February 7, 2017

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the CDC of Tampa, I am writing to enthusiastically endorse The Women’s Business Centre [WBC] at the Helen Gordon Davis Centre for Women in Tampa.

I believe wholeheartedly in the programs and services of the WBC, and am proud that CDC will be a collaborative partner of the ASPIRE program. We look forward to providing financial literacy and counseling workshops in order to ensure the success of programs female entrepreneurs.

It is a natural fit, then, for CDC Tampa to be part of the WBC’s exciting new program proposal for the ASPIRE Project, to equip formerly incarcerated women with the business knowledge, skills, and connections they need to start a small business of their own. We will be pleased to continue to partner with the WBC to help women reentering our communities use their creativity and courage to become productive, successful citizens contributing to the great business climate here in the Tampa Bay area.

Having worked closely with WBC Director Stacey Banks-Houston, I can attest to the impressive results her program has achieved to date, providing business counseling services to more than 2,000 women and helping dozens start new enterprises. I understand that Stacey’s deep experience includes curriculum development, instruction, and mentoring for the Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry in Ohio and the Prison Entrepreneurship Program in Texas programs, so we are confident in the bright possibilities for our part in the SBA’s ASPIRE Challenge and this proposed project.

CDC Tampa looks forward to being part of this well-conceived initiative.

Sincerely,

Ernest M. Coney, Jr.

President and CEO