



LEAD

SUMMIT

**Leadership. Education.
Awareness. Development.**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026

9:00 AM – 4:30 PM



**FLORIDA COMMISSION
*on the STATUS of WOMEN***

2026 LEAD Summit

PROGRAM

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AGENDA

8:30 AM

Registration And Networking

9:00 AM

Welcome

Tammi F. Garrett | Executive Director, Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Opening Remarks

Commissioner Belinda Keiser | Vice Chancellor of Community Relations and Student Advancement, Keiser University

Invocation

Rev. Dr. Minerva "Minnie" Diaz | Veteran, Chaplain, Human Rights Advocate and Civil Servant

Pledge Of Allegiance

Chief Ann Starling | Chief of Police, Dade City

Message From The Chair

Commissioner Candace Falsetto | Chair, Florida Commission on the Status of Women, Executive Director and Lending Specialist, J.P. Morgan Private Bank

Special Video Message

Jeanette Nuñez | President, Florida International University

9:30 AM

Believe Bigger: Leadership, Opportunity, Florida's Future

Drawing from her distinguished career in sports, business, and leadership, Donna Orender will share an inspiring message about the power of bold leadership, resilience, and creating opportunities for the next generation. With Florida continuing to grow and evolve, her presentation will explore how leaders, communities, and individuals can work together to strengthen opportunity, empower women and young people, and build a brighter future for the Sunshine State. Through lessons learned from a lifetime of breaking barriers and leading transformational change, Donna will challenge audiences to think bigger about what is possible for Florida and the people who call it home.

Donna Orender | Founder & CEO, Orender Unlimited & Generation W

Introduction by Commissioner Lori Day

10:15 AM

Break

10:30 AM

Beyond Service: Women Veterans, Family Resilience, & Building Stronger Communities

Military service shapes lives long after the uniform is worn for the last time. This panel will explore the unique experiences of women veterans as they navigate family life, career transitions, and reintegration into civilian communities. Panelists will highlight the resilience of women veterans and the importance of support, connection, and community in helping them and their families thrive.

Commissioner Sophia Eccleston, Moderator | Senior Director, NextEra Energy Resources

Layla Collins | Army Veteran and Florida's Second Lady

Commissioner Kerry Irvin | CEO, Operation Healing Forces

Valerie Lavin | Founder & CEO, Luminary Global

Jennifer Williams | Founder & CEO, GPS4VETS

12:00 PM

Break

12:45 PM

Leading With Purpose: Building A Healthier Future For Florida

Florida's rapidly growing and changing population presents both significant opportunities and challenges for the healthcare system. Drawing on her experience leading complex healthcare organizations and as president of Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Alicia Schulhof will share her perspective on the future of healthcare in Florida and the importance of building connected healthcare systems that better serve Florida's children, families and communities.

Alicia Schulhof, MHA, FACHE | President, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Introduction by **Commissioner Stephanie Goforth**

1:15 PM

Educating Florida's Future: Challenges, Opportunities & The Path Forward

Join education leaders and experts for a timely discussion on the challenges and opportunities shaping Florida's education system. From strengthening student achievement and supporting teachers to preparing students for the workforce of tomorrow, this panel will explore the issues facing primary and secondary education and the innovative solutions that can help build a stronger future for Florida's students.

Commissioner Lina Rojas, Moderator | Government Relations Manager, Florida State University

Kelly Garcia | Executive Director, GuidEd for Families

Rhea Law | Attorney and Immediate Past President, University of South Florida

Madeleine Thakur | President & CEO, The Children's Movement of Florida

2:45 PM

Break

3:00 PM

See Them, Hear Them, Act: Ending Human Trafficking In Our Communities

Human trafficking often hides in plain sight. Drawing on more than four decades of advocacy and direct work with survivors, Dotti Groover-Skipper will explore the realities of human trafficking, the warning signs communities should recognize, and the power each of us has to make a difference. This compelling presentation will challenge attendees to see the vulnerable, understand the realities of exploitation, and take meaningful action to protect and support survivors.

Dotti Groover-Skipper | Member, Florida Women's Hall of Fame, and Founder & CEO, HeartDance Foundation, Inc.

Introduction by **Commissioner Rosie Paulsen**

4:00 PM

Closing Remarks

Commissioner Candace Falsetto | Chair, Florida Commission on the Status of Women, Executive Director and Lending Specialist, J.P. Morgan Private Bank

4:30 PM

Summit Concludes

* Times are subject to change

About The Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Since 1991, leaders from across Florida have been appointed to the Florida Commission on the Status of Women. Collectively, these leaders, with the support of dedicated staff, work to deliver programming aimed at improving the well-being of Florida women and girls – and by extension, all Floridians.

We have a three-fold mission: Collaboration. Education. Celebration.

