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CONTACT:

Rosemary Boisvert
Southwest Florida Addiction Services
(239) 338-2977
r_boisvert@swfas.org

Susan Bennett, APR, CPRC
Susan Bennett Marketing & Media, L.C.
(239) 277-5255
sbennett@susanbennett.biz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ZONTA FOUNDATION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
AWARDS \$13,000 TO SWFAS**

The Zonta Foundation of Southwest Florida has awarded a \$13,000 grant to Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) to assist women recovering from substance abuse at SWFAS' Transitional Living Center on Dixie Parkway in Fort Myers.

The money will be used to help women obtain the skills they need to earn a living wage and become self-sufficient in the workplace.

“We are so excited about this opportunity for our ladies in recovery,” said Transitional Living Center Director Rosemary Boisvert. “Our goal is to remove the barriers that prevent them from being successful. If they need financial assistance for tuition, we can help with that. If they need help with child care, supplies, or transportation to get to school or training, we can assist with that as well.”

In some cases, a stipend may be available to help the women with living expenses while they obtain the educational training they need. One of the women who has been awarded one of the Zonta scholarships plans to study to become a paralegal.

“While at SWFAS' Transitional Living Center, the women work very hard at learning skills for the job of living in sobriety, this grant will help them build on their newfound skills and give them something more to enhance their chances of maintaining their sobriety and self-sufficiency,” Boisvert said.

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SWFAS opened the women=s portion of the Transitional Living Center in 2001 and now provides transitional and permanent supportive housing for 17 women recovering from substance abuse. The Transitional Living Center also provides a nurturing environment for 22 men recovering from substance abuse.

“Providing a home-like environment for persons recovering from substance abuse is a key part of the recovery process,@ said Boisvert.

Depending upon their needs, residents participate in a short-term residential program or in a four to six-month transitional living program. A limited number of permanent supportive housing units also are available for families as long as they live a drug-free lifestyle, obtain work, and pay monthly rent that is based on their income. The facility is supported by 24/7 staff on the TLC campus and medical management is available, as needed, by the medical staff already in place at the SWFAS Detoxification Center across the street.

SWFAS is the most comprehensive substance abuse treatment and prevention program in Southwest Florida, serving 6,000 people per year from ages 9 to 90. SWFAS offers outpatient and residential programs for both adults and youngsters from seven locations in Lee County and two in Hendry County. In addition, SWFAS provides detoxification services for adults, prevention programming, and an Employee Assistance Program for about 80 Southwest Florida businesses.

Fees are charged on a sliding scale, based on family income. In many cases, private insurance is accepted. SWFAS is a United Way agency.

For more information, contact Boisvert at (239) 338-2977 or visit www.swfas.org.