

Leslie Saunders Profile



Leslie Saunders is CEO of Fly Fast, LLC and president of Leslie Saunders Insurance and Marketing (LSIMI), established in 1988. Leslie brings more than 25 years of experience in the airport industry to her leadership of Fly Fast. LSIMI has grown to become one of the top ranked women owned agencies in the country by revenue. Last year the company was named to Tampa Bay Business' "Top 50 Women-Owned Businesses".

Leslie has specialized in airport concessions, counting Anton Airfoods, Paradies Shops, Stellar Partners, Ampco Parking, and Gali Services among her clientele. Leslie works with employees in airport locations explaining complex Employee Benefits to a diverse group of employees. Her ability to explain complex policies in simple, direct terms has earned her the respect of countless airport concessionaires.

When Travelocity looked for its first supplier of Travel Insurance including Trip Cancellation and Travel Accident, Leslie Saunders' insurance agency won the bid. This enabled the firm to be among the first to offer online products, operate a call center, and administer benefits to a worldwide market.

When Leslie placed the first rental car policy in 1980, it triggered a career in providing innovative insurance products to meet the complex and varying needs of the modern corporate business traveler. Her outstanding and unique approach to risk management has been showcased in articles for such publications as *Auto Rental News*, *Travel Agent*, *Frequent Flyer*, *MBE Magazine* and *Airport Retail News*. Her marketing expertise was featured in the book *Breaking Through: Creating Opportunities for America's Women and Minority Owned Businesses*, and her business life story is featured in the recently-released *Yes, I Can Do That!*.

LSIMI is today one of the country's premier women owned insurance and marketing firms and is the only woman-owned WBE/DBE insurance agency certified in most airports and nationally by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

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LSIMI counts among its Fortune 500 clients the AvisBudget Car Rental Group. The company designs and implements employee benefit plans and creates and deploys specialized training systems for small and large businesses alike, including many women-owned firms, airports and airport concessionaires. For AvisBudget, LSIMI developed a training product that maintains a high customer service metric while providing incremental revenue, thus improving service while growing sales. LSIMI is the largest diverse supplier for this client. Training is provided at more than 100 airports throughout America.

A member of many business focused organizations and an advocate of small business, Leslie was a participant in the 1988 Women's Economic Summit hosted by the National Women's Business Council in Washington, DC and was awarded the Working Woman's Excellence Award in 2001. She has provided testimony on behalf of women owned small businesses on the costs and challenges of providing health care benefits to employees.

A long time member of the WBENC Board of Directors, Leslie serves on the Governing Group of WBENC's National Women's Enterprise Leadership Forum. She also holds memberships in the Airports Council International (ACI), Society of Human Resource Executive Managers (SHERM), the Women Presidents Organization (WPO), the Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC), the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), and the Independent Insurance Agents Association. She has served on the ACI Best Practices Committee for Airport DBE Compliance, was past President of the Tampa Independent Insurance Agents and a Charter Member of the Florida ESOP chapter.

Leslie received her BA degree from Douglass College, Rutgers University and a certificate from the Tuck/WBENC Executive Management Program.