We **COLLABORATE** with organizations statewide to raise awareness of the challenges and issues facing Florida women and families, and the resources available for assistance.

We **EDUCATE** Floridians by hosting educational forums and seminars on far-ranging women's issues; from economic challenges to climbing the ladder of success.

We **CELEBRATE** the contributions and successes of women and girls.



FLORIDA COMMISSION
***on the STATUS of* WOMEN**



Welcome Message Executive Director

Greetings and welcome to the L.E.A.D. Summit 2026!

It is truly my honor to welcome an incredible group of leaders, creators, and changemakers to this year's summit. Whether you are returning, joining us for the very first time, or partnering with us, your presence gives us the momentum we need to make a real difference.

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women hosts the L.E.A.D. Summit to expand leadership educational opportunities for the women who shape our state. This year, anchored by our L.E.A.D. pillars—Leadership, Education, Awareness, and Development—we are driving conversations across areas of Leadership, Veteran Care, Healthcare, Education and Human Trafficking.

The energy of this summit comes from our shared goal to lead confidently and leave a lasting impact. The inspiring speakers and impactful panel discussions are designed to challenge, inspire, and equip you. That is why I encourage each of you to dive in completely. Connect with new people, share your ideas boldly, and support each other as we learn and grow together.

I want to extend a deep thank you to our dedicated commissioners, hardworking team, sponsors, and expo participants who poured so much energy into bringing this vision to life. Most importantly, thank you to each of you for being here and investing in your own growth and leadership journey.

Let's discover new possibilities together as we continue to L.E.A.D!

Warmest regards,

Tammi F. Garrett
Executive Director
Florida Commission on the Status of Women



Welcome Message Commission Chair

LEAD SUMMIT CHAIR

On behalf of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 LEAD Summit. We are honored to bring together leaders, advocates, community partners, and engaged Floridians who share a commitment to strengthening our state and creating greater opportunities for women and families.

Today is about **Leadership, Education, Awareness, and Development**—and about the important conversations that will help shape Florida's future.

Today we will hear from thoughtful leaders and experts on issues that touch the lives of Floridians every day, including healthcare, education, women veterans and their families, human trafficking, and the many opportunities and challenges facing our communities.

The strength of a summit like this comes not only from the speakers on the stage, but also from the people joining us today. Your experiences, ideas, questions, and commitment to service are what make meaningful progress possible.

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women is proud to provide a forum where important issues can be explored, diverse perspectives can be shared, and relationships can be built. By coming together, we can elevate the voices of women, strengthen families, and help create a brighter future for all Floridians.

As you participate today, I encourage you to listen, engage, connect, and consider what you can take from these conversations and put into action in your own communities. The challenges before us are significant, but so are the opportunities—and progress begins when people are willing to lead, collaborate, and make a difference.

Thank you for being part of the 2026 LEAD Summit and for your commitment to making Florida a stronger, more prosperous place to live, work, and raise a family.

May today's conversations inspire us to lead with purpose, lift others with compassion, and leave Florida better than we found it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candace Falsetto".

Commissioner Candace Falsetto
Chair, Florida Commission on the Status of Women
Executive Director and Lending Specialist, J.P. Morgan Private Bank

MEET THE LEAD SUMMIT CO-CHAIR



Commissioner Rosie Paulsen

Founder & CEO

***S&R Services LLC & Author
"Ñeque"***

Rosie Paulsen is the founder and CEO of S&R Services LLC, a Medicare and ACA insurance agency serving Florida seniors since 2009. Originally from Quito, Ecuador, Rosie came to the United States as a teenager and became a proud naturalized American citizen in 2000. For over 20 years she has helped hundreds of Florida seniors find the right Medicare plan — with clarity, compassion, and zero cost to them.

Rosie holds the RSSA® credential — Registered Social Security Analyst — and a Florida 2-15 Health, Life and Variable Annuities license. She works with top Medicare carriers including Humana, UnitedHealthcare, and Devoted Health. She is bilingual in English and Spanish and serves seniors across all of Florida.

Beyond insurance, Rosie is a published author, a public speaker, and a civic leader. Her book — *Ñeque: Purpose, Resilience, and Determination: Create Your Lasting Legacy* — shares the resilience philosophy that built S&R Services. She has been recognized as one of the Top 50 Most Influential Leaders in Florida by the Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Florida Commission on the Status of Women.

Rosie leads every conversation the same way — with a servant's heart, a warm smile, and a genuine commitment to making insurance simple for every senior she meets. Her motto says it all: Pure. Positive. Inspiring.

