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THE RESEARCH TEAM

The Center for Leadership at Florida International University is committed to equipping leaders across all sectors with the competencies needed to succeed in complex, multicultural organizations. To realize its potential an organization must effectively develop and utilize the leadership capacity of its people. As the pace of globalization and competition accelerates, this ability is becoming an increasingly critical foundation for success. In recognition of this challenge and of the leading role that South Florida plays as a hemispheric hub, the Center for Leadership engages in cutting-edge research in the area of leadership development, conducts leadership development programs for organizations to assist them in building leadership capacity, and supports the leadership development agenda of Florida International University.

The Commonwealth Institute (TCI) is a dynamic, non-profit organization founded in 1997 to help women entrepreneurs, CEOs, and senior corporate executives build successful businesses. TCI's goal is to reach women leaders during the critical stages of their businesses and to provide them with the tools and resources they need for growth. The cornerstone of TCI's approach is peer mentoring in a confidential, small group atmosphere. Since its inception, TCI has worked with several hundred women-led companies. In January 2004, TCI expanded into the South Florida area, where it presently runs forums and monthly programs for women CEOs. TCI currently has more than 300 members, whose companies have annual revenues ranging from \$250,000 to more than \$12 million.

College of Business Administration at Florida International University (CBA) is South Florida's most important business education resource and a recognized leader in international business education. As the largest of FIU's professional schools, the CBA enrolls approximately 6,000 undergraduate and more than 1000 graduate students. The CBA also serves the multinational business community through an extensive menu of executive and professional education programs.

The Metropolitan Center at Florida International University is an applied research institute that delivers information and expertise to decision-makers, community leaders, and citizens as they seek to forge solutions to urban problems. The Center provides research, training, and technical assistance to governmental, non-profit, and for-profit institutions. At the forefront of public opinion research, the Center has a solid record of producing survey research studies, while adhering to recognized methodologies for survey design, administration techniques, and data analysis and reporting.

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FLORIDA'S WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES, 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women fill only 3% of top positions in organizations nationwide, yet 50% of professional and managerial positions are held by women. The Center for Leadership at Florida International University, in partnership with The Commonwealth Institute South Florida, surveyed Florida women business leaders who have risen to prominent executive positions. To qualify for the study, the woman must be the firm's Chairman of the Board, CEO/President/General Manager, and/or primary owner. In addition, the business must be headquartered in Florida, must be for-profit, and must be either an independent business or a legal subsidiary of a larger corporation.

This report analyzes key characteristics of women leaders including the women's business strategies, career progression, personal motivation, work habits, and life choices. In addition, we include a list of prominent business women in Florida who lead companies having revenues of \$3M or more.

What are the characteristics of these women and the businesses they lead?

Women-led businesses are an integral part of the Florida economy.

- In 2004, 24% women-led businesses in Florida earned more than \$10 million, and had a combined economic impact of more than \$12 billion.
- These companies reported more than 30,000 employees, with 50% of the firms having more than 25 permanent employees.

Women-led businesses exhibit strong growth potential.

- More than 75% of the women leaders surveyed experienced at least some growth in company revenues over the past two years. An optimistic 91% expect revenue to grow over the next two years, which will be done mostly through the acquisition of new clients and customers and by introducing new products.
- Financing for business growth is mostly done through cash flow from operations, retained earnings, and short-term revolving debt.

Women leaders show strong company involvement from the start.

- Almost 70% of these women started the business themselves.
- Eighty-two percent of the businesses were privately held corporations or were family-controlled.
- All of the women leaders hold the highest executive operating position in their companies and 85% have a controlling ownership stake.
- Eighty-eight percent were the first women to ever hold their position in the company.
- Forty-three percent of the respondents that had corporate boards reported that over 60% of board members were female.



Women leaders are self-motivated, well educated, and involved in their communities.

- Almost 60% aspired early on to be CEOs or presidents, or to own their own companies.
- While 47% of the respondents' fathers were business executives, only 10% of their mothers attained the same position.
- Eighty-eight percent attended college or completed a bachelor's degree, and approximately 20% had a master's degree or higher. Only 12% had less than a college education.
- Almost 40% found mentors to be extremely important and almost 90% actively
 participate in professional business associations, economic development groups,
 and/or community organizations.

Women leaders balance their careers with a family life.

