

# Alyce Lee Stansbury took the path less traveled



By Steve Liner  
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"I like building something from scratch," Alyce Lee Stansbury says.

Through a 20-year career in fund raising she has done that same job so much that she's ended up building her own consulting business from the ground up, and said she couldn't be happier. Still it wasn't easy or without emotional cost.

Stansbury started out like most college graduates — without a particular career path in mind. A freshly graduated communications major from Florida State University, she knew only she would like to stay in Tallahassee. Along the way Florida's chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) found her and she found them.

"MDA was such a small organization I was able to raise the money and then see directly how it was spent on service to people," she said. "I got hooked on that."

It is this insider's view of turning funds raised into better lives that has energized her career. It has taken her through four years of organizing MDA's telethon, to the Florida Prevention Association and its Just Say No and Project Graduation and Red Ribbon campaigns, to the Florida Special Olympics, the Big Bend Hospice capital campaign and, finally, Community Foundation of North Florida.

Along the way, she learned much about raising money and a great deal about dealing with and training community volunteers to stretch charitable dollars.



STEVE LINER/Democrat

Alyce Lee Stansbury, left, speaks with Ashlee Miller, a family-support worker at Brehon Maternity House.

Like all career paths, though, eventually Stansbury found herself at a fork facing the choice between continuing on the established path and taking the less traveled route.

In 2006 the Knight Foundation grant that seeded the Community Foundation ran out. While the end of the Knight funding was no surprise (and the Community

Foundation has continued to grow), Stansbury faced the shock of the loss of her father about this time.

It was a transforming moment.

"It helped me face the fear of starting my own business," she said. "Life is short. Do what you love."

Soul searching demonstrated to her that she loved the process of fund

raising and training, but most of all she loved "empowering groups to do their own fund raising."

She knew she needed to take the less traveled path.

"It's always been rewarding," she said of the business and her ability to serve a growing number of organizations in need of contributions to offer their services. "Raise money; save lives."