OPENING REMARKS



Commissioner Belinda Keiser **Vice Chancellor of Community Relations and Student Advancement** *Keiser University*

Belinda Keiser has devoted her career to advancing Florida's economic and workforce development, global competitiveness, education, and healthcare communities. In addition to serving on various governmental boards, Keiser is the Vice Chancellor of Community Relations and Student Advancement at Keiser University (KU), overseeing Media and Public Relations, Government Relations, and Student & Career Services for more than 30 years, and is an advocate for social mobility, accessibility to higher education, and talent development.

Under her leadership, KU has grown into Florida's largest, not-for-profit university, serving 20,000 students pursuing 100 doctoral through associate degrees in many of Florida's targeted industries. Approximately 20 percent of KU's student body are active-duty service members, veterans, or military family members. With 21 Florida campuses and 3,800 team members, KU's annual economic impact is \$3 billion and results in more than 30,000 direct and indirect jobs. Regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges as a Level VI institution, KU continues to serve Florida students, families, and employers seeking career-ready graduates. Keiser University is a state and national leader in the production of nursing graduates passing the NCLEX on first attempt, and actively facilitates clinical partnerships in many of Florida's premier hospitals.

In 2017, Keiser was appointed to Florida's Constitution Revision Commission (2017-18) by former Governor Rick Scott. Florida is the only state in the Union with a Constitution Revision Commission. The 37-member commission meets only once every 20 years to make recommendations for amendments to Florida's Constitution for consideration by Florida voters. As a member of the CRC, Keiser served as a member of the Executive, Legislative, and Education Committees. She served consecutive terms—eight years—as a reappointed member of the 17th Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission.

In 2019, Belinda Keiser joined the Foundation for Florida's Future as a member of the Board of Trustees at the request of former Governor Jeb Bush, citing her commitment to the foundation's goals of providing access to quality education preparing students for lifelong success.

In March 2022, Florida Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jimmy Patronis appointed Belinda Keiser to the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, which was created over three decades ago by the Florida Legislature with the mission of raising awareness and celebrating the contributions and successes of women and girls.

INVOCATION



Rev. Dr. Minerva "Minnie" Diaz **Veteran, Chaplain, Human Rights Advocate, and Civil Servant**

Faith leader, veteran, chaplain, human-rights advocate, and civil servant, Dr. Minerva "Minnie" Diaz brings a lifetime of public service, spiritual care, and leadership across military, nonprofit, and community settings.

Dr. Diaz is committed to advancing freedom, democracy, human rights, and religious liberty, with particular concern for the Venezuelan people and other communities seeking liberty from oppressive systems.

She participates remotely in the International Religious Freedom Roundtable and has contributed to civil-society initiatives including the Mentally Ill Out of Jail/Rehabilitation Initiative in Pasco County, where she chaired the program for the Pasco County Sheriff's Department.

Dr. Diaz earned a Doctor of Ministry in Soul Care from Wesley Theological Seminary, affiliated with American University. Her dissertation received recognition from the U.S. Library of Congress, and she produced a related documentary available through social media platforms.

Originally from San Jose, California, Dr. Diaz attended the University of Puerto Rico, majored in Psychology, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force.

As an Air Force officer, she served with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations at Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She was the first female active-duty officer assigned to Air Force Office of Special Investigations Detachment 140. She later served with the 715th Bombardment Squadron as Operations Management Officer, and as a Command-and-Control Officer for the 68th Air Refueling Wing at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, managing communications during nuclear, weather, man-made, and international-hostility emergencies involving the White House and the Pentagon.

Dr. Diaz has served as a reserve, hospital, and police chaplain and previously supported nonprofit organizations as a legislative chair advisor. From 2009 to 2015, she served with the Human Trafficking Tampa Bay Task Force.

Dr. Diaz is currently involved in her local church in New Port Richey, Florida, where she participates in pastoral care of the sick, theater, choir, and evangelistic outreach. She has three adult children, twin grandsons, and a Chihuahua named Chabella Lilly.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE



Chief Ann Starling
Chief of Police
Dade City Police Department

Chief Ann Starling serves as the Chief of Police for the Dade City Police Department, bringing more than 2 decades of law enforcement experience and executive leadership to the role. A Florida native raised on a farm in Lawtey, she credits her upbringing with instilling the grit, discipline, and work ethic that continues to shape her leadership today.

Chief Starling began her law enforcement career with the Largo Police Department in 2004, where she served in a variety of operational and leadership assignments, including Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Traffic Homicide Investigator, and SWAT Commander. She rose through the ranks and retired as Deputy Chief before being selected to lead the Dade City Police Department. Throughout her career, she has earned a reputation for decisive leadership, operational excellence, and an unwavering commitment to public service.

Chief Starling earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and a master's degree in law enforcement administration from the University of South Florida. She is a graduate of Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command, where she received the prestigious Kreml Leadership Award in recognition of outstanding leadership and character.

