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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SWFAS CELEBRATES RECOVERY
AT 30th ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON**

***Four “You’ve Got A Friend”
Award Winners Named***

FORT MYERS, FLA., April 7, 2010 – More than 250 community leaders, board members and supporters celebrated the joy of recovery from substance abuse and the 30th anniversary of Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) April 1 at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre.

“You’re Got A Friend” was the theme of the luncheon, which also included presentation of the first “You’ve Got A Friend” Awards to four individuals with long-standing service to the non-profit organization. Honored were:

- ***Mary and the late Charlie Hagan*** – Charlie Hagan was a founding board member of SWFAS in 1980. He also served as the founder and first executive director of Florida Lawyers Assistance, a network of recovering attorneys and judges. Mary Hagan supported him in his efforts.
- ***Larry Hart*** – Hart is the longest serving member of the SWFAS Board of Directors with more than 20 years of service. He also serves on the Board of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Corporation, offering input to Florida’s leadership on statewide issues.
- ***Dr. Washington Baquero*** – Dr. Baquero is one of the original two employees still with SWFAS and has served as medical director since SWFAS’ beginning. While maintaining his private practice, he also

sought additional training to become certified in addictionology and was a strong advocate leading to the creation of a two-year degree program in behavioral health care at Edison State College; and

- ***Carl Keene*** – Keene is a donor to SWFAS. Although he is not the largest donor, he was honored for being the most consistent over the longest period of time, giving every two weeks for the past 10 years. Keene credits SWFAS with saving his daughter’s life. “I remember when my daughter needed money for a bus ticket and SWFAS gave it to her. It’s my way of giving a bus ticket to someone else who needs it,” Keene said.

The free Brown Bag lunch, which really was served in a brown paper bag, was made possible due to major sponsorships from Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre, Chico’s, First Community Bank of Southwest Florida, Goldberg Racila, D’Alessandro & Noone, LLC, Leading Edge Financial Group, Inc., and Owen-Ames-Kimball Company.

“We are very grateful for the support we’ve had over the years that has made it possible for us to help others. This was a celebration of new beginnings and lives saved because SWFAS is here,” said SWFAS CEO Kevin B. Lewis.

The program included highlights from SWFAS’ first 30 years, a tribute to donors, and speakers who have gotten their lives back on track because of SWFAS.

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 five locations in Lee County and two in Hendry and Glades counties. In addition, SWFAS provides detoxification services for adults, prevention programming for youth and adults, and an Employee Assistance Program for about 60 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 about SWFAS call (239) 332-6937 or visit www.swfas.org.

Cutlines: (identified left to right)

- 1) *“You’ve Got A Friend” Award winners Carl Keene, Larry Hart and Mary Hagan.*
- 2) *Master of Ceremonies and SWFAS Board Member Jim McLaughlin and Board Member Diana Black*
- 3) *SWFAS Donor Eleanore Kleist with SWFAS CEO Kevin B. Lewis*
- 4) *Sponsors Kerri Sisson and Janette L’Heureux of Leading Edge Financial Group, Inc.*
- 5) *Sponsor and SWFAS Board Member Fred Anderson of Chico’s, Inc., and Sponsor Dennis Pearlman of Case Pearlman Corporate Benefits*
- 6) *SWFAS Donors John and Larry Gavin of Gavin’s Ace Hardware & Marine*
- 7) *SWFAS Board Treasurer Geoff Roepstorff and Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott*
- 8) *Alouise Skehan Pyle and former SWFAS Board Member Homer Pyle*