's Hospitality Group is a Company founded on a cornerstone of Community and Friendship; two ideals that mean a lot to me. We have grown to six Gecko's Grill & Pub locations, and introduced our new concept, S'macks Burgers & Shakes over the course of our 23 year history. This industry is astoundingly competitive and I believe that staying true to those values is what sets us apart. You can't buy friendship, but you can find it at Gecko's. Eat, Drink & Be Merry! For locations and phone numbers, visit: <http://geckosgrill.com>





NOMINEE

"It is truly an honor to be nominated. I moved to Sarasota 21 years ago, and worked in the shopping center and construction industries in the Sarasota market for 10 years. I quit working to raise two children on Longboat Key for a period of 10 years. I have found a new passion after recently launching my "second career" in real estate. Being a part of the Sarasota community is a pleasure, and networking is the foundation of my business."

Janet Walter

MICHAEL SAUNDERS & COMPANY, REALTOR

Born and raised in St. Louis, MO, Janet Walker came to Florida's Gulf Coast in 1994 and ultimately settled on Longboat Key. Janet's approach starts with a commitment to excellence, strong local network and business relationships – cultivated over the 21 years she has lived and worked in the Sarasota area. Janet was the marketing director for Sarasota Square and Southgate Plaza Malls, development director for Kellogg & Kimsey General Contractors, marketing director at The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort, and most recently owner of her own public relations company, The Walter Network. Janet holds a degree from Denison University and is a graduate of Leadership Sarasota and enjoys serving local charitable organizations. This year, she is co-chair for the Asolo Grand Gala and Donte's Den Top Dog. Outside of real estate, Janet enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters, boating, barre workouts, horseback riding and walking the family's two wonderful retrievers. 440 Gulf of Mexico Dr., Longboat Key, FL 34228 | 941-232-2000 | janetwalter.michaelsaunders.com



LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE

"I am extremely honored to be included in such a prestigious list of "doers" in our community. If you know the quality of these women you will understand how impressive this list truly is. Every one of these women work hard, get involved and live life to the fullest. They are all people that I would enjoy having as friends."

Mary Forristall

FORRISTALL ENTERPRISES, PRESIDENT



Mary Forristall is a native Floridian, born in Miami, FL. She came to the West Coast of Florida in 1981. Together with Stephen, her husband of 35 years, they have built Forristall Enterprises, Inc., a demolition company, into a successful and thriving company that employs more than 40 people and is celebrating its 25th year in business in 2015. Forristall Enterprises was awarded the Small Business of the Year in 2002. Mary earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business, in 1998. She then went on to earn her Master's Degree, in Managerial Leadership in 2001. Mary is President of Forristall Enterprises, Inc. She holds a State of Florida General Contractor's License (1992), has a LEED AP Accreditation and is a Florida State Certified Minority Business Owner as well as an FDOT DBE business. Mary is the current Chair for the Gulf Coast Builder's Exchange, and serves on Meals on Wheels Plus of Manatee Board and the YMCA of Manatee Board. Mary is a proud mother and Grandmother. In her spare time Mary also teaches aerobics at the YMCA. 3404 17th St. E., Palmetto, FL 34221 | 941-729-8150 | www.forristall.com



NOMINEE

"I read once that 'experience is what you get when you don't get what you want.' Over time, the knowledge I've gained from "failing forward" has been immeasurable, but more importantly, applicable to what we do every day.

Patricia Courtois

C•SUITE COMMUNICATIONS, PRESIDENT & CEO

C-Suite Communications (f/k/a Clarke Advertising and Public Relations) was "reborn" in January 2015 to serve clients who recognize that effective marketing communications must be strategically based and founded upon their organization's brand. To do that you need curious "best of breed" professionals who are as eager to learn as they are to create. I'm very proud to lead such a team whose unique work style, personality and professionalism energizes our workplace, allowing us to do our very best work. My career passion is equally matched by a dedication to our community. I serve on the boards of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, EDC of Sarasota County and Florida Studio Theatre and as a volunteer cooking instructor for All Faiths Food Bank's Cooking Matters. And very recently we were honored for the public service campaign we created for Southeastern Guide Dogs, bringing attention to the canine heroes, raised in our own backyard, who go on to serve the visually impaired nationwide. 401 N. Cattlemen Road, Suite 308, Sarasota, FL 34232 | 941-487-1916 | www.c-suitecomms.com



LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE

"It's extremely important to me personally and to GCBX to give back to the community, and it is fulfilling to work with a group of business leaders who take this commitment very seriously. Members of GCBX are some of the top sponsors at many charitable events throughout the community and continually work to build a better community for all residents."

