

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

TAMPA BAY, Fla., January 6, 2005/PRNewswire/ -- Here are some news briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

### **Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metro Area Ranked 8<sup>th</sup> Among Top New Business Locations Worldwide**

The Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater metro area was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among "Top New Business Locations Worldwide" to set up and operate a business according to data from a KPMG survey. ResearchWorldwide.com, a worldwide commercial real estate information portal, conducted an analysis of data using "Competitive Alternatives," a detailed Top Report by global consultancy KPMG, to determine the top new business locations worldwide by ranking the top 30 international cities by their cost of competitiveness. For more information on how your business can benefit by relocating or expanding in the Tampa Bay region, contact Jennifer Taylor, Tampa Bay Partnership, at 813-878-2208 or [jtaylor@tampabay.org](mailto:jtaylor@tampabay.org).

### **Florida High Tech Corridor Expands**

In a move designed to increase the state's ability to attract, retain and grow high tech industry and the workforce to support it, the Florida High Tech Corridor Council announced the addition of the University of Florida (UF) as a full partner in the economic development initiative founded in 1996 by the University of Central Florida (UCF) and the University of South Florida (USF). This expansion will increase the list of Corridor counties to 23. The Corridor Council has partnered across its counties with 12 local economic development organizations, 12 community colleges, public school systems and numerous high tech companies dedicated to its mission. The council, started in 1996, sponsors university and private research projects, promotes local work-force development programs and markets the region. So far, the council has helped generate more than \$128 million in research with more than 200 companies in the targeted industries. Contact: Michelle Knapp, 407-423-8006, [mknapp@thestrategicfirm.com](mailto:mknapp@thestrategicfirm.com).

### **Progress Energy/Kessler Plan Large-Scale Development in St. Petersburg**

St. Petersburg City Council unanimously approved a plan by Progress Energy (NYSE: PGN) and Kessler Enterprise, Inc. to build a major mixed-use development in downtown St. Petersburg. The \$100 million project includes 200,000 square feet of class "A" office, a 250-room Westin Grand Bohemian Hotel, between 50 to 80 residential units, a 500-space parking structure, improvements to the adjacent Williams Park, and ground-level retail. Progress Energy will relocate approximately 700 employees from locations throughout the county and create 160 new jobs. Kessler development estimated that it will employ 150 to 200 people at the Westin Grand Bohemian Hotel. Contact: Ronald Barton, City of St. Petersburg, at 727-893-7100 or [ronald.barton@stpete.org](mailto:ronald.barton@stpete.org).

### **Hernando County Increases Size of Enterprise Zone**

Hernando County Office of Business Development announced the Brooksville/Hernando County Enterprise Zone boundary amendment has been approved by the State of Florida effective January 1, 2005. The expansion will increase the size of the Enterprise Zone to 3.7 square miles, adding an additional 1,198 parcels of which 252 are business parcels. Contact: Michael McHugh, 352-540-6400 or visit [www.hernandobusiness.com](http://www.hernandobusiness.com).

### **Roskamp Institute Receives NIH Grant for Cancer Research**

The Roskamp Institute, located in Manatee County, announced that its research scientists have received a grant from the National Institutes of Health for continued research on angiogenesis, a cancer research project that resulted from the Institute's work on Alzheimer's Disease. Dr. Mike Mullan, the director and chief scientist for the Roskamp Institute, and Dr. Daniel Paris will lead this project. The original work was detailed in the July 1, 2004 edition of the medical journal *Angiogenesis*, a leading publication within the cancer research field. The Institute is also collaborating with scientists from the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa to work on the project. For more information, visit Roskamp Institute at [www.rfdn.org](http://www.rfdn.org).

### **STAR Technology Enterprise Center (STAR TEC) Welcomes Three New Tenants**

STAR TEC, the manufacturing and technology business accelerator located at the Young-Rainey Science, Technology and Research (STAR) Center in Largo, Florida, recently accepted three new high-tech tenants: Cyber Shield Network, a developer of advanced information security technologies; Ready Alert TM, a web-based emergency notification company; and Scalable Network Technologies, a leader in network simulation software. For more information about STAR TEC or its tenants, contact Tonya Clark, STAR TEC executive director at [clarkt@ctcgsc.org](mailto:clarkt@ctcgsc.org) or visit [www.STARTECflorida.com](http://www.STARTECflorida.com).

### **Curtain Rises on New Patel Arts Conservatory**

The Dr. Pallavi Patel Performing Arts Conservatory premiered its new \$30 million, 45,000-square-foot facility, providing a venue for prospective arts professionals and community residents to explore and build appreciation for the performing arts. The conservatory holds classrooms, studios and a theater for students. The conservatory is connected with the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center and together they act as a magnet for talented instructors and performers from around the world and serve as an engine of real economic and cultural development in the Tampa Bay region. Contact: Wendy Leigh, 813-222-1002 or visit [www.patelconservatory.org](http://www.patelconservatory.org).

### **Tampa Bay Technology Forum Names New Director**

Andy Hafer has been named Executive Director of the Tampa Bay Technology Forum. He will replace Michelle Bauer, who recently announced her resignation after serving as director since the group's inception in 2001. Hafer was formerly the chief information officer of PRIDE Enterprises Industries Training Corporation (ITC). He and Heather Kenyon, who has been promoted to Director of Programming and Membership, will kick off 2005 as the new TBTF executive team. For more info: [www.tbtf.org](http://www.tbtf.org).

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