As Dade City's first female Chief of Police, Chief Starling is committed to strengthening public trust, mentoring future leaders, and advancing innovative, community-focused policing while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and service.

SPECIAL VIDEO MESSAGE



Jeanette Nuñez
President
Florida International University

Mrs. Jeanette M. Nuñez is the President of Florida International University. After serving as interim president, the FIU Board of Trustees voted unanimously to name Mrs. Nuñez as the university's seventh president. Her presidency was confirmed by the Florida Board of Governors on June 18, 2025.

Prior to her appointment as Interim President, Mrs. Nuñez served as Florida's Lieutenant Governor. She was first elected in 2018 and subsequently re-elected in 2022. Mrs. Nuñez oversaw the Florida Department of Health and served as Chair of Space Florida, Florida's Cybersecurity Advisory Council, and the Health Care Innovation Council. She was reappointed as Chair of the Space Florida Board of Directors on February 17, 2025.

Before her tenure as Lieutenant Governor, Mrs. Nuñez served as a State Representative of the Florida House of Representatives from 2010 to 2018. Mrs. Nuñez earned her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Political Science and her Master of Public Administration from Florida International University.

MEET THE SPEAKER



Donna Orender

Founder & CEO

Orender Unlimited & Generation W

Donna Orender is a respected corporate leader, board member, and changemaker with a proven track record in strategic growth, brand revitalization, and innovative business development across sports, entertainment, and digital media. She brings a unique combination of strategic focus, operational expertise, and entrepreneurial vision to every role, having guided organizations through transformation, economic challenges, and rapid growth.

Donna currently serves as CEO of Orender Unlimited and as the co-founder, investor, and Commissioner of the Upshot League, a newly launched professional women's basketball league created in partnership with Zawyer Sports. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida, the Upshot League brings fresh energy to the sport, expanding opportunities for women athletes and creating new connections with fans nationwide.

Her board experience includes serving as a founding member of the World Surf League (WSL) and as Audit Committee Chair for the publicly traded Goal Acquisition Corporation, where she has played a pivotal role in shaping acquisition strategy. She also serves on the boards of the V Foundation for Cancer Research and the Jacksonville Public Education Fund.

A trailblazer in sports leadership, Donna served six years as Commissioner and President of the WNBA, revitalizing the brand and driving growth in attendance, TV ratings, sponsorship, merchandise sales, and digital engagement. Before that, she spent 17 years at the PGA TOUR as an executive in the Office of the Commissioner. Her vision fueled groundbreaking innovations, including the creation of PGA TOUR Radio, SHOTLINK (the TOUR's data and technology platform), and transformative television rights strategies.

In 2012, Donna founded Generation W, a nonprofit dedicated to educating, inspiring, and connecting women and girls to build inclusive, empowered communities—impacting thousands of lives nationwide.

Donna's achievements have earned her recognition as one of the Top 10 Most Powerful Women in Sports, one of Newsweek's 100 Most Influential People in Sports, and recipient of honors including the March of Dimes Sports Leadership Award and the UJA-Federation of New York's community leadership award. A Hall of Fame athlete at Queens College and inductee into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, she is also the best-selling author of *WOWsdom! The Girl's Guide to the Positive and the Possible*.

MEET THE VETERANS MODERATOR



Commissioner Sophia Eccleston

Senior Director

***NextEra Energy Resources & Author
"Hands That Built Me: A Memoir of Faith,
Grit and Giving Back"***

Sophia E. Eccleston is a distinguished energy and external affairs executive with a proven track record in renewable energy, stakeholder engagement, and strategic partnerships. With deep expertise in helping commercial and industrial clients achieve their sustainability goals, she has played a key role in advancing clean energy solutions.

As Senior Director of Origination at NextEra Energy Resources, Sophia has successfully guided businesses in their transition to renewable energy. Previously, she held leadership roles at Florida Power & Light (FPL), managing external affairs function for Southern and Central Palm Beach County. In this role, she was instrumental in securing major rate cases, overseeing emergency operations during natural disasters, and strengthening governmental and community relationships.

Her career began in contract management at KBR Inc, where she supported U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Africa. She played a key role in overseeing supplier contracts, procurement, and logistical operations, ensuring efficiency and compliance in high-stakes environments. A U.S. Army veteran, Sophia served in Heidelberg, Germany and Savannah, Georgia, gaining valuable experience in military logistics and operations.

Beyond her corporate career, Sophia is a leader in community service. She serves as an Executive Board Member for CareerSource Florida, a commissioner and past Chair for the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, and a Board Member of the Boca Raton Regional Hospital. Her leadership has earned her multiple accolades, including the 2023 Minority Community Leader Award from Keiser University and the 2023 Women in Leadership Award from the Executive Women of the Palm Beaches Foundation.

