

Women on Board

Women are still rare on the boards of Florida's biggest public companies.

> Making Inroads

Women comprise at least 25% of the board at:

Company Headquarters	% of Board Seats Held by Women
Claire's Stores Pompano Beach	57.1%
Ryder System Miami	36.4
Hollywood Media Boca Raton	33.3
Imperial Industries Pompano Beach	33.3
Office Depot Delray Beach	33.3
Tupperware Orlando	30.8
Chico's Fort Myers	30.0
Parlux Fragrances Fort Lauderdale	28.6
Jacuzzi Brands West Palm Beach	25.0

Source: Women On Boards: Mixed Opportunities; InterOrganization Network

Nine years ago, Miami businesswoman Ann Spector Loeff was at a crossroads. Camelot Music had just bought Specs Music, the Miami-based retail music chain that her father founded in 1948, and Loeff's 18-year reign as CEO was coming to an end. At 46, Loeff believed she was too young to retire. She thought she would like to serve on the boards of public companies, but offers were few and far between. "The phone wasn't quite ringing off the hook like it had been while I was a CEO. As a former CEO, I didn't seem to be as appealing," Loeff recalls.

When the recruiting firm she called turned her away, Loeff considered becoming a retail consultant. But later that year, through aggressive networking, she landed her first board job with the Herzfeld Caribbean Basin Fund, a management investment company pioneered by Miami closed-end fund guru Thomas Herzfeld. Today, at 55, Loeff also serves on the boards of directors of Hastings Entertainment, Birks & Mayors and Claire's Stores. She also runs a consulting firm specializing in CEO mentoring and leadership development.

The key to her success, she says, is networking. "It's disappointing we don't see more women on corporate boards, but a lot of that has to do with not having as strong of a network as men. Women need to do a better job of speaking out and asking for positions."

Loeff doesn't have a lot of female company in the boardroom. In 2006, women occupied just 106, or 8.7%, of the 1,221 board seats of Florida's top 150 public companies, according to Women Executive Leader-

Filling a Void: Cindy Kushner heads Women Executive Leadership, which serves as a matchmaker between women executives and companies looking to fill board seats.

ship, a Fort Lauderdale-based non-profit that advocates women serving on corporate boards.

A big part of the problem for women in Florida is that there aren't many board seats in the state to begin with, says WEL's treasurer, Evelyn D'An, who's also president and founder of

D'An Financial Services. "Remember that Florida is not where you will find the bulk of the Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies. You'll find them in Chicago, in the bigger cities. Because they have a greater number of board seats, they'll have a larger number (of women) on their board."

> Women Board Members by State

State	% of Board Seats Held by Women
Wisconsin	11.1%
Massachusetts	10.8
Michigan	9.9
California	8.8
Florida	8.7
Georgia	6.7

Source: Women On Boards: Mixed Opportunities; InterOrganization Network