- The average age of the women leaders surveyed was 51 years old.
- Eighty-five percent of respondents are caucasian and 61% are currently married.
- Seventy-four percent work more than 40 hours per week and 10% reported working more than 60. Eighty-one percent work 5 or 6 day work weeks and only 36% have 8 or more days off each month.
- Approximately 40% stayed home past maternity leave and 61% had outside help with child rearing.
- Only half of the women are satisfied with the amount of time they spend on personal affairs and at work.

METHODOLOGY

The 2006 Florida Women-Led Businesses study undertook the task of building a database of women-led and women-owned businesses throughout the state of Florida using a variety of public sources including Dunn & Bradstreet, and South Florida, Orlando, Tampa, and Jacksonville business journals. Additionally, an announcement of the survey was published in *The Miami Herald* requesting reader's participation via the Center for Leadership website. The Center for Leadership and The Commonwealth Institute South Florida (TCI) also contacted other sources through affiliations with respective organizations, professional networks, and other published listings.

Prior to development of the survey, extensive research was conducted in scholarly and practitioner-oriented journals to gather information on common threads in current reports on leaders and business women. Preliminary questions were devised and the research team conducted a focus group meeting with approximately 12 women business leaders at a monthly TCI South Florida meeting. Important issues and helpful suggestions resulted from the focus group and through subsequent correspondence with TCI. The survey was revised numerous times to reflect these suggestions.

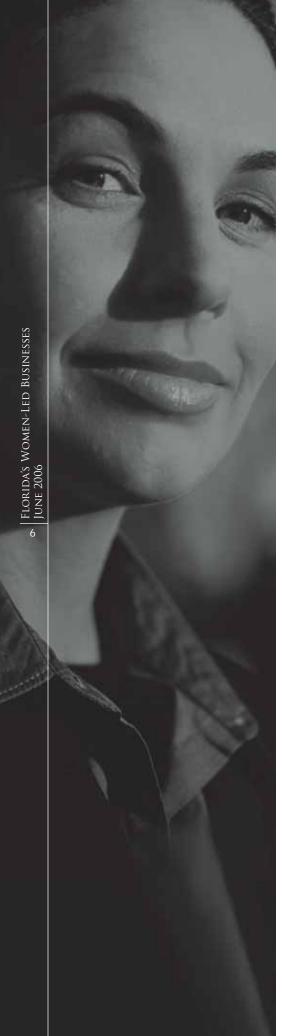
Included in the study were women who held the positions of Chairman of the Board, CEO/President/General Manager, and/or primary owner. In addition, the women must lead for-profit businesses headquartered in Florida, that are either independent businesses or legal subsidiaries of larger corporations.

Metropolitan Center researchers verified company information via telephone and informed these women of the study. The survey asked respondents a variety of close-ended questions, including inquiries about their companies, leadership styles, strategies for growth, and family life. Since the questionnaires were distributed early in 2006, respondents were asked to report their revenues for 2004. The final verified list included approximately 1582 women in executive positions (Survey results are based on responses received through April 30, 2006.)

By the end of spring 2006, 161 respondents from across the state had completed the questionnaire. The study includes only the top level executive-decision makers and does not include non-profit organizations, leaving 123 women who met these qualifications. Surveys were completed in two ways. First, participants completed a hard copy of the questionnaire in a brochure format that was mailed to them by the Metropolitan Center. They then mailed the completed survey back to the Metropolitan Center, where staff members manually entered the data into an on-going database. Second, participants completed the questionnaire electronically through the Center for Leadership website. The Commonwealth Institute South Florida also solicited responses through its network of partners.

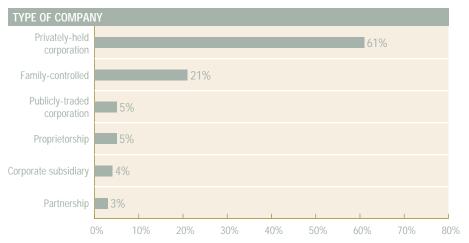
The study provides insights into women-led businesses, as well as trends and business issues these women currently face. In addition, we provide a list of prominent women in Florida who lead businesses with revenues of \$3M or more. The list is ranked in order of revenues.



