

Business & Finance

A4 THE DAILY IBERIAN

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Doerle Foods CEO gets award

Schumacher says risks taken after buying company paid off big

BY MCKENZIE WOMACK
THE DAILY IBERIAN

The Louisiana Center for Women in Government and Business at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux recently honored Carolyn Doerle Schumacher as Woman Entrepreneur of the Year at the fifth National Women's Leadership Submit.

Schumacher is the managing director and chief executive officer of Doerle Food Services. She has been at the business since 1980 and CEO since 1988.

Her father, Paul Doerle Sr., started the company in 1950 in New Iberia.

Schumacher has worked as a registered nurse and counselor, has a bachelor of arts degree from Stephens College in Columbia, Mo., and a Master's of Social Work from Louisiana State University.

After working as an RN and counselor at Acadiana Mental Health Clinic for seven years, her father asked her to work for the business.

"I was ready for a break. I said I would come in for

two years. I was only planning to stay for two years, and eight years later, I was the CEO," she said.



Schumacher

acher said she "felt freer" to take more risks after buying it from her family.

"That's when I felt we re-

ally took off because I took some pretty bold risks ... I was able to take risks and fortunately those risks paid off and we've grown tremendously," she said.

The company has grown from about \$42 million in gross revenues in 2003 to an expected \$350 million in sales in 2013, Schumacher said. The company has 440 employees and locations in Shreveport, Broussard, Port Fourchon and Pasadena, Texas.

Schumacher has served on a multitude of boards and committees, including

serving as the only woman chair of the International Food Service Association during its 100-year history.

LCWGB Director Laura Badeaux said Schumacher "amazed" the board members who selected her for the honor.

"What she had done with this company just amazed us. With Carolyn, there was a continuous admiration for all she had done. We were pretty much unanimous in wanting her to receive the award,"

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AWARD: *A role model*

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Badeaux said.

She said Schumacher is someone to mimic.

"She's a role model in the way she carries herself and the way she is supportive of other women. She just was the candidate that was a role model, had increased a business

and had changed the way in which the business ran and had come out on top in a competitive industry," Badeaux said.

LCWGB was founded in 1990 to promote public service, but it has evolved to include involvement with women's education and promoting women who are leaders in business, she said.

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