Mary Dougherty-Slapp

GULF COAST BUILDERS EXCHANGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The **Gulf Coast Builders Exchange (GCBX)** is the Trade Association for the Commercial Contracting Industry in Manatee, Sarasota and Charlotte Counties. It was founded in 1952 by a small group of local business leaders and 63 years later continues to represent the leaders in business in the region. The Gulf Coast Builders Exchange encourages its members to do business with other members, thereby strengthening the local industry and economy. The organization provides networking and educational opportunities for the members to assist them in growing their businesses. The organization is involved in government advocacy to create a business friendly environment in the region and prosperous economy for the entire community. The members of the organization contribute significantly to the community through their philanthropic efforts and GCBX as an organization continuously supports community efforts such as; barkitecture, the Manatee and Sarasota Food Banks, the Summer Hunger Campaign, and veterans initiatives to name a few. 8470 Enterprise Circle, Suite 101, Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202 | 941-907-7745 | www.gcbx.org





NOMINEE

"Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence!" The author of this quote is unknown but she must have been quite a woman! I am honored to have been nominated as one of the SRQ Women in Business and I am in awe of those who stand beside me as fellow nominees."

Lynne Koy

COLDWELL BANKER PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL
ON LONGBOAT KEY, REAL ESTATE AGENT

After 40 years as a real estate agent and 30 years in Sarasota, I try to bring the same enthusiasm and work ethic to both my business and my non-profit interests. As a SPARCC board member, I see first-hand the benefits of raising awareness as well as funding, and offering a "hand up rather than a hand out." I am so fortunate to be part of organization like Meals on Wheels that allows me to deliver a smile as well as a hot lunch every Friday. I am humbled by the opportunity and the responsibility to give back to a community that has allowed me to build my business and nurture and honor friendships along the way. As a single mother, raising two toddlers in the suburbs of Chicago in the early 1970's, with only a high school diploma, real estate seemed like the only option. I was fortunate to have great teachers and mentors along the way. One told me, "Each battle prepares you better for the next." I have learned more from my mistakes than my successes, I have taken risks, I believe in forgiving myself and others, and I believe in God and am grateful for everything that He has done for me. 201 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Suite 1, Longboat Key, FL 34228 | 941-387-1803 | www.lynnkoy.com



NOMINEE

"Like they say about the Oscars, it is an honor just to have been nominated. As peers nominate for this award, this means that my philosophy and approach to the practice of law - very client centered - resonates. Practicing employment law is not a job for me, it is a passion that drives me to learn more and strive to do my best to assist my clients with their concerns."

Christine Sensenig

HULTMAN SENSENIG + JOSHI, PA

My law practice grew last year by having partners Lori Hultman and Nik Joshi join me; this growth was important in that I, and my partners, strongly believe that giving back to the community is a core value, not something you simply say but something you live. We help our clients every day with their employment law matters, we listen, we work with them to arrive at a tailored solution; this is a privilege. The three of us know that we also have the privilege of living in paradise. Sarasota's natural beauty is here for everyone to enjoy, but the ability to thrive is somewhat of a challenge for some. My partners and I are committed to supporting local philanthropic organizations like Forty Carrots and All Faiths Food Bank, among others, so that we can be partners in our community in additions to partners in our Firm. 2055 Wood Street, Suite 103, Sarasota, FL 34237 | 941-953-3018 | www.hsjlawfirm.com





LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE

"I am thrilled to be nominated for SRQ Women in Business— to me this recognition means that the issue of being an advocate for the voiceless and standing up for the exploited has truly come to the light in our community! I am extremely grateful for SRQ Magazine for being a frontrunner in this messaging! If we all truly awaken to this very real and present evil happening right before our eyes, we can be an impenetrable army!"

