



## Wendy Myers

CEO, Florida Health Care Plans

### 2011 Influential Women In Business

By Valerie Whitney  
Staff Writer

**D**r. Wendy Myers, president and chief executive officer of Florida Health Care Plans Inc., was introduced to medicine at an early age by her dad, a veterinarian.

"I grew up working with him but he encouraged me to pursue human medicine," Myers said during a recent interview.

With that in mind, Myers left her home in Centre Hall, Pa., after graduating from high school and headed to the Sunshine State where she graduated from medical school at the University of Florida and proceeded to complete her residency at the University of Maryland.

Myers married Luckey Dunn, who also graduated from UF's medical school and who happened to be in the U.S. Air Force.

Dunn, who was born in Daytona Beach, moved his wife and family here in 1992 from Arkansas.

Myers took a job with Florida Health Care Plans as a primary care doctor and internal medicine consultant. Eight years later, she was named president and chief medical officer for the Holly Hill-based health maintenance organization. "Our passion at Florida Health Care is really to provide excellent health care for everyone at a price they can afford," said Myers, adding that FHCP officials have worked hard to be cost effective as the same time, especially when the outcome would be the same.

During her tenure as chief medical officer at FHCP, Myers oversaw an important quality management accreditation and the implementation of a nationally-recognized electronic medical records process. She also

was on the team when FHCP's then-parent company, the non-profit Halifax Health hospital system, sold the HMO in 2008 to for-profit Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida.

"That has been a good relationship for us," Myers said of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. "It offers members a broad network of providers when they need help

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### Wendy Myers

**Job title:** president and CEO, Florida Health Care Plans Inc.  
FHCP website: www.fhcp.com

**First Job:** Playground attendant at county fair in Centre Hall, Pa., at age 16. Earned 50 cents an hour.

**Other Jobs:** formerly chief medical officer at Florida Health Care Plans; FHCP primary care physician and staff physician at Halifax Health Medical Center; internal medicine consultant for the Social Security Administration for disability determination. Currently also clinical assistant professor at Florida State University College of Medicine; still retains staff privileges at Halifax Health Medical Center.

**Community Involvement:** executive committee, Volusia County Medical Society; member, American College of Physicians and the American College of Physicians Executives. Chairs or participates in many committees including patient safety, disease management, physician leadership, electronic health record policy board, pharmacy and therapeutics.

**Educational background:** B.A., Florida State University; graduate, University of Florida, College of Medicine; completed residency and internship at University of Maryland.

**Hobbies:** reading, walking

**Family:** husband, Dr. Luckey Dunn, dean of the FSU College of Medicine campus in Daytona Beach. Three sons: Adam, an attorney; Charlie, in medical school at Wake Forest University; and Clint, a junior at FSU in the medical scholars program.



## Sam Perkovich

Owner/broker, ParkSide Realty Group

### 2011 Influential Women In Business

By Tom Knox  
Staff Writer

**S**am Perkovich's work history reads like a primer in beating the odds.

As a woman working in the male-dominated aviation industry, Perkovich has managed to blaze through obstacles.

She moved to Florida 14 years ago. In 2000, she embarked on a new career path by becoming a real estate agent.

Last year, she made the decision to open a real estate brokerage of her own in Flagler County, despite being in one of the state's worst-hit housing markets.

Perkovich, the owner/broker of Flagler Beach-based ParkSide Realty Group, has been selected by the *Business Report* as one of this year's "Influential Women in Business."

Perkovich, 58, was born and raised in Chicago, where she lived until her husband retired in 1997. She started working for Chicago-based United Airlines in 1972 at age 19. She interviewed and got a job for a clerical position — making \$475 a month.

Perkovich wanted a better job at the airline, and asked what else she could do. Her supervisor told her she'd need to wait six months before applying to be a ticket agent or reservation sales representative. When she got older, she could be a flight attendant. The boss briefly mentioned a dispatching job, which caught Perkovich's interest.

"I said, 'What about the dispatch stuff? It's fascinating, I'm really interested,'" she recalled. "He said, 'Women can't do that, that's a guy's job.'"

That comment helped ratchet up her interest. She studied for the job, which required a tough eight-hour written test, including generating a flight plan by hand, and an eight-hour oral test to obtain the airman's license necessary for the job. She spent four years preparing because of a minimum age limit of 23.

Aircraft dispatchers are not the same as the more commonly known air traffic controllers. Dispatchers are employed by the airlines and are there to be the captain's eyes and ears on the ground. They plan the route, watch for thunderstorms and tell the pilot where there's turbulence. An extensive knowledge of meteorology is required.

"If he gets any surprises, you didn't do your job," Perkovich said of pilots.

Perkovich passed the test and got her license at the Federal Aviation Administration in Chicago, where she said officials there told her she was the sixth woman in the country to get the license.

The boss who told her that only men are aircraft dispatchers soon apologized to her and acknowledged that he was wrong.

It was common to work 15 to 30 flights already in the air and 15 to 30 flights ready to take off. United was initially reluctant to hire Perkovich, she said — they didn't know if a woman would disrupt the office — but they hired her. Her male coworkers were pleasant, and she met her husband Ted, a fellow dispatcher.

"The young guys would say, 'I can't believe some of the things

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### Sam Perkovich

**Job Title:** Broker/owner, ParkSide Realty Group

**First job:** Clerk at an Ace Hardware store in Chicago, age 15.

**Other employment:** Clerk and aircraft dispatcher, United Airlines

**Community involvement:** President, Palm Coast Arts Foundation; organizer of annual Cypress Knoll Neighborhood Food Drive for local food pantries; member of Women's Council of Realtors, Flagler Home Builders Association and Flagler County Chamber of Commerce

**Family:** Husband, Ted

**Company website:** parksiderealtygroup.net