



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Chamber of Southwest Florida Launches National Search**

FORT MYERS (February 15, 2011) Today, the Chairman of the Board of Directors for The Chamber of Southwest Florida announced a comprehensive national search for a new President and Chief Executive Officer for the organization. Richard Lewis, HSA Engineers & Scientists, and Chairman of the Chamber's Board of Directors will head up a Search Team. The team members are all past-chairmen and currently Board members for the regional business membership organization. The team plans to seek applicants to fill a vacancy created when the 29-year veteran Chief Steve Tirey announced his formal retirement.

Tirey will continue to serve on the Chamber Board of Directors representing Southwest Florida College, his new employer. Tirey has been named Director, Industry Partnerships and Graduate Placement for the college. Southwest Florida College is a private Senior College accredited and licensed to award bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, and diplomas.

Richard Lewis, HSA Scientists and Engineers is the current Chairman for the regional Chamber of Commerce. Lewis has previously stated, "Our working Board and volunteer-driven Program of Action will continue to work with Steve and his successor to build our regional Chamber of Commerce. Service to our members and the community will be seamless. We will have the benefit of Steve's time and industry experience as a volunteer. While we are open to a national search to fill the open position, we hope to hear from those in our regional community who may have the qualifications and interest to fill this position as Chief Executive for The Chamber."

Lewis went on to offer his perspective on this transition stating, "We will miss Steve's day-to-day involvement, but the transition is well timed in that we have recently developed a broad range of new services and value opportunities through the Strategic Planning process to augment the regional activities already provided. With a recent increase in membership, largely due to new signs of improvement in the economy, The Chamber plans to increase our role as a regional nexus for business. This month, we graduate the 24<sup>th</sup> Class of our signature Leadership Lee County Program. In the coming months, The Chamber has plans for a number of high-profile speakers at our business luncheons (following on the heels of US Senator Bill Nelson, US Congressman Connie Mack, and State Representative Gary Aubuchon). In addition, new programs for our members will include industry-specific training (like the recent training on the EPA's numeric nutrient criteria), B2B-Reverse Trade Expo, Chairman's Counsel, and small-business coaching opportunities to name a few."

Next week, the Chamber will begin to post information about the position on the Chamber web site. Candidates should send their information to: Search Team, The Chamber of Southwest Florida, 5237 Summerlin Commons Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33990. Alternatively, the information may be emailed to the Search Team by sending to: [cswfcareer@gmail.com](mailto:cswfcareer@gmail.com) and typing "Search Team" in the subject line. All information will be treated confidentially.

The Chamber of Southwest Florida is a regional business membership organization with members in Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry and Glades Counties. Chamber members are regional employers and many provide products and services across the region. For more information visit: <http://www.chamber-swflorida.com>

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