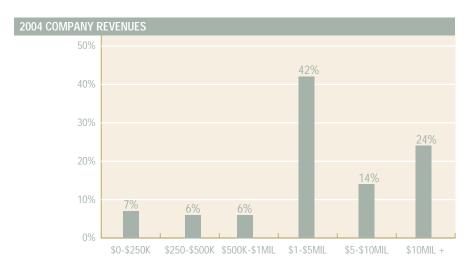


A Profile of the Companies

The majority of the women-led businesses surveyed (82%) were identified as either privately-held corporations or family-controlled companies. Meanwhile, a significantly smaller portion, a combined 17%, consisted of publicly-traded corporations, corporate subsidiaries, partnerships, and proprietorships. The companies represented a diverse collection of industries, including travel, manufacturing, retail, commercial banking, professional services, and construction.



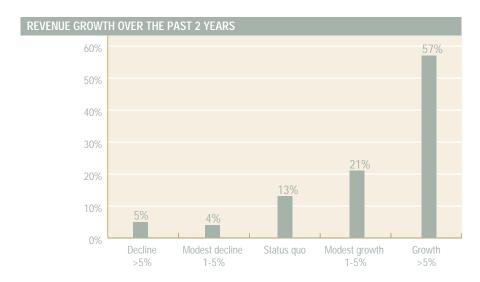
Across Florida, these businesses contribute billions of dollars in revenues to the state economy and provide thousands of jobs. In 2004, the most common range of annual revenues for the companies surveyed was between \$1 million and \$5 million followed by companies with over \$10 million. The combined economic impact of these companies for the state was more than \$12 billion.

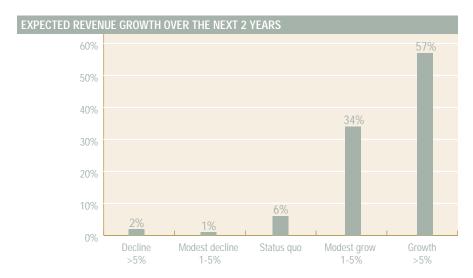


Another important economic factor is employment opportunity. Women-led firms in Florida reported a total in excess of 30,000 employees, with 50% of companies having a payroll of more than 25 employees at their firm. Such significant contributions from their companies prompt women business leaders to remain optimistic that these trends will continue.

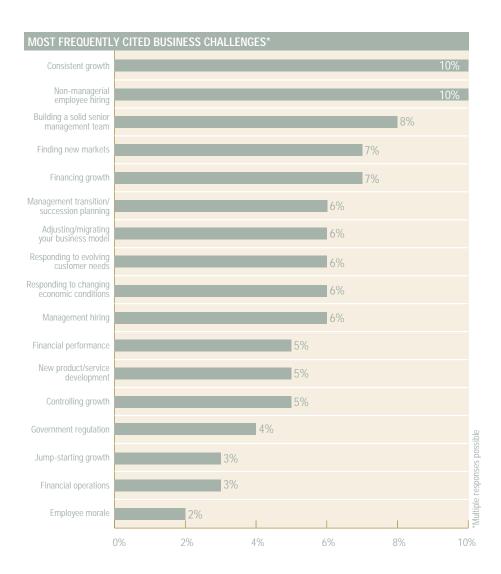
Future Company Growth

Dynamic economic performances from women-led companies have resulted in encouraging expectations for future growth. Over the last two years, more than half of the companies experienced a five percent growth in earnings and over 75% had at least a one percent increase. Perhaps because of these trends, more than half of women leaders forecast growth over the next two years to be higher than five percent and over 90% predict increases in revenue during the same period.

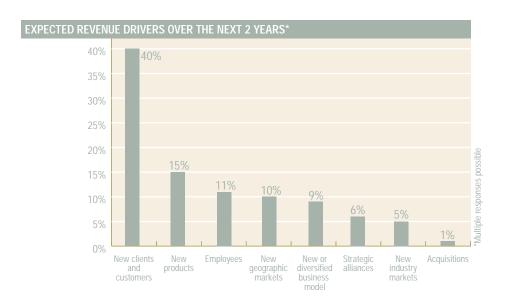




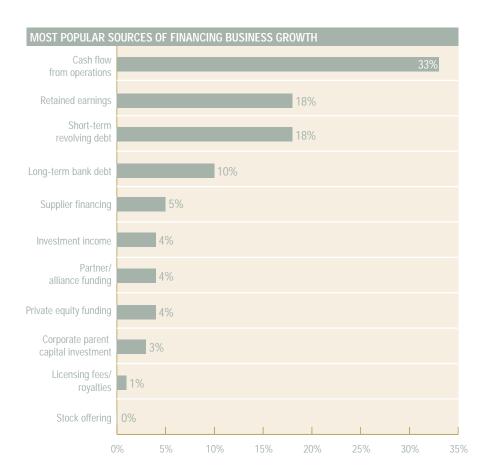
Despite the strong performances of the past and optimistic predictions for the future, challenges remain for these businesses. Among the most commonly cited issues by firms are keeping revenue growth consistent (10%), hiring an effective non-managerial staff (10%), and building a solid senior management team (8%). To confront these challenges, firms must improve and sustain earnings while implementing strategies to drive revenue and finance their businesses.



