



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Leadership Lee County Graduates 29th Class

Fort Myers, FL (March 9, 2011) Community Leadership is alive and well at The Chamber of Southwest Florida with the recent celebration of graduation for the 29th Class of Leadership Lee County. On Friday, March 2nd, the 16 members of the class gathered at St. Charles Yacht Club with family, friends, previous Leadership Graduates and Chamber Members for Graduation Ceremonies. The following individuals are the members of the current graduating class:

Catherine Bergerson, Edison State College
Jack Dillon, KRAFT Manhattan
Peg Elmore, SWFL Workforce Development Board
Joanne Hartke, FGCU Institute of Government
Doreen Herring, Realtor Association of Greater Fort Myers and the Beaches
Walter Robert Johnson, Lee County Sheriff
Steven Kushner, Becker & Poliakoff, P.A.
Richard Lewis, H S A Engineers & Scientists
Cee Cee Marinelli, Barron Collier Companies
Neal McAlister, Harry Chapin Food Bank
Chris Nesheim-Plonski, HealthPark
Matt Pusateri, Modern Service
Luis Rivera, Henderson Franklin Attorneys
Christina Harris Schwinn, Pavese Law Firm
Denise Walton, Lee County Electric Coop
Julie Workman, Heights Foundation

This unique program helps newcomers as well as long-term residents understand the dynamics of the Lee County community and its role in the region. The program strives to strengthen and serve the community with an intensive interactive learning experience that focuses on the concepts of servant leadership. The goal of the program is to develop a core group of leaders who are willing to serve first and then lead; ultimately becoming community trustees who are willing to hold the community in trust for future generations.

The program covers history, social and economic issues in the community and participants are exposed to an overview of government, education, healthcare, the environment, the arts, media and quality of life issues in the community. A special session on community volunteerism is a feature. "The program is an excellent workforce development tool for employers; which will orient a new employee and spouse to the community. The program can also help develop an existing employee to become a more involved leader within the community" according to Steve Tirey, President and CEO of The Chamber of Southwest Florida and Founder of the program.

The program is implemented by a Steering Team made up of Leadership Lee County Graduates who are Chamber Members serving as volunteers. Betsy Allen, Gaining Results Inc.

is the current program chair. Karen Miller, H S A Engineers & Scientists serves as Vice Chair for the organizing team.

Tirey commented today, "The impact of 25 years of service to the community and the work of the past 28 classes and the 1,000 plus members of Leadership Lee County has confirmed the need for this type of community program. It makes no difference if you are a new resident or someone who has been here since birth. This program will give you information and create relationships that can help you in your personal and professional life all while strengthening and serving the community."

An application for the program must be completed and tuition is required. A limited number of scholarships are available through the Southwest Florida Leadership Foundation.

The program information and application are available on The Chamber's website at www.chamber-swflorida.com. For additional information contact The Chamber at 239-275-2102. Currently an "Early Bird" registration provides for application on June 1, 2011. Tuition is \$2,950. Enrollment will be limited to 40 persons and seats are still available.

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