Sophia holds an MBA from American Intercontinental University and a BS in Criminal Justice from Armstrong State University. A Harvard-certified leader in negotiations and emotional intelligence, she enjoys traveling, golfing, and giving back to her community.

MEET THE PANELIST



Layla Collins
Army Veteran
Florida's Second Lady

Layla Collins has had a storied career in the United States Army (USA) which began in 1994 and spanned over two decades. During that time, she was deployed in support of operations in several countries, including Afghanistan and Iraq.

Her career has provided her with invaluable experience that has prepared her for a wide range of topics and events, from security to policy and doctrine. The capabilities that shaped her resiliency in her early career afforded her the opportunity to deploy in support of Marine Missions in Haiti, where she laid a foundation for her expertise in security and force protection. She later served as a liaison between the Human Resources Command for the Army. Both experiences allowed Layla to enter a field where she was uniquely equipped to serve within Special Operations Forces (SOF).

Layla served in multiple SOF units with a wide range of focus. Layla was selected to be a core member of a Special Actions Team that evaluated security protocol at the highest levels of our government. She collaborated to develop curriculum and courses to train and educate other service members on sensitive skills and best practices. Working within the SOF Community, allowed Layla to not only practice her skills as a counterintelligence agent, but expand her aperture through working on projects that included shaping policy for the federal government that had a direct and lasting change on funding, procurement and training.

Through Layla's unique abilities gained throughout her successful career, she was able to handle difficult situations that her family would face. Her husband was facing an amputation, and her son was diagnosed with several complex medical concerns – she was now facing continuing her career or retiring. She chose the latter to care for her family.

Layla is the proud wife of Jay, and mom of 2 precious boys, Gabe and Colt. Layla has been very active in her children's education, substitute teaching, volunteering and advocating for adaptive sports, and the veteran community. Layla has a special place in her heart for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students and families.

MEET THE PANELIST



Kerry Irvin **Chief Executive Officer** *Operation Healing Forces*

Kerry Irvin is the Chief Executive Officer of Operation Healing Forces and a State Commissioner appointed to the Florida Commission on the Status of Women. A former national security and intelligence officer, she has spent decades working across government, nonprofit, military, and community leadership to empower individuals, strengthen organizations, and create opportunities for people, families, and communities to thrive.

As CEO of Operation Healing Forces, a Florida-based international nonprofit, Kerry leads a distributed team delivering life-changing services to wounded, ill, and injured U.S. Special Operations Forces service members and veterans, as well as their families, caregivers, and survivors. Under her leadership, the organization has dramatically expanded its reach and strengthened programs addressing mental health, family resilience, crisis assistance, caregiver support, workforce transition, and long-term well-being. Throughout her career, she has built high-performing teams and forged strategic partnerships across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Kerry is a Master Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth Trainer, Certified Human Performance Expert, ASIST Suicide Prevention facilitator, and Certified Military Transition Assistance facilitator. She has partnered with the Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, first responder agencies, and civilian organizations to develop and deliver programs that strengthen well-being, leadership, human performance, and resilience.

Her Florida-centric leadership includes service on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the National Alliance on Mental Illness - Pinellas County and membership in Leadership Tampa's Class of 2025, the CEO Council of Tampa Bay, and the Nonprofit Leadership Center's CEO Circle. She mentors transitioning service members and military spouses through American Corporate Partners and has spent decades providing self-defense training to women and girls.

Her honors include the President's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Secretary of the Army's Superior Public Service Medal, 2025 Tampa Bay Business Woman of the Year, the Tampa Bay Lightning Community Hero Award, Titan 100 Tampa Bay, The National Mighty 25 Military Community Award, and three state-level Military Spouse of the Year honors. These distinctions reflect the collective impact of the teams, partners, and communities she is privileged to serve.

MEET THE PANELIST



Valerie Lavin

Founder & CEO

Luminary Global

Valerie Lavin is a retired U.S. Army First Sergeant and Founder and CEO of Luminary Global, an emergency preparedness company dedicated to saving and protecting lives. More than a provider of preparedness products, Luminary helps bridge the critical gap between catastrophe and medical care through high-quality emergency preparedness and trauma response solutions. The company equips both professional and citizen responders with the tools and resources to act when moments matter most, at home, in the workplace, on the front lines, and around the world.

Valerie is a co-founder of Action Zone, a nonprofit organization that nurtures the entrepreneurial aspirations of members in the military and first responder communities. As Executive Director and a certified facilitator of both Ice House Entrepreneurial Mindset and CO.STARTERS, Valerie frequently leads Action Zone's programming, empowering founders to turn their ideas into sustainable ventures.

Her influence extends nationally through her past role with Bunker Labs, where she served as a Director of Ecosystem Development and helped launch and scale their Ambassador Program supporting 150 volunteer leaders across the country. Valerie is also a facilitator for the Military Founder's Lab program at Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF).