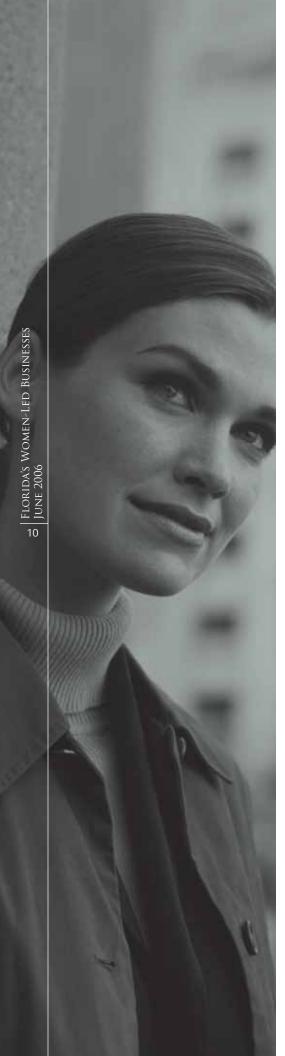
The most preferred strategy to increase revenues among respondents was reaching out to new customers (40%) followed by introducing new products, expanding into new geographic markets, and improving the effectiveness of their staff. Since respondents could choose several methods to drive revenue, these responses likely indicate a comprehensive plan for sustaining growth by attracting new clients and improving the quality/quantity of their employees.



To finance their businesses, women-led companies mainly rely on cash flow from their operations (33%), retained earnings (18%), and short-term revolving debt (18%). A majority of respondents lead privately held businesses; therefore, it is not surprising these firms reported stock offerings as the least desired option for growth.

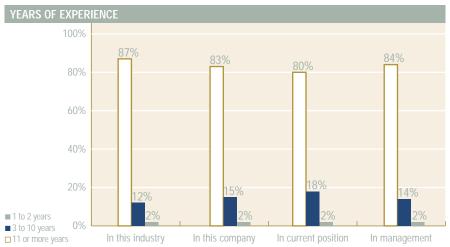






About the Leaders

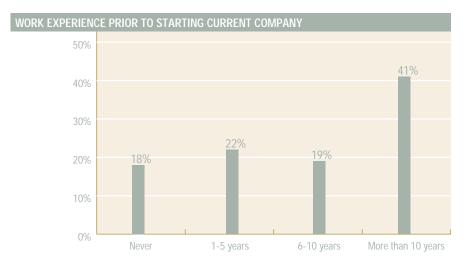
Florida's women business leaders are self-starters with diverse experience in the corporate world. Moreover, these women are intimately familiar with their industries and have long tenure with the companies they currently lead. While all of the women leaders occupy the highest executive-level position in their company, it is significant that a strong majority (85%) also have a controlling ownership stake.



Reflecting the large representation of family-controlled and privately-held businesses among top women executives, very few were hired to the top position in their company from outside the organization—a mere 5%. However, the small percentage (16%) who reported they were promoted from within their current company may also confirm the limited growth potential for these highly-motivated women within the corporate world. Perhaps pointing to limited opportunities, 88% of the women reported that they are the first woman to ever hold their position for their company.

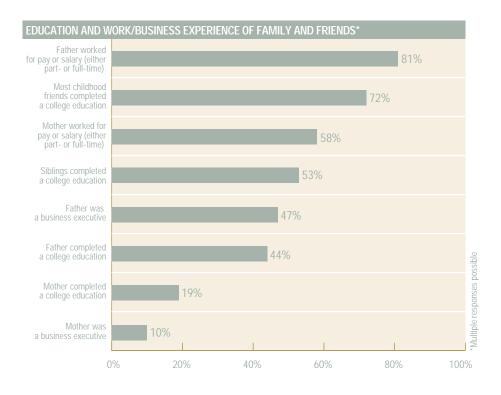


Capitalizing on work experience and industry expertise, 41% of these highly-successful women worked for other companies for more than 10 years before leaving to start their own business. Almost 70% of these women leaders started the businesses they now lead and only 18% started their own companies without any prior employment in other organizations.

