

Highlights of Economic and Business Growth in the Tampa Bay Region (News Briefs)

TAMPA BAY, Fla., April 5, 2005/PRNewswire/ -- Here are some news briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

DTCC Opens Southern Business Center

The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC) opened its new Southern Business Center (SBC) recently in a special ceremony to recognize the role that Florida, Hillsborough County and Tampa officials played in DTCC's decision to choose Tampa for its SBC location. DTCC is the largest U.S. clearinghouse for transactions in stocks, bonds and government-backed and mortgage-backed securities, and for the first time in 2004 cleared transactions worth \$1-quadrillion. DTCC chose Tampa from among nearly 300 other cities considered because of its knowledgeable workforce, local power and telecommunications infrastructure, affordable housing, diversity, educational resources, good medical facilities, accessible airports and reasonable cost of living. Some 400 employees, ultimately, will staff the SBC by the end of 2005. Contact: Stuart Goldstein, DTCC, 212-855-5470, sgoldstein@dtcc.com.

Honda Grand Prix Takes Historic "Right Turn" in St. Petersburg

An estimated 60,000 people took to the streets of St. Petersburg, Fla., this past weekend to witness the first non-oval event in IRL IndyCar Series' 10 year history. New St. Petersburg resident Dan Wheldon led his four Andretti Green teammates to the finish line in the IRL IndyCar Series' first-ever street race. The event showcased the Tampa Bay region and was viewed by 170 million households in 200 countries worldwide. The race was staged on a picturesque 14-turn, 1.8-mile temporary course framed by the city's waterways and incorporating part of a runway at Albert Whitted Municipal Airport. For information about the Honda Grand Prix, visit www.gpstpete.com.

UCH Research Institute to be Named After Dr. Kiran Patel

Through the generosity of Dr. Kiran C. Patel, The Research Institute long affiliated with Pepin Heart Hospital will be named Dr. Kiran C. Patel Research Institute following a \$3-million donation. The gift will take the institute to a new level by providing the latest options for drug therapies and medical devices for heart patients. According to Brigitte Shaw, CEO for Pepin Heart Hospital & Research Institute, "With Dr. Patel's help, the Research Institute will be able to promote and advance patient care through clinical and patient-focused research, in essence, putting Tampa on the research opportunities map." Contact: Phoebe Ochman, UCH, 813-615-7074, pochman@mail.uch.org.

Lakeland Project Announcements

At the Lakeland Economic Development Council's annual breakfast, attendees heard a list of business announcements for the area, which this year ranged from retail to warehousing. Included in the announcements were: Southern Wine & Spirits, a national distributor of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, which broke ground on a 653,000-square-foot distribution center that will serve the entire state and employ more than 300; Flagler Development Co. which is planning a 665-acre industrial and office park in south Lakeland; Keiser College's new campus which will be nearly double the college's existing space and is scheduled to open in February 2006; and CDG Group, a New Jersey telemarketing company, which announced plans for a 250 person call center in Lakeland. For more

information, contact Steve Scruggs, LEDC, 863-687-3788, sscruggs@lakelandchamber.com.

Port Investor Lands Wood Warehouse

Tapping the strong demand for importing Brazilian wood products to feed the booming housing construction market, Port Manatee Commerce Center recently completed 84,000 square feet of enclosed warehouse space for Port Manatee Forestry Terminals, Inc. (PMFT), a subsidiary of Gearbulk. PMFT bills itself as the “largest offload destination for South American forestry products shipped by parent company Gearbulk.” The deal allows PMFT to continue to accommodate the surging import of wood products fueled by Florida’s construction boom. The \$20 million Port Manatee Commerce Center seeks to cash in on the port’s steady growth by providing additional maritime, commercial and industrial-related staging and storage facilities through private investment. Port Manatee is currently readying two new deepwater berths and an expanded turning basin and shipping channel to accommodate escalating ship traffic. Contact: Steve Hollister, Port Manatee, 941-722-6621, shollister@portmanatee.com.

Pinellas County Education Foundation Rated the Top Education Foundation in the Country

The Pinellas County, Fla., education foundation was honored by Dewey & Associates, Inc., as the Top Education Foundation in the United States. The firm rated the forty largest school districts in the U.S. to measure the effectiveness of generating and sustaining financial resources as well as distributing resources to students. Pinellas County’s school district serves over 148,000 students through pre-kindergarten, K-12, and adult schooling programs. Contact Rich Engwall at 727-588-4816, pcs.engwallr@pinellas.k12.fl.us.

2005 Medical Device Symposium To Be Held April 26 – 27

The Florida Medical Manufacturers’ Consortium is hosting a symposium for medical device manufacturers, R&D firms, educational institutions and government officials on April 26-27 in Tampa. Conference attendees will participate in a FDA briefing, learn about product liability, discuss industry trends and attend mini-workshops specific to industry and product development. For more information, visit www.FlaMedMfg.org.

USF Research Foundation Receives Donation to Fund Florida High Tech Corridor Manufacturing Center of Excellence for Obsolescence Mitigation

The University of South Florida Research Foundation recently received a \$50,000 donation to help establish the Florida High Tech Corridor Manufacturing Center of Excellence for Obsolescence Mitigation. In the project’s early stages, a study will be conducted to help determine the size of the manufacturing market and the Corridor’s capacity to respond to contracting opportunities that might be generated by the discontinuation of obsolete military equipment. According to Tom Patton, Executive Director of the Central Florida Development Council, “This donation will indefinitely increase Central Florida’s national technology standing while helping to identify area technology companies that are able to support the manufacture of obsolete military products.” Contact: Tom Patton, Central Florida Development Council, 863-534-4370, tom@cfdc.org.

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