Valerie currently serves on the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veteran Advisory Council, the Board of Directors for the Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions (ISPS) at St. Petersburg College, the John Moroni Legacy Foundation, and Leadership Tampa Bay. She's a member of the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance (TBDA) and was an active contributor to the former Synapse Impact Board.

Valerie's latest project is leading a major regional initiative, a collaboration between TBDA and University of South Florida to create a comprehensive database and mapping tool for all defense-related organizations. This will serve the military and veteran community by improving collaboration, reducing redundancy, and increasing access to critical support services across the eight-county region of Tampa Bay.

MEET THE PANELIST



Jennifer Williams

Founder & CEO

GPS4VETS

Jennifer Williams is an international speaker, award winning educator, and global advocate for accessible, transformative learning. She is the Founder, CEO and Executive Director of GPS4VETS Foundation, Inc., formerly Global Pathway Studies Foundation—an evolution that reflects her sharpened mission and her personal commitment to serving veterans and their families with dignity, compassion, and purpose.

A United States Navy Veteran, MST survivor, former Active-Duty service member, US Naval Reservist, Special Forces Spouse, and veteran, Jennifer has lived nearly every dimension of military life. She understands the culture, the trauma, the transition challenges, and the family impact because she has experienced them firsthand. Her lived experience fuels her leadership and shapes the heart of GPS4VETS Foundation.

Jennifer's MST journey was featured nationally in the January/February 2025 issue of DAV Magazine in an article titled "*Dismissed No More.*" The piece highlighted her courage, her decades long struggle navigating trauma and the VA claims process, and her determination to ensure that no survivor is ever silenced again. She is currently authoring a forthcoming book tracing her military service, the long term impact of trauma, and the ripple effects it had on her family—offering an honest, powerful narrative of survival, resilience, and restoration.

GPS4VETS Foundation focuses intentionally on one of the fastest growing and most vulnerable homeless populations in America: single female veterans with children. Jennifer's MST informed advocacy and trauma aware leadership guide every program the foundation offers—from career and certification training to mental health resources, childcare support, disability claim assistance, and financial readiness coaching.

Her newest endeavor is the creation of a fully furnished, fully stocked transitional home that will support three single female veterans and their children for up to six months. This home is designed to eliminate survival stress so mothers can focus entirely on healing, learning, and preparing for long term independence.

The home will also feature raised garden beds, offering grounding, nourishment, and a sense of ownership. Most importantly, it will be a safe space—a place where children can witness their mothers being treated with dignity, respect, and honor. For Jennifer, this is deeply personal: she is determined to ensure that no woman who served, and no child of a veteran, ever feels invisible or unsupported.

Jennifer's professional background spans more than 35 years in business consulting and organizational development, including key roles in the startup of over twenty companies. She has served as COO, CMO, Director of Operations, and National Director of Sales & Marketing, and has worked with Fortune 500 companies and international partners. Her leadership in education earned her the Outstanding Leadership in Education Award (2022) and the Visionary Award in Dubai (2022) for her creation of Virtual Career Institute International.

MEET THE SPEAKER



**Alicia Schulhof,
MHA, FACHE**

President

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Alicia Schulhof is a mission- and values-driven healthcare leader with more than 20 years of experience building high-performing teams and guiding organizations through transformational change across for-profit, nonprofit, community, and academic settings.

As president of JHACH, Alicia oversees all aspects of the health system, including hospital and affiliate operations, research and academic programs, physician enterprises, and the Foundation. Under her leadership, JHACH has achieved record performance results, been ranked the #1 children's hospital in Florida by U.S. News & World Report, earned its second Magnet® designation, and expanded access to pediatric care across the region.

Before JHACH, Alicia served as president of Peyton Manning Children's Hospital and statewide pediatric service line leader for Ascension St. Vincent in Indiana. She previously held leadership roles of increasing responsibility at Indiana University Health, culminating as president of three hospitals in the North Suburban Area. Her IU Health experience also included serving as system senior vice president for continuous process improvement and chief operating officer of Riley Hospital for Children.

Alicia began her career with HCA Healthcare, serving in progressive leadership roles across Indiana, Texas, and Florida, including chief operating officer and ethics and compliance officer.

She earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Purdue University and a master's degree in health care administration from Indiana University. Alicia is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and serves on several national and local boards. She and her husband, Patrick, live in St. Petersburg with their four children and enjoy athletics and the outdoors.

MEET THE EDUCATION MODERATOR



Commissioner Lina Rojas **Government Relations Manager** *Florida State University*

Lina Rojas was appointed to the Florida Commission on the Status of Women by Florida Senate President Ben Albritton in December 2025. Born in Colombia and raised in Miami, she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Florida State University.