Elizabeth Melendez Fisher

SELAH FREEDOM, PRESIDENT/CEO

Elizabeth Melendez Fisher is the President/CEO of Selah Freedom, an NPO confronting the issue of sex trafficking. Selah Freedom is a million dollar organization with 4 thriving programs; AWARENESS, PREVENTION, OUTREACH AND RESIDENTIAL HOUSING. Selah Freedom educates and trains over 30,000 annually, runs survivor led programs to empower over 150 at-risk teens, serves over 400 exploited young women through the streets and the jails together with States Attorney, Sarasota PD and First Step, in their newly created jail diversion program TYLA (Turn Your Life Around). And two Safe Houses also allow Selah Freedom to fully rehabilitate and re-launch survivors of sex trafficking. SRQ Magazine describes Fisher as, "Part healer, part businesswoman, all resolve—if Selah Freedom is bringing light into the darkness, then Fisher is the one behind the megawatt." She is the 2014 recipient of the prestigious Tampa Bay Business Woman of the Year Award. A Chicago native, she worked in television and holds a BA/Communications, and MA/Clinical Psychology. PO Box 21415, Sarasota, FL 34276 | 941-677-8840 | www.selahfreedom.com



NOMINEE

"Insanity: Doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results. —Albert Einstein."

Dawn Millhous

CHARTER ONE HOTELS & RESORTS, CORPORATE
DIRECTOR OF REVENUE MANAGEMENT

Headquartered in Sarasota, Florida, Charter One is a fast moving, performance based, goal oriented hotel ownership, consulting and management company. We are an organization, where passionate, competent and focused individuals are given the tools, guidance and opportunity to make a difference. Charter One has been known for its dynamic and entrepreneurial approach to operating hotels, purchasing hotels and providing asset management services. I am responsible for all revenue management, e-commerce, sales and marketing activities for Charter One's portfolio of independent, branded, full-service, and select service hotels. This innovative approach to sales and revenue management has proven successful across our portfolio of hotels. Charter One's entrepreneurial and innovative approach is what makes us leaders in Hotel Management. I believe to be the best you have to surround yourself with the best. I am surrounded by the best people and that's what makes me successful. Charter One is my home. 6731 Professional Parkway West, Suite 100, Sarasota, FL 34240 | 941-907-9017 | www.charteronehotels.com





**LEADERSHIP
CIRCLE**

"We become a stronger community when we listen, care, and advocate collectively. Everyone has a voice and story worthy of hearing. My daily mantra is to listen to it and take action!"

Tammy Kovar

BIOLOGICAL TREE SERVICES, CEO/BIOLOGIST

Tammy Kovar named her company "Biological Tree Services" in October of 2004 after four hurricanes. The company logo features a live oak tree surrounded by a life preserver with the message, "Rooted in Conservation and Preservation". Ms. Kovar is a passionate Biologist, ISA Certified Arborist, and Florida licensed Pest Control Operator. She is a seasoned veteran of the Green and Agricultural industries with a scope reaching back almost 30 years. Tammy is widely recognized as the "subject matter expert" and problem solver for below ground root and soil biology. Throughout her extensive career and leadership in local, state, national, and international industry associations, Tammy has remained focused on sustainability and education of personal responsibility. Providing innovative, vibrant, sustainable tree and landscape solutions through biologically proven methods has driven BTS's impressive growth since 2004. Homeowners, businesses, and municipalities appreciate individualized solutions, which create artistic, beautiful and sustainable landscapes that can change the client forever. Kovar's goal is to create masterpiece landscapes -- one property at a time. 2036 20th Street | 941-706-1414 | www.biologicaltreeservices.com



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

2015 Women in Business Trailblazer Award Adrienne Vittadini

For award-winning fashion designer Adrienne Vittadini, the blend of Hungarian heritage, American upbringing and Italian sensibility helped propel her to the forefront of international design and made the name Adrienne Vittadini into a global brand. Today Mrs. Vittadini remains passionate about art, architecture and design. She and her husband concentrate their efforts today on developing luxury residential properties through their new business venture, AGV Design & Development LLC. They are currently developing properties in Florida as well as condominiums in the Italian Alps.

Special Thank You to Special Keynote Speaker Pam van der Lee

Pam is the Chief Marketing Officer for San Francisco based, financial technology company iMatchative, and its flagship product, AltX. In her current position, Pam is responsible for communicating the iMatchative and AltX brands to its partners, customers, and the media. Throughout her 25-year career, Pam has worked at the intersection of marketing, strategic planning, and branding. Prior to iMatchative, Pam was a consultant to nonprofits, primarily within the educational and disability sectors. She served as chair of the National Down Syndrome Society and is currently President of the Board at the Tuxedo Park School, a pre-K to 9th grade independent school. Before making nonprofit work a full time occupation, Pam ran corporate marketing and managed the marketing, licensing and research councils for Viacom. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Rollins College. Pam lives in NY with her husband and three sons.



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