

Leadership Spotlight

Cheryl Kirby, Ph.D.



High resolution photo available online

Dr. Cheryl Kirby is the Chief Operating Officer for the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network, Florida's largest and leading provider of assistance for small and medium-sized businesses. In this capacity, Dr. Kirby is responsible for overseeing the operations of the network's more than 40 offices and 280 employees, executing the Florida SBDC's strategy, and ensuring the network continues to exceed stakeholder expectations and contribute value to Florida's bottom line. An accomplished executive, Dr. Kirby holds more than 20 years of experience in marketing, training, innovation leadership, and strategic planning.

At the Florida SBDC Network, she uses her deep understanding of human capital development, continuous improvement, and strategic planning to drive overall organizational performance and customer satisfaction.

Prior to her role as COO, Dr. Kirby served as Chief Strategic and Branding Officer for the network. In this role, she spearheaded the successful rebranding of the network, fostered the development and implementation of the network's strategic plan, and led the network through its most successful national accreditation.

Dr. Kirby has given regional and national presentations on topics such as competencies that foster creative work environments, change management using social media, human capital issues, thinking styles, strategic planning, brainstorming techniques and return on investment in marketing outcomes.

Prior to joining the Florida SBDC in 2011, Dr. Kirby served as an adjunct faculty member in the communication arts and engineering and computer technology departments at the University of West Florida. She earned a bachelor's degree in Communication Arts and a master's degree in Health Communication Leadership from the University of West Florida. She earned her Ph.D. in Human Capital Development from the University of Southern Mississippi.

She is a member of several distinguished regional and national boards and associations, including the America's SBDC Accreditation, Associate State Director, and Legislative Committees; and Board of Directors for CareerSource Florida, the Florida Economic Development Council, Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and the Florida Manufacturing Association. She previously served on the Board of Examiners for the 2014 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and is a graduate of the Leadership Pensacola Class of 2008.

State Designated as Florida's Principal Provider of Business Assistance [Fla. Stat. § 288.001]

The Florida SBDC Network is a statewide partnership program nationally accredited by the Association of America's SBDCs and funded in part by the U.S. SBA, DLA, State of Florida, and other private and public partners, with UWF serving as the network's headquarters. Florida SBDC services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Language assistance services are available for individuals with limited English proficiency.



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