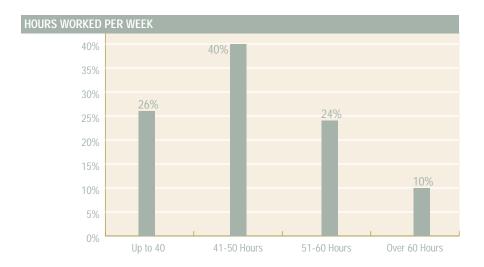


To better understand how family and social life influenced career choices, participants were asked about the work and business experience of their family and friends during their formative years. As expected, most of the women leaders' fathers worked for pay or salary, while a slight majority of the mothers (58%) also worked for pay or salary. However, only 10% of the women leaders' mothers were business executives while five times as many of the women's fathers attained that position.

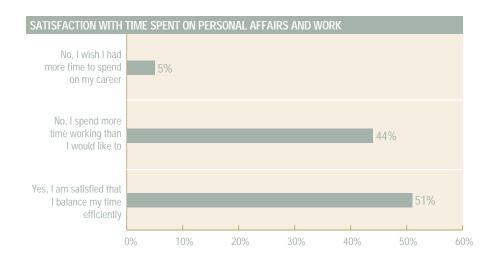
Educational attainment of family and friends was an important factor in the development of the women leaders, a majority of whom hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Forty-four percent of the women's fathers completed a college education (as did 19% of their mothers). Social interaction in the formative years appears to also have influenced the women leaders. A majority (72%) reported their friends from childhood completed a college education, possibly indicating that these women interacted socially with others similar in disposition.



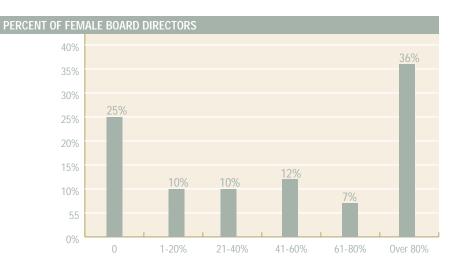
As with most top executives, these women leaders have busy schedules, with almost 75% working longer than the traditional 40-hour work week; of those, 10% work more than 60 hours each week. On average, most spend a little over 9 hours per day at work and a consistent 81% work 5 or 6 days per week. Only 36% enjoy 8 or more days off each month.



Business travel was a significant factor in the work week, and while most of the leaders reported travel for work, almost 50% travel only a few times a year or less. Travel comprises a significant portion of the work schedule for the fewer than 20% who travel more than a few times each month. The findings indicate that these leaders work hard 5 or 6 days per week and take off as many full weekends as possible. However, only half of the women said that they were satisfied with time they spent on personal affairs and working, whereas almost an equal number wished they had more personal time.



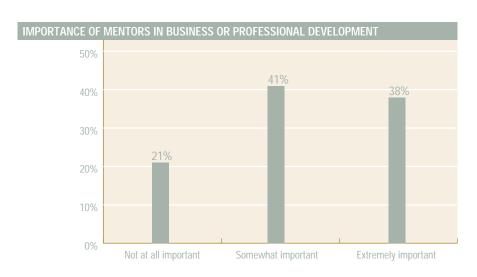
Many of these women business leaders were pioneers in the work force, in educational attainment, and at the executive level. Nevertheless, it is clear that they are also beginning to engage other women for business expertise. As might be expected, a significant percentage of companies do not have corporate boards. However, 43% of respondents that had corporate boards reported that over 60% of board members were female, a dramatic shift from the dearth of female board members in companies nationwide.



