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Kathleen Woodring honored by Florida Economic Development Council



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FT. LAUDERDALE – CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion’s Executive Vice President Kathleen Woodring has been named the Florida Economic Development Council’s Toni Jennings Workforce Development Professional of the Year.

Woodring, who has been with CareerSource CLM since 1997, was honored Monday night during the FEDC’s annual conference in Ft. Lauderdale. The award was presented by Lois Scott, retired bureau chief for the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and last year’s recipient.

The FEDC is the statewide organization that educates, advocates for and connects Florida’s economic stakeholders. In addition to Woodring, the FEDC recognized Florida Gov. Rick Scott as the 2017 Business Ambassador and the Eunice Sullivan Economic Development Professional of the Year was awarded to Crystal Sircy, executive vice president of the Orlando Economic Partnership.

The workforce developer professional of the year award has been given annually since 2007 to recognize the achievements of an outstanding Florida workforce developer who has made a significant impact on workforce development. It is named in honor of its first recipient, former Florida Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings, in recognition of her exceptional leadership in building a strong workforce system to respond to critical workforce needs and advance local, regional and state economic development.

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This marks the first time in the award's 10-year history that two members of the same organization have been named the state's top workforce development professional. Rusty Skinner, CEO of CareerSource CLM, received the award in 2013.

Woodring, who directs workforce program implementation and programming for Citrus, Levy and Marion counties, has been instrumental in area YouthBuild projects and led the statewide planning effort for the annual Workforce Professional Development Summit for the last three consecutive years. The summit provides system-wide training for more than 800 professionals and is a collaboration of CareerSource Florida, Florida Workforce Development Association and DEO.

"I'm honored to be recognized for this award by the FEDC," Woodring said. "As workforce professionals we work every day to keep our promises with our job seekers, business and our economic development partners. Fulfilling the vision of the FWDA, CSF and DEO for a strong and fulfilling Summit make it possible for our network to keep this promise."

She was nominated by Ed Peachey, president and chief executive officer of CareerSource Tampa Bay.

"Ms. Woodring has set a new standard for excellence in managing relationships with community organizations and partners," Peachey said. "Thanks to her leadership, extraordinary attention to detail and devotion to educating our professionals to be the most innovative and effective in the nation, she has helped create a path to prosperity for thousands of at-risk Citrus, Levy and Marion county residents. Her impact on these communities will be felt for decades to come."

Kathy Judkins, CareerSource CLM's board chair, said, "I can't think of a more deserving person to receive this prestigious award."

"We appreciate Kathleen's unfailing commitment to the workforce mission," said Judkins, who was on hand during the awards ceremony. "Her unprecedented leadership and accomplishments as chair of the annual summit is a worthy acknowledgement."

Woodring has been involved in workforce development for nearly three decades, serving as an equal opportunity officer for an employment and training consortium in Pennsylvania and as placement and support services coordinator for the former Withlacoochee Workforce Development Authority in Ocala. She joined CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion, then Workforce Connection, in 1997, in 2005 became chief operating officer and last year was named executive vice president, managing program implementation and programming for the three-county region. Prior to her career in workforce development, Woodring was a manager for the US Bureau of the Census and Disney World.

Woodring, who chairs the Florida Workforce Development Association's Chief Operating Officer subgroup, also serves on numerous civic and community boards, including the Marion County Transportation Disadvantaged board, Early Learning Coalition of Marion County, United Way of Marion County Financial Stability Vision Council and the Marion County Homeless Coalition.

A native of Minnesota, she graduated from Bemidji State University and earned her Master's in Management with honors from Webster University in 2006.

Woodring and her husband Mac have lived in Ocala since 1995 and have one son and three dogs.