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THE NEXT GENERATION OF DOCTORS

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Deborah Duffey

President and Partner – Dermazone Solutions, Inc.

Improving peoples' lives energizes Deborah Duffey, president and partner of Dermazone Solutions, Inc. The life science company, which is built on a nanotechnology platform, develops and distributes clinical skin care products internationally; and Duffey became president when it went private in 2001.

"Every day we get amazing testimonials from parents whose kids have eczema, from burn victims, from teenagers who were embarrassed to go out because of the condition of their skin," said Deborah Duffey. "It brings tears to your eyes. Our products change peoples' lives and there's nothing better than that."

Duffey's personal commitment to effecting positive change extends to

the company's monthly Random Act of Kindness.

"Being a good corporate citizen is part of our company policy," said Duffey. "Every month we pick a nonprofit in our community. Sometimes we support them with products, sometimes it's volunteer hours, sometimes it's a financial donation."

She has broadened the company's philanthropic reach by recently signing on as an international sponsor of eWomenNetwork, which has a mission of helping women business owners. Dermazone is also participating in the creation of the Tampa Bay chapter of the ARCS Foundation, Inc., an organization that provides scholarships to students who are studying science, medicine and engineering.

Duffey says "the excitement about what we haven't discovered yet" motivates her to go to work each day, where she strives to help all employees achieve success and encourages respect and a positive attitude. Her corporate policy manual clearly reflects her own values in statements like, "Dermazone has zero tolerance for whining, negative thinking, gossip, spreading rumors, and saying, 'It's not my job.'"

As dedicated as she is to her career, Duffey is equally dedicated to making sure it doesn't encroach on the rest of her life. Despite a work schedule that includes extensive travel, she's figured out how to give "110 percent and a little bit more" to the company and to her life in Safety Harbor with husband, Michael, and daughters, Ashlynn, 8, and Alexis, 11.

"I have a hard time switching from the mom hat to the professional hat with the snap of a finger, so I try to create balance by setting boundaries," said Duffey. "And I don't cross the line! When I come into the driveway at 6:30 p.m. or 7 p.m., I power down. I ignore the phone, my PDA, and the computer. I don't allow work into the house – my children deserve that." On the flip side, her girls know that mom may not respond to a text message during the day because she's giving "110 percent" to employees, customers and colleagues.

In her non-work hours, the energetic Duffey loves to indulge her passions – playing tennis and riding the family's Buckskin, Bella. She also pitches in to clean up Philippe Park and raises money for Operation Care Package for servicemen and women.

Maintaining the status quo doesn't come naturally to Duffey. Instead, she continually sees and seizes opportunities to make a difference. With a business mind and a giving spirit, she's an expert in empowerment and progress.

-Mary Ellen Collins