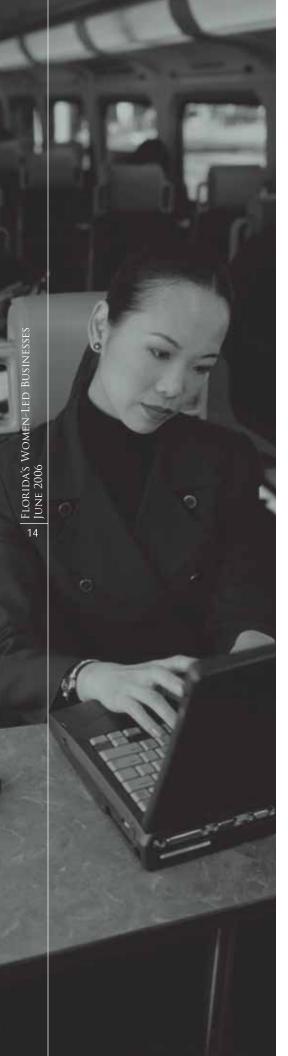
Significantly, almost 60% of these women leaders aspired to be CEOs, presidents, or owners of a company early on; however, only 33% developed clear, goal-oriented career plans. It is not surprising, then, that a significant majority of respondents found mentors to be important to their career and almost 40% reported that mentors have been extremely important in their professional development.

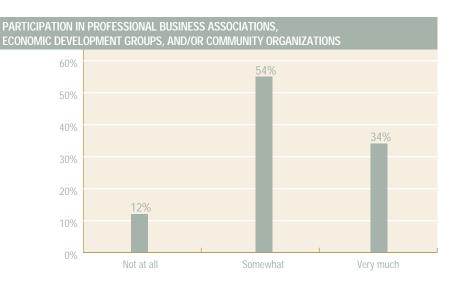


The value of networking and mentoring is also reflected in women business leaders' responses to their level of community involvement. A strong majority (88%) actively participate in professional business associations, economic development groups, and/or community organizations. These findings may indicate that even with their extremely busy schedules these women find mentoring and involvement in business and community organizations to be valuable activities.

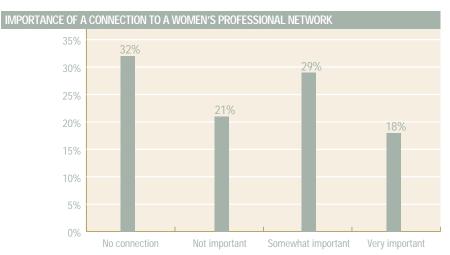






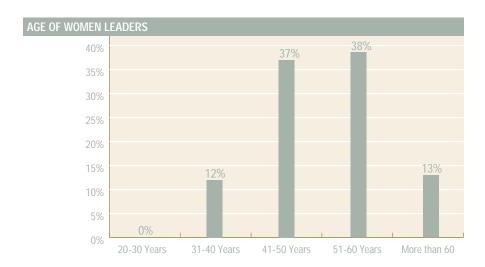


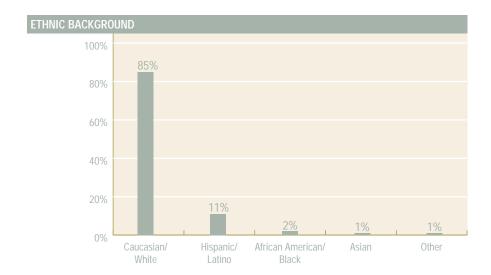
Conversely, these women had mixed reactions to the importance of a connection to a women's professional network. Yet, almost 20% found such organizations to be very important. This may suggest that while these leaders have found involvement in outside organizations to be effective, perhaps they have not had access or exposure to a valuable professional organization in Florida for the enhancement of business specifically among women.



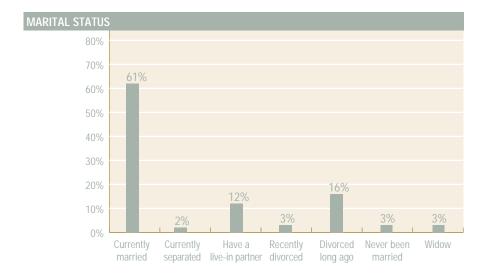
Personal Characteristics

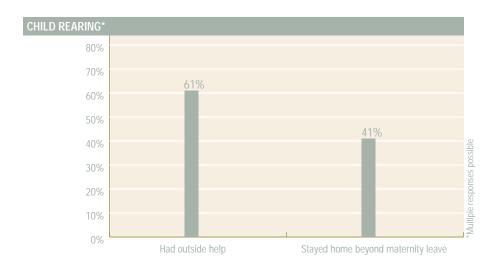
On average, the women leaders surveyed are 51 years old, caucasian, hold a bachelor's degree, are married and have two children. More than two-thirds of the women were between 40 and 60 years of age with only 12% under 40 and 13% in the over 60 range. While almost 80% of the women had some college or completed a bachelor's degree, slightly more than 20% had a master's degree or higher. Only 12% reported they had not attended college at all.



