

Volusia Manufacturers Association – Jayne Fifer, President/CEO selected as one of Volusia/Flagler County’s 2011 Most Influential Women in Business!

Jayne Fifer, President/CEO of the Volusia Manufacturer’s Association recognized for contributions to Volusia/Flagler County community outreach and manufacturing.

August 2, 2011 (FPRC) -- For six years now, the Volusia Flagler Business Report has been writing a feature article on Volusia-Flagler area’s most outstanding women in business, and for 2011, Jayne Fifer, current CEO & President of the Volusia Manufacturers Association has been chosen as one of the winners. The process starts with many women being selected by the Business Report’s readers and staff. After deliberation, Business Report staff then selects several women business owners and executives, and announces the top ten women chosen to be the “Influential Women in Business” for that year for Volusia and Flagler Counties. The current Volusia Flagler Business Report issue was released on July 25, 2011.

The Volusia/Flagler Business Report is the leading source of business news and useful information about companies in Volusia and Flagler counties and the issues affecting them. The publication is published every other Friday, and then directly mailed to over 10,500 business executives and owners, and the full, online version can be found at <http://www.vfbr.com>. The Business Report covers topics from residential/commercial real estate, construction, manufacturing, banking, finance, economic development, tourism, professional services, and health care. Each issue is a mix of business news, current business trends, up-and-coming companies, with interviews of top executives. Often, guest commentaries by local business leaders and upcoming business events are printed.

The Volusia Manufacturers Association (VMA) is the leading manufacturing trade association established by Volusia and Flagler County Manufacturers and has been in the area for over 30 years. Directing the Volusia Manufacturers Association is the VMA Board of Directors, who represent the various manufacturing member companies and associations and Jayne Fifer, the President/CEO. Ms. Fifer has been the President/CEO of the Volusia Manufacturers Association for the last five years.

Jayne’s lifetime achievements prior to the VMA and during reign as VMA President were printed in the current edition of the Volusia/Flagler Business Report by Valerie Whitney, and are included below in italics for reflection.

Jayne Fifer, president and chief executive officer of the Volusia Manufacturers Association, is a strong believer that things happen for a reason. After graduating from high school in Cleveland, Fifer wanted to work in a mission school in West Virginia. Her application was turned down. So Fifer took what jobs she could find, including catering and even working behind the soda fountain in the Kresge department store. “My dad did not make plans for me to go to college,” she said, because she was a girl. Her dad, a mechanical engineer who owned a couple of businesses, pinned his hopes on her brother. Fifer married her first husband — who also was from Cleveland—and the couple moved to West Virginia. While living there, she did some mission work as part of a women’s

club at her church. Fifer attended Marshall University where she earned a bachelor's degree in business administration. "I was going to be a social worker and save the world," Fifer said, until she evaluated all the time she would have to "Now, I consider myself a bleeding-heart conservative,". After her brief first marriage ended, Fifer packed up "Florida was scary," she said, adding she had to learn to co-exist with nature here. Her first employer in the Sunshine State was Burdines department store, where she was hired as a training manager. The job called for her to travel around the state training sales people and overseeing systems operations at stores within the chain. Fifer eventually decided to find a job that would require less travel. She was hired initially as a motivational speaker for the Volusia, Lake and Flagler Private Industry Council. She later worked as a project director for the Workforce Development Board of Flagler and Volusia Counties (now known as the Center for Business Excellence). By the mid-1990s, her duties had changed numerous times. It was during this time also that she met Lou Fifer, a former banker and marketing executive, who had become the founding president/CEO of the Volusia Manufacturers Association. They worked together on several projects including a career and manufacturing video. In 1997, Jayne Fifer took a part-time position as vice president with the VMA. A year later, she married Lou Fifer. After her husband retired in 2005, Jayne Fifer was named to succeed him in 2006. Lou Fifer passed away in 2009 at the age of 86. Under Jayne Fifer's leadership, the association has expanded programming and increased sponsorship, while she works tirelessly to increase awareness of the impact of manufacturing in here in Volusia County, Florida and nationwide. Her position and activities recently earned her a spot on the Business Report's 2011 list of influential area women in business. "I am in love with manufacturing," Fifer said, adding she feels the public has been misled, somewhat, by reports that suggest most manufacturing today occurs in faraway places. "The U.S. still manufactures 21 percent of all products in the markets," she said, while acknowledging consumers are likely confused since so much that is sold in this country bears a tag showing that it was made in China. China ranks second in manufacturing with 13 percent of goods, according to Fifer. Moreover, she noted, that some of the manufacturing jobs that were sent overseas are starting to come back as business owners discern that they are no longer saving enough to make it worthwhile. Fifer, 58, is enjoying being a grandmother, but says she has no plans to retire. "I never want to. I have the best job," she said.

The Volusia Manufacturers Association is extremely proud of its leader's recognition and commends Jayne on all her achievements and recognizes her years of hard work for the VMA. The Volusia Manufacturers Association (VMA) has been very successful under Jayne Fifer's reign and has been successful in connecting businesses and strengthening them to work together for their success. For more information about the Volusia Manufacturers Association, please contact Volusia Manufacturers Association or Jayne Fifer at 386.673.0505.

About Volusia Manufacturers Association:

The Volusia Manufacturers Association was founded in 1980 in Volusia County, Florida by manufacturers for manufacturers. Volusia Manufacturers Association provides information, education and networking opportunities to help manufacturers grow and succeed. VMA are made up of companies that range in size from one employee to over 500. If you are interested in joining the Volusia Manufacturers Association, please visit <http://www.vmaonline.com>.

Contact Information:

Jayne Fifer
President/CEO

Volusia Manufacturers Association
jayne.fifer@VMAonline.com
386.673.0505
Fax: 386.673.6663
Cell: 386.212.4003
www.VMAonline.com

Contact Information

For more information contact Jayne Fifer of Volusia Manufacturers Association
(<http://www.vmaonline.com>)
386.673.0505

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