

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

TAMPA BAY, Fla., April 20, 2006/PRNewswire/ -- News briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

### **Illinois Company to Expand with Call Center in Sarasota**

CCB Credit Services Inc., a leading accounts receivable management firm with headquarters in Springfield, Illinois, is opening a Sarasota call center that could eventually employ 40 people. The company is seeking employees to staff the new call center, which opened April 17 at 2803 Fruitville Rd., Suite 250. (Contact: Cara Reiser, CCB Credit Services, 217-786-4800 x2244, [www.ccbcreditservices.com](http://www.ccbcreditservices.com).)

### **Tampa Bay Area is Ranked as Bargain**

The Tampa Bay area was ranked as one of the nation's least costly places to do business by KPMG's 2006 Competitive Alternatives Study. Among 23 major U.S. cities, the Bay area was ranked second-most economical, slightly behind Atlanta. The international report, which is conducted every two years, is a resource for corporate relocation. To learn more about doing business in the Tampa Bay region, visit [www.TampaBay.org](http://www.TampaBay.org). (Contact: Jennifer Taylor, Tampa Bay Partnership, 813-872-2809, [jtaylor@tampabay.org](mailto:jtaylor@tampabay.org).)

### **USF Research Park Attracts New BioTech Tenant**

The University of South Florida recently announced its newest biotech tenant for the USF Research Park -- the LifeLink Tissue Bank. The tissue bank is part of the Tampa-based nonprofit LifeLink Foundation, best known for arranging organ transplants. The 21-year-old LifeLink Tissue Bank, which is the largest not-for-profit tissue bank in the southeast and one of the largest in the U.S., creates grafts from donor bone, tendons and other connective tissues. One of the largest tissue processors in the country, LifeLink has partnerships with a number of cell-research and bioengineering companies and does its own research -- an effort that could get a boost from proximity to USF's health and engineering schools. The partnership with LifeLink allows USF researchers to study human tissue and organs they wouldn't otherwise have access to. The new facility will increase the dedicated research space at the park by about 25 percent and add about 200 employees to the 300 already there. (Contact: Rod Casto, USF, 813-974-1082, [rcasto@research.usf.edu](mailto:rcasto@research.usf.edu).)

### **Halkey-Roberts Nears Completion on Expanded Facility**

Halkey-Roberts Corporation, a manufacturer of components and valves for the medical, inflation and container industries, is nearing completion on a new 160,000-square-foot facility in Pinellas County that includes a large clean room for its medical products. A subsidiary of Atrion Corporation, Halkey-Roberts' continued growth necessitated a larger facility but its current location was not suitable for expansion. After considering a number of options from other counties and states, Atrion credited the plan put together by City of St. Petersburg and Pinellas County officials as being the deciding factor in selecting their new location and staying in St. Petersburg. The company's growth will create 79 new jobs and retain 187 positions in Pinellas County. The new facility is scheduled for completion in May 2006. (Contact: Danielle Ruiz, Pinellas County Economic Development, 727-464-7332, [www.PCED.org](http://www.PCED.org).)

### **Communities of Tampa Bay Among “Top 100 Places to Live”**

The communities of Tampa Bay are not only a great place to do business, they are also a great place to call home. RelocateAmerica.com listed the communities of Bradenton, Clearwater, Sarasota, St. Petersburg and Venice on its “America’s Top 100 Places to Live in 2006” list. Considerations include the area’s people, beauty, schools, crime rates, activities and economic health. Learn more about the communities of Tampa Bay at [www.TampaBay.org](http://www.TampaBay.org).

### **Moffitt Research: Nicotine Can Inhibit Lung Cancer Chemotherapy**

Nicotine can prevent chemotherapeutic drugs such as taxol from killing lung cancer cells, researchers at the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute report. While nicotine itself is not a carcinogen, it can influence biological pathways that help promote tumor growth. Srikumar Chellappan, Ph.D., and colleagues tested whether nicotine’s influence could affect the performance of three standard lung cancer drugs and found that in a variety of lung cancer cell lines, the addition of a small amount of nicotine, what would be present in the blood of an average smoker, inhibited these drugs’ ability to kill the cancer cells. When the authors silenced the expression of either gene, nicotine’s protective effect was eliminated. (Contact: Michelle Carlyon, Moffitt, 813-745-1505, [carlyom@moffitt.usf.edu](mailto:carlyom@moffitt.usf.edu).)

### **Tampa Bay Partnership Hosts Foreign Direct Investment Business Roundtable**

As part of the Tampa Bay Partnership's ongoing strategy to attract foreign direct investment into the Tampa Bay region, the organization hosted a Foreign Direct Investment Business Roundtable on April 3, 2006. The panel consisted of three global site selection consultants who have worked projects, which have resulted in foreign direct investment in Florida or the U.S., along with three international journalists who provided their perspectives on trends in international investments. The panel discussed trends, deal makers and breakers, the decision process and what the region needs to do to be more competitive in attracting foreign direct investment to Tampa Bay. (Contact: Chris Steinocher, Tampa Bay Partnership, 813-878-2208, [csteinocher@tampabay.org](mailto:csteinocher@tampabay.org).)

### **Regional Leadership Conference Draws National Speakers**

Two nationally known speakers will keynote at the Tampa Bay Partnership’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Leadership Conference. Under the theme “This Way Forward,” the conference will address the long-term effects of current growth and critical issues that impact the livability of the region’s future. Charles Wheelen, lecturer, columnist, and author of *Naked Economics*, will provide economic analysis about creating a regional growth and development strategy based upon his experiences with Chicago 2020, a business-backed civic group promoting healthy regional growth in the Chicago area. Bruce Tulgan, an author and leading expert on young people in the workplace, will address engaging emerging leaders into long-term planning. For information and registration, visit [www.TampaBay.org](http://www.TampaBay.org). (Contact: Elisa DeGregorio, 813-872-2810, [edegregorio@tampabay.org](mailto:edegregorio@tampabay.org).)

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