Lina serves as Government Relations Manager for Florida State University, where she represents the university before state government and advances FSU's legislative, budgetary, and policy priorities. She also played a key role in developing FSU's Legislative Internship Program, now in its fifth year, which provides students with hands-on experience in the legislative and policymaking process.

Prior to joining FSU, Lina worked in the Florida Senate, including in the Senate Majority Office under then-Majority Leader Kathleen Passidomo and as a Policy Advisor to Senate President Wilton Simpson, with a focus on education policy. Earlier in her career, she spent five years in the Governor's Office, serving in several policy and budget roles, including oversight of matters related to Florida's State University System.

Lina is a graduate of Leadership Tallahassee Class 43 and remains engaged in efforts to support leadership development and mentorship. She serves as Advisory Board Chair and Executive Board Advisor for Florida State University's Kappa Kappa Gamma chapter, where she advises and mentors a collegiate chapter of nearly 300 women.

She resides in Tallahassee and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Education at Florida State University.

MEET THE PANELIST



Kelly Garcia
Executive Director
GuidEd for Families

Kelly Garcia is an educator, nonprofit founder, and leader dedicated to helping families navigate education choices. She is the co-founder and executive director of GuidEd, a Tampa-based nonprofit that provides advisory services to parents navigating school choice and the state scholarship application process.

Kelly began her career in education as a Teach For America teacher in 2009 and has a decade of classroom teaching experience in public, private, and charter schools. Her commitment to education policy and school choice has also led to leadership roles at the state level. Governor Ron DeSantis appointed her to the Florida Virtual School Board of Trustees in 2022, and she served on the Florida State Board of Education from 2023 to 2025.

Kelly is a mother of four and lives in Tampa, where she continues to advocate for families and expand access to educational opportunities for all children and families.

MEET THE PANELIST



Rhea Law

Attorney & Immediate Past President
University of South Florida

Rhea Law is a fifth-generation Floridian and former president of the University of South Florida, serving from 2021 to 2026. She is widely engaged in corporate, public policy, civic, and charitable leadership across Florida. She earned a bachelor's degree in management while working her way through college and later received her law degree from Stetson University College of Law.

A practicing attorney with over 40 years of experience, Law previously served as CEO and board chair of Fowler White Boggs and led its merger with the national firm Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, where she chaired the firm's Florida offices until 2021. Her legal practice focused on land use, strategic planning, higher education, government, and economic development, helping shape growth across the state.

Law has held senior leadership roles with numerous Florida organizations, including as chair of the Florida Council of 100 and as a two-time chair of both the Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation and the Tampa Bay Partnership during periods of significant transition and expansion. She has also served on university and nonprofit boards supporting legal education, medical simulation, and the arts.

Currently, Law serves numerous regional and statewide civic, economic development, and cultural organizations, including the boards of Tampa Electric and Peoples Gas, as well as the Florida Council of 100, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center National Board of Advisors, the Straz Center for the Performing Arts, and Embarc Collective as Vice Chair.

MEET THE PANELIST



Madeleine Thakur

President & CEO

The Children's Movement of Florida

Madeleine Thakur is president and CEO of The Children's Movement of Florida, a statewide advocacy organization focused on the policies and investments that help each child in Florida thrive in their first five years. She leads The Movement's state-level policy efforts, building strong relationships with elected officials and informing the public about early childhood issues in the legislature. She provides strategic direction for the business engagement initiative Bosses for Babies, the early literacy mentorship program ReadingPals, and the community-centered work that powers Movement advocacy.

Madeleine sits on the board of United Way Miami, the Florida Chamber Foundation, and the Florida Early Learning Consortium, whose focus is legislative advocacy. She was recognized in the Florida 500 as one of the most influential executives in the state in 2025. She was also selected as a 2024 Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow.

Before joining The Movement in September 2017, she spent nearly a decade focused on economic and social development in Latin America, working closely with senior executives in the legal, tech, consumer goods, and financial sectors.

She lives in her hometown of Miami with her husband and two young sons.

MEET THE SPEAKER



Dotti Groover-Skipper

Member

Florida Women's Hall of Fame

Founder & CEO

HeartDance Foundation, Inc.

Dotti Groover-Skipper believes in dynamic living through servant leadership! Since graduating from the University of South Florida, she has facilitated expert programming to impact positive policy change in substance abuse, addiction, and sex trade and has helped develop numerous sustainable community coalitions. Her experience as an NFL Cheerleader for the Miami Dolphins 1978-1980, helped set the foundation for her life's work. She is founder of *HeartDance Foundation*, which serves men, women and children engaged in the sex industry. Groover-Skipper is an ordained missionary who has operated at the national level to mobilize and train clergy, faith communities, businesses, school districts and organizations to engage in issues of addiction, sex trade and justice throughout her forty years serving in the anti-human trafficking arena. She serves on several national, state and local boards utilizing her expertise in anti-human trafficking. Her *TEDx Talk* that highlights her life's work can be viewed on YouTube.

