

Charlotte County celebrates International Women's Day

By Hector Flores

On March 8, we observed International Women's Day. To get a sense of our commitment to supporting the career goals and professional development of the women who work for Charlotte County, check out Social Media Manager Ashley Turner's video on our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok pages. Visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/social for links.

In my employee message on Monday, I wrote, "This year's International Women's Day theme is #BreakTheBias. Whether bias is deliberate or unconscious, knowing that bias exists isn't enough. Action is needed to level the playing field. It's also a reminder to continually focus attention on issues such as gender equality, stereotypes, discrimination, and violence and abuse against women.

"While diversity, equity and inclusion is part of our awareness and continuing training, I want to ensure it is ingrained as part of our culture. It will challenge us to continually improve and reinforce that Charlotte County government is a great place to work."

All county employees are required to take sexual harassment training and we recently partnered with the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking and adopted policies and employee training programs they recommend.

Charlotte County will continue our efforts to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children and vulnerable adults, and mitigate the associated public safety, economic, and health risks to our community, in collaboration with the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking, and other anti-human trafficking organizations.

Our award-winning Leadership Development Program provides training, interdepartmental collaboration and mentoring opportunities. More than half of the program's graduates have been women. County administration also supports a Lean In Circle, an international program founded by Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook) Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg. Lean In helps women achieve their ambitions and helps companies and organizations "build inclusive workplaces where women of all identities are supported and empowered," according to the group's website.

Of the county's nearly 1,300 full- and part-time employees, 30% are women, including our deputy county administrator, assistant county administrator, county attorney, and directors of our Human Resources and Human Services departments. Dozens more hold senior leadership positions as division managers, business managers, purchasing managers, programming managers, contract specialists, public information coordinators, facility supervisors, attorneys, planners, fiscal analysts, business managers, purchasing managers, engineers, project managers, marketing managers, biologists and more.

I want to thank all my female colleagues and share how proud I am of your accomplishments and contributions to achieving our mission to deliver exceptional service to our community.

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