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## Top women-led businesses honored

BY CINDY KRISCHER GOODMAN

FIU's Center for Leadership and The Commonwealth Institute South Florida recognized 50 women on Wednesday for leading companies in Florida with more than \$3.5 million in revenue. "These women are exceptional leaders. To be exceptional you have to win employees minds and hearts," said Joyce Elam, executive dean of FIU's College of Business Administration.

Elizabeth Fago, who runs the largest female-led business in Florida, says she built a \$325 million business in Palm Beach Gardens, Home Quality Management, through her tenacity and optimism.

"People who doubted me are now in awe of my success," Fago said. "Without optimism and a strong belief in yourself, women can not make it in the world of men."

Sue Ramanos, CEO of CareerXchange, built an \$18.6 million business in Miami and offered this advice: "Starting out, you think you can do it all. You can't. You need to hire the right people."

And, Beverly Raphael, CEO of RCC associates in Deerfield Beach, a \$70 million general contracting company, said the most important lesson she has learned in business "is not to be discouraged by others expectations and fears."

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