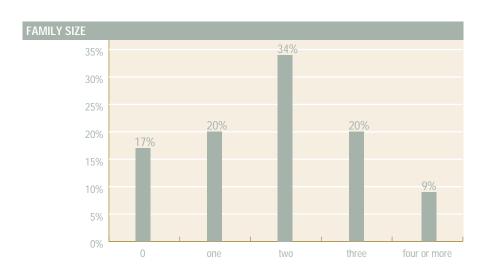


A majority of the women (62%) are currently married, while almost 40% were either divorced or had other living arrangements. In the traditional family environment, approximately 41% of the women stayed home beyond allotted maternity leave; significantly, 61% had outside help with child rearing.





Most often, women reported the traditional family size of two children. However, approximately a third of women had three or more children; 20% had only one child, and 17% have no children. While most of their children are now adults, approximately 20% of these women still have teenagers or younger children at home. Finally, 79% of the women leaders' husbands had fulltime jobs, but 61% of these included flexible work schedules, perhaps indicating shared family responsibilities between these women business leaders and their husbands.



CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that women-led firms in Florida represent a broad spectrum of industries. They form an integral and growing sector of Florida's economy. It is worth noting that almost all of the women-led businesses included in this study are privately-held businesses and most were started by the women themselves or their families. It will be interesting to see in the years ahead if this situation changes and more women achieve the CEO/president positions in publicly-traded corporations through more traditional avenues, including promotion from within.

As would be expected, the women included in this study are self-motivated and well-educated individuals. Nearly all actively participate in professional business associations, economic development groups, and/or community organizations. And, they are pioneers – 88% are the first women to ever hold their position in the company. Most aspired from early in their careers to become CEOs or to own their own businesses. Yet, most are married with children, indicating that these women have combined career and family.

This study was the first for women-led Florida businesses. The Center for Leadership and The Commonwealth Institute South Florida intend to annually replicate this survey in order to track the growth and development of women-led businesses and to better understand the women who lead them.







Prominent Women-Led Businesses in Florida

Rank	Leader	Title	Company	Revenues in millions of dollars	Employees	Type of business	City
1	Patricia Moran	Chair	JM Family Enterprises, Inc.	9,400.0	4321	Automotive retailing	Deerfield Beach
2	Bonnie Schaefer	Co-Chair, Co-CEO	Claire's Stores, Inc.	1,133.0	17500	Specialty retailer	Pembroke Pines
3	Nancy Crews	CEO	Custom Manufacturing & Engineering, Inc.	140.0	140	Engineering and manufacturing services	St. Petersburg
4	Deborah Natansohn	President	Seabourn Cruise Line	120.0	540	Cruise line	Miami
5	Judy Mitchell	President	Peter R. Brown Construction, Inc.	106.0	96	Construction	Clearwater
6	Rhea Law	President & CEO	Fowler White Boggs Banker, PA	81.0	650	Law firm	Tampa
7	Adrienne Arsht	Chair	Totalbank	56.7	250	Banking	Miami
8	Kathy Boyd	President	Sypris Test and Measurement	45.0	350	Engineering testing	Orlando
9	Heather Henning	President	The Henning Group	36.0	21	Construction	Naples
10	Marilyn Ounjian	CEO	CareersUSA	30.8	n/r	Human resources - staffing	Boca Raton
11	Miriam López	Chairman & CEO	Transatlantic Bank	29.0	150	Banking	Miami
12	Rosa Sugrañes	President	Iberia Tiles Corporation	26.0	90	Tile supplier	Miami
13	Abigail Ackerman	CEO	Bogan Supply Company, Inc.	22.0	55	Building materials supplier	Pensacola
14	Roberta Backus Turner	Chair	Backus Turner International	21.0	15	Public relations, marketing, and advertising agency	Fort Lauderdale
15	Rella Levinston	CEO	Supersonic Services	20.5	14	Military and commercial parts supplier	Cooper City
16	Catherine Muth	President & CEO	O.R. Colan Associates	20.0	140	Land acquisition and relocation services	Fort Lauderdale
16	Julie Klapstein	CEO	Availity, LLC	20.0	62	Healthcare information services	Jacksonville
16	Mercedes LaPorta	Owner	Mercedes Electric Supply, Inc.	20.0	40	Electric equipment distributor	Miami
19	Susan Stackhouse	President	Stellar Partners, Inc.	19.3	150	Airport retailers	Tampa
20	Leila Nodarse	CEO	Nodarse & Associates	19.0	200	Engineering testing	Winter Park
21	Gloria Rodriguez	CEO	Kramer Laboratories, Inc.	15.0	15	Pharmaceuticals	Miami
22	Olga Ramudo	President & CEO	Express Travel	12.0	18	Travel agency	Coral Gables
22	Susan Stokes	President	Stokes Mechanical Contractors	12.0	75	Building contractors	Lake Worth
24	Carole Metour	President & CEO	PM Services Company	11.1	100	Building management and maintenance services	St. Petersburg
24	Sue Romanos	President & CEO	CAREERXCHANGE	11.1	25	Human resources- staffing	Pembroke Pines
26	Lisa Bucher	President	R.D. Masonry	11.0	278	Masonry contractors	Jacksonville
26	Pamela Schaetzel	General Manager	SMJ Corporation (J.M. Stewart Corp.)	11.0	65	Sign manufacturing	Sarasota
28	Mary Ann Stiles	President & CEO	Stiles, Taylor and Grace, PA	10.0	101	Law firm	Tampa

