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**7th annual Chrysalis Awards honor 6 local individuals/businesses
for community contributions**

Lee County VCB, Greater Fort Myers Chamber salute winners

LEE COUNTY, FL – The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) and the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce Inc. honored six local individuals and businesses with *Chrysalis Awards* at the annual *Celebration of Business & Tourism Awards Luncheon and Trade Show* today at the Harborside Event Center in downtown Fort Myers.

In addition, the VCB presented its long-standing annual Junonia Award to Ellis Etter, general manager of Wyndham Garden Hotel, Fort Myers Beach. Created in 2006, the VCB's Junonia Award recognizes individuals who have positively impacted the local tourism community by demonstrating unique capabilities, leadership, commitment, and dedication. The Junonia is a highly treasured shell and was selected as a symbol of the VCB's annual award because of its rarity and exceptional quality.

The 2016 Chrysalis honorees that were celebrated for their positive impact on the local community were:

- Business Development: Chico's FAS, Inc.
- Cultural Achievement: Artfest Fort Myers, Inc.
- Education: Florida Gulf Coast University- Colloquium
- Sports: City of Palms Classic Basketball Tournament
- Sales & Marketing: Florida Southwestern State College
- Eco-Innovation: Captiva Cruises, Inc.

The 43 nominees included area attractions, accommodations, retailers, educational institutions, arts and cultural organizations, transportation companies, and other local businesses in six categories. The awards are designed to foster a stronger alliance between the tourism industry and the county's business community.

Chrysalis Award nominees were judged on innovation in their respective category, how they have distinguished themselves in the community, the results of their efforts to promote the destination, their contributions to business and tourism partnerships for the overall benefit of the county, and their work to foster growth and sustainability. Honorees were recognized for their commitment to excellence in improving community growth and creating job opportunities for the citizens of Lee County.

The trade show and luncheon celebrates the successful collaboration between tourism and the community to maintain and enhance tourism as the major economic engine for Lee County.