

May 17, 2010

Contact: Eric Basinger, Executive Director, Economic Development Council, (941) 748-4842, ext. 128, ericb@ManateeEDC.com
Sally Hill, Communications Director, Suncoast Workforce Board, (941) 358-4080, ext. 1123, shill@swdb.org

Workforce grant trains nurse examiners to aid sexual assault victims

BRADENTON, FL – Sexual assault victims in Manatee and Sarasota counties will receive the specialized nursing attention they need in the aftermath of an attack thanks to workforce training funds that meet the needs of healthcare workers in Manatee and Sarasota counties.

Twelve Registered Nurses from Manatee Memorial Hospital, Blake Medical Center and Sarasota Memorial Hospital received Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) training paid for with federal dollars from the Suncoast Workforce Board matched locally by the Manatee-Sarasota Workforce Funders' Collaborative. The Workforce Board, Manatee Economic Development Council (EDC) and Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice coordinated the training.

"Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are critical to the sexual assault response process," said Jennifer Dritt, executive director for the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, which provided the 40-hour training program at Blake Medical Center in Bradenton in May. "Their expertise in collecting forensic evidence and providing medical treatment is vitally important to ensuring that victims continue on the road to recovery and that law enforcement and prosecutors are able to bring perpetrators to justice."

"Without this funding partnership, the SANE center would not become a reality," said Tyler White, director of emergency services at Blake Medical Center. "The SANE training being performed at Blake Medical Center will satisfy a desperate need in Manatee and Sarasota counties. After completing this training, advocates for the victims of sexual assault will be able to ensure consistent, high quality care and assessment to these individuals."

The Manatee Glens Rape Crisis program has been working for years to provide this service for sexual assault victims in Manatee County, according to Catherine Wilson, assistant director of children's outpatient services at Manatee Glens.

"Our SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) was instrumental in making this vision come true," Wilson said. "The SANE center, which is a partnership with Planned Parenthood, will operate through the SART team of community agencies that provide services to victims of sexual assault. This training opportunity is making a dream come true."

The next grant cycle for healthcare and other workforce training begins July 1. For information about grant opportunities, contact the EDC at (941) 748-4842, ext. 145, or Runa Badal at the Suncoast Workforce Board at (941) 358-4200, ext. 1102.

About the EDC

The Economic Development Council, a division of the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, develops and implements programs to attract new high-impact businesses and to assist in the retention and growth of targeted existing businesses in Manatee County. Information: www.ManateeEDC.com.

###