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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SWFAS CEO WINS CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Kevin B. Lewis, CEO of Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) has been honored by the Lee County Commission as the Paulette Burton Citizen of the Year for providing outstanding civic contributions to the community.

The award, now in its 17th year, serves as a tribute to past and present civic activists who have devoted much of their time and energy to citizen involvement with Lee County Government.

The board made the announcement at its February 19 meeting. Lewis was honored for his tireless efforts in working with families, employers, and the community by developing substance abuse programs for adults and adolescents throughout Southwest Florida.

Lewis, who joined SWFAS in 1985 and has been CEO since 1993, was nominated by the Zonta Club of Sanibel-Captiva, who said his accomplishments in 2007 deserve special recognition.

In their letter of nomination, Zonta said, “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.”

The letter went on to say that Lewis is “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, Lee Memorial Hospital and FGCU. He understands synergy and knows how to make it happen.”

Other finalists for the award were Ann Bruning of Captiva, John Bunch of St. James City, Bruce Gora of Fort Myers, Lalai Hamric of Fort Myers, and Gregg Makepeace of North Fort Myers.

The Paulette Burton Award was created in 1991 to honor Burton, who was a long-time Sanibel resident and government watchdog who died in a car accident in 1991.

Photo: Kevin B. Lewis