

Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau employees earn esteemed hospitality industry certifications

LEE COUNTY, FL – The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) is proud to announce that three employees have recently achieved certification in their respective areas of specialty.

Simone Behr, VCB visitor services coordinator, has been awarded the Certified in Volunteer Administration credential by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration. Recognized internationally, this sought-after designation is awarded to those who demonstrate their professional excellence in mobilizing and managing volunteers. The rigorous process includes preparation of a performance-based portfolio judged by a panel of professionals, along with an extensive examination testing knowledge, application, and analysis of skills related to volunteer resources management.

Since March 2005, Behr's job responsibilities have been varied. Among her most important duties is the recruitment and training of hundreds of local volunteers as "Tourism Ambassadors" to work at Southwest Florida International Airport information booths, providing information, assistance, and goodwill to the traveling public.

VCB Tourism Education Manager Christine Davlin has contributed to the VCB's professional standing by earning the designation of Certified Hospitality Trainer (CHT) from the Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Lodging Association in July.

The CHT designation is one of the highest achievements awarded by the Educational Institute. To qualify for this distinction, hospitality professionals must demonstrate their skills and abilities through academic achievement and industry experience. A comprehensive examination tests skills in various disciplines, such as assessment, instructional design, techniques and tools, technology, evaluations, and management development.

Davlin joined the VCB team in November 2009. Her primary function is developing and implementing various hospitality and educational training programs to benefit tourism industry personnel. Among other responsibilities, she identifies and provides training in customer service trends and techniques, tourism professional development programming needs, and destination awareness education.

VCB Administrative Assistant Charm Evans earned the Certified Administrative Professional rating from the International Association of Administrative Professionals in July. Evans demonstrated her superior skills and abilities through an examination, joining an elite group of 6,400 professionals worldwide who have been acknowledged

as the best in their profession.

An integral part of the VCB's administrative department since May 2006, her many duties include assisting the bureau's executive director and department managers with various projects, as well as providing support to ensure that VCB programs are managed effectively and efficiently.

"With the tourism marketplace continuously changing and increasingly competitive, attaining further education and certifications truly demonstrate the commitment to excellence that makes the VCB a stronger organization and ultimately benefits local tourism businesses," said Tamara Pigott, VCB executive director. "The VCB and the Lee County Tourist Development Council are proud of these accomplishments that raise our local hospitality industry's standards."