Groover-Skipper is credited as a valiant catalyst for action against human trafficking in Tampa Bay, Florida and beyond and recognized by former Florida Governor Rick Scott and former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, as the *Human Trafficking Advocate of the Year 2013* for the State of Florida. She has received countless additional awards including *Woman of Distinction* from the Girl Scouts of West Central Florida, the Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation recognition as a *Community Hero*, *100 Women To Know In America*, the *Lifetime Achievement Award* and *Honorary Deputy*, from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and awarded the *Citizen of the Year* and *Small Non-Profit of the Year* from the South Tampa Chamber of Commerce, *Woman of Influence* from the Tampa Bay Chamber, the *Ethics Award* from the Sykes College of Business, University of Tampa and *Women Who Win* from TBB&W. Groover-Skipper was recently recognized by the NFL Alumni Cheerleader Association with their inaugural *Legacy Award* for her years of service off the field. In September 2025 Governor Ron DeSantis inducted her into the *Florida Women's Hall of Fame*, where her portrait forever hangs in our Florida Capitol rotunda. Dotti Groover-Skipper is married to her high school sweetheart, Roger. Together they are the proud parents of seven adult children and grandparents of three.

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KEISER UNIVERSITY

Keiser University is a private, nonprofit university serving nearly 20,000 students through campuses across Florida, online programs, and international locations. Founded in 1977, the University offers more than 100 career-focused degree programs at the associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Guided by a "Students First" philosophy, Keiser University combines quality teaching, hands-on learning, and community partnerships to prepare a diverse student body for successful careers in Florida's most in-demand careers in healthcare, business, technology, criminal justice, education, hospitality, and other high-demand fields. The University has consistently been ranked one of the best institutions in the U.S. in providing upward, social mobility to students and is a designated Hispanic-Serving Institution committed to strengthening the workforce and serving its communities.

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women would like to extend its heartfelt appreciation to Vice Chancellor Belinda Keiser, Campus President Brandon Barnhill, Angela McCarthy and the Keiser University Tampa Campus team for their support of today's event.

Their extraordinary generosity in providing this beautiful venue and sponsoring today's lunch helped to make this Summit possible. We are deeply grateful for their commitment to supporting the Commission and its mission.

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S&R Services believes that every senior deserves to understand their Medicare options clearly. Founded in 2009 by Rosie and Scott Paulsen, the agency has grown from a single Agency Partner's passion into a team of dedicated servant leaders who put your needs first, every single time. Based in Zephyrhills, they proudly serve seniors across the United States. Their Agency Partners are licensed, certified, and trained to simplify the complex — whether you are turning 65, approaching



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Doctors HealthCare Plans (DHCP) is a Florida-based, locally owned and operated Medicare Advantage Health Plan offering coverage for eligible Medicare beneficiaries. We began by serving Miami-Dade County, expanded into Broward County, and are now proud to bring our benefit plans and services to Central Florida — including Hillsborough, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Polk, and Seminole counties. Founded on a deep commitment to the communities we serve, DHCP provides an extensive network of trusted providers, pharmacies, and hospitals. As we grow, our focus remains the same: delivering high-quality, affordable, and compassionate healthcare that meets the unique needs of each beneficiary. Their mission is to develop and establish a healthcare organization that is responsive and attentive to the needs of all beneficiaries by offering high-quality and cost-effective health care services. Doctors HealthCare Plans is accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), which upholds nationally recognized standards that ensure accredited organizations provide safe, high-quality care.

Thank You!

**The Florida Commission on the Status of Women
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LEAD Summit Task Force**

Candace Falsetto, Chair

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Stephanie Goforth

Kerry Irvin

Belinda Keiser

Lina Rojas

Brittany Yonge

Thank You To Our Expo Table Participants!

Doctors HealthCare Plans

HeartDance Foundation

Hillsborough County Commission on the Status of Women

Pasco County Commission on the Status of Women

Safe Families Tampa

Thank you to the following businesses who helped to make our LEAD Summit a success!

Mission BBQ

MMMM Delicious Cupcakes

Jesse Romimora, ElectricEye Captures

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Bayfront Cabinet Studio

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women would like to extend a special thank you to Natalie Logan and Tim Osborne of the OAG Litigation Support Team for the design and production of this printed program. Thank you to Nancy Gunn with OAG Civil Rights Office for your generous time and assistance in preparation for this event.

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For more information regarding the programs and organizations
from today's LEAD Summit, please visit FCSW.net



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