

**NOMINATION OF KEVIN LEWIS, CEO OF SWFAS,  
FOR PAULETTE BURTON  
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR 2007**

On behalf of the Zonta Club of Sanibel-Captiva, I would like to nominate Kevin Lewis, CEO of Southwest Florida Addiction Service (SWFAS) as the 2007 Citizen of the Year. Our Club has had a rewarding 7-year partnership with SWFAS, helping women transition from addiction to self-sufficiency, and supporting the dedicated and talented staff and leadership at SWFAS. We have seen first hand the effectiveness of SWFAS' programs in helping women put their lives back together. Through our partnership with SWFAS, we have been members of "Kevin's team" to raise public awareness and support for finding solutions to substance abuse and mental health problems in our community.

Kevin's accomplishments in 2007 deserve special recognition. As a result of his leadership, vision, private/public partnership fundraising, and coalition-building skills, sufficient funds were raised to begin construction on a much-needed Detoxification and Outpatient Treatment Center for our community. As a result of his leadership, his strong working relationship with the County Commission Chair, Bob Janes, and the coalition of supporters he brought together—the Sheriff, the LMHS CEO, the SW Florida Community Foundation, and others in the community—the Lee County Commissioners voted unanimously in April to award \$2 million to the Detox Center.

Our community is lucky to have someone like Kevin Lewis working on so effectively for over two decades on behalf of those in our community who often have no voice. (Kevin has 23 years of service with SWFAS and has been CEO since 1993.) Having been in the public policy/advocacy field for many years, he's the kind of advocate and leader that is a pure delight to work with. It is so refreshing and inspiring to work with someone of his caliber, talents, dedication, commitment, energy, and savvy, who has assembled a well managed organization and staff behind him. He doesn't let his ego get in the way of his message. He's an effective public speaker but never gives the impression he's trying to get headlines for himself. He does not try to compete with people whose cooperation he attracts.

Over the past year, as Zonta has become more involved in these efforts, we've heard outstanding comments about him from representatives of other public and nonprofit organizations in Lee County, further validating our personal experiences. What I'm most excited about is his larger role as a "change agent" in our community for effective partnerships among various organizations that don't normally work together—including community mainstays like the Lee County School District, the Lee Memorial Hospital, and FGCU. He understands synergy and knows how to make it happen.

Kevin continues to help other "players" in our community to come together in partnerships for the common good as he did with the coalition that developed a proposal and then a strategy for funding the Triage Center. What you hear around town, as well as at the regional and state level, is that his can-do attitude, his commitment to networking with other agencies, his presence, his depth of knowledge, and ability to get the job done



are highly valued. By modeling new approaches for partnership and collaboration, Kevin is a “change agent” for leaders of other organizations in this community. We need to grow many more community leaders like Kevin. Awarding him the honor of Citizen of the Year would not only recognize his contributions to this community, but could encourage others to take more collaborative approaches to finding solutions to the many problems facing every community in America today.

Nomination Submitted on January 3, 2008 by:  
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