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SERVING GREATER TAMPA BAY

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Loving what you do at work motivates others

BY CARLENE COBB

Attitude — it's like playing tag.

"A positive attitude at work spills over, affecting those around you," said Zina Cannon, operations manager for Big Sur Technologies Inc. in Tampa.

"The only way I know to be motivating to others is by loving what you do.

"We must stay well educated, up to the minute. We have to inform our clients, the business community, government agencies and universities, about the latest innovations that will best serve their needs."

Sam Sandusky, president and chief executive officer, said his business-to-business technology sales company has been on a growth trend since opening almost three years ago.

He, and his wife and co-owner, Lisa Sandusky, trust Cannon to oversee critical details.

He describes her as the safety net prior to order shipping.

"We're real proud of Zina," said Sandusky. "Since we hired her a year-and-a-half ago, she's really bought into the vision of our company and demonstrated her ability to manage and motivate others. It's important for us to have that level of trust in our operations manager."

Responsible for handling sensitive company financials, purchase orders, inventory, billing and payroll, Cannon's accounting capabilities are matched by her interpersonal skills.

"At Big Sur, we don't just suit up and



Zina Cannon, operations manager of Big Sur Technologies Inc., keeps the company running smoothly and efficiently from her Tampa office.

show up, Cannon said. "We've had continued growth and development, and we've had a ball doing it. No one person gets the credit. It's all about teamwork and being of service to those around you. That's how we achieve whatever needs to be done."

She is able to shift from handling customer satisfaction issues to holding an engineer to a deadline.

The emphasis on high-end customer service in this industry often mandates delicate negotiations between manufacturers and customers with a thin margin for error.

It always requires attention to details and

staying abreast of new developments in a variety of technologies.

Sometimes servicing the customer means asking a manufacturer to make an exchange and "not taking 'No' for an answer," said Cannon. "I follow the chain until I get to the person who can make it happen."

In addition to her responsibilities at Big Sur Technologies, Cannon enrolled in evening classes to earn her college degree.

She is active in her church, the United Way of Hillsborough County and supports the activities of her son, Corey Faircloth, 16, and daughter, Brittney Fink, 12.

Cannon, a single mother, moved her family to Tampa from Fayetteville, N.C.

She was working in the same industry there, saw need for a change and fell in love with the Tampa Bay area during a visit.

"I researched opportunities in Tampa and Silicon Valley," said Cannon. "When I met the owners of Big Sur Technologies, I felt they had the high level of integrity and honesty I was seeking. From our first meeting, we were on the same sheet of music."

Although relocating a family can be challenging, her children are very supportive of her career, she said.

While trying to teach them the importance of responsibility, dependability and being accountable, she also wants them to view work as fun.

"I want them to know they can wake up and look forward to going to work every day, like I do," she said. "My daughter wants my job when she grows up. I guess that's a good sign."