Rank	Leader	Title	Company	Revenues in millions of dollars	Employees	Type of business	City
29	Ann Machado	CEO	Creative Staffing	9.5	27	Human resources - staffing	Miami
30	Jennifer Clark	President	Mill-Rite Woodworking Company, Inc.	9.3	62	Architectural woodworking	Pinellas Park
31	Ann Durland	President	Waldenlake Business Services, Inc.	9.0	6	Contractor support services	Plant City
32	Carmen Dominguez	Owner	Homes by Carmen Dominguez	8.0	7	Custom home builder	Orlando
33	Tanya Sims	President	B&S Diversified Inc.	6.9	50	General and electrical contracting services	Orlando
34	Adela Gonzalez	President	Future Force Personnel Services	6.8	10	Human resources - staffing	Miami Lakes
35	Patricia Rew	President	Bay Manufactured Homes, Inc.	6.0	10	Manufactured home dealership	Tampa
35	Vania Amorim	General Manager	Intermills Trading Incorporated	6.0	30	Food manufacturer	Miami
37	Christine Madsen	President & Owner	Mad 4 Marketing, Inc. d/b/a InterMedia	5.5	15	Advertising, marketing, and publicity services	Fort Lauderdale
37	Mary Nesbit	Owner	Cardinal Caregivers, Inc.	5.5	43	Home health care	Palm Harbor
39	Peggie Schultz	President	O-Gee Paint Company	5.4	24	Paint supplier	Miami
39	Connie Wightman	President	Technologies Management, Inc.	5.0	42	Telecommunications consulting services	Winter Park
39	Catherine Haas	President	Parametric Solutions, Inc.	5.0	49	Product design and development services	Jupiter
42	Alice Johnson	President	One Source Roofing, Inc	4.9	65	Roofing company	Orlando
43	Pamela Kirchner	CEO	BCA Financial Services, Inc.	4.1	50	Collection agency	Miami
44	Norka Munilla	President	Thunder Electrical Contractors, Inc.	4.0	50	Building contractors	Miami
45	Monique Hamaty-Simmonds	President	Tortuga Rum Cake Company	3.8	18	Food manufacturer	Miami
46	Charlene Sullivan	President & CEO	DataSavers of Jacksonville, Inc.	3.6	31	Offsite record storage management company	Jacksonville
47	Laura Paynter	President	Chilton Construction, Inc.	3.5	30	Site development	Ocala
47	Connie Jones	President	Rimco Marketing Products Inc.	3.5	7	Marketing packaging solutions	Orlando
49	Victoria Evelyn Villalba	President	Victoria & Associates Career Services, Inc.	3.3	7	Human resources - staffing	Miami
50	Cindy Hartig	President	Information Technology and Data Solutions, Inc	3.0	30	Electrical contractor	Kissimmee
50	Claudia Straw	President	Foelgner, Ronz & Straw, PA	3.0	26	Certified public accounting firm	St. Petersburg
50	Eileen Rosenzweig	CEO	Leda Printing	3.0	20	Commercial lithographic printing	Sarasota





