

## Southwest Florida Office Opens

Businesswomen in Southwest Florida have a powerful ally now with the recent establishment of a local branch of the Florida Women's Business Center in Fort Myers. It is located in the Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC), which is located close to downtown Fort Myers and Interstate 75. The SWFEC recognized that the FWBC services aligned well with its own and generously donated office space. Local businesswomen, Deborah Shane is the Business Development Manager for the Ft. Myers branch. Her role is to provide a combination of small business training, one-on-one counseling and outreach/marketing of the program.

### Florida Women's Business Center Expands Into Southwest Florida

Businesswomen in Southwest Florida have a powerful ally now with the recent establishment of a local branch of the Florida Women's Business Center in Ft. Myers. The Florida Women's Business Center (FWBC) is the premier small business resource center in Florida dedicated to the individual professional development of women in business. The FWBC provides training, counseling, resources, referrals, support and advocacy to those seeking to create, sustain, or grow micro businesses. The FWBC is the result of a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA). Although its services are available to all business concerns, the FWBC is committed to attracting and serving women, especially those who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged.

For many brave women, starting their own business opens possibilities for financial independence and better care for their families. About half of new business starts fail within two years. FWBC is committed to assist women to start their business grounded in sound business principles and practice and to help their business survive. The desired outcome is a stronger Southwest Florida economy and an enhanced life for women and their families. The FWBC's Ft. Myers branch is in the Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC) which is located close to downtown Fort Myers and Interstate 75, at 3903 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. The SWFEC is a learning laboratory for entrepreneurial enterprises and provide assistances and support to the entrepreneur so that he or she may realize the full potential of their business enterprise and of themselves as business owners and managers. The SWFEC recognized that the FWBC services aligned well with its own and generously donated office space in their center so that the FWBC could open a branch in Ft. Myers. To learn more about SWFEC, visit [www.SWFLEnterprisecenter.com](http://www.SWFLEnterprisecenter.com)

Deborah Shane has been chosen as the business development manager for the Ft. Myers branch. Her role is to provide a combination of small business training to emergent and growing women entrepreneurs, small business one-on-one counseling, and outreach/marketing of the program to women in the area. "This is a remarkable opportunity for women in Southwest Florida, and the community of businesswomen is growing by leaps and bounds. Every resource facility, networking group or professional agency that we can collaborate with is one more way of ensuring success for these amazing entrepreneurs," says Shane. An entrepreneur herself, Shane operates her own education, training and professional development business in Ft. Myers. She holds a bachelor's degree in English from Florida Atlantic University and a teacher's certificate from the Florida Department of Education.

Shane will be focusing on Southwest Florida counties, which is a major part of the 18 counties the FWBC serves in Florida. The FWBC will offer a variety of educational workshops each month that are FREE or \$15! Reserve your spot now for an upcoming workshop or sign up for a FREE counseling session at [www.FLWBC.org](http://www.FLWBC.org) and for more information call 866-353-3790.