

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

TAMPA BAY, Fla., July 3, 2003/PRNewswire/ -- Here are some shorts concerning the economic and high tech growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

University of South Florida Moves Forward with Biotech Park

University of South Florida announced it will break ground by the end of the year on two buildings in the Research Park that will add more than 200,000 square feet for laboratories and offices for corporate partners and house the Center for Biological Defense and an expanded 30,000-square-foot business incubator. Part of USF's Center for Entrepreneurship, the incubator offers assistance to start-up and young companies that are pioneering new technologies. It provides office space and vital business assistance, such as developing business plans and feasibility studies, conducting market research and raising capital. The center, which has housed three start-up companies in leased space since its inception in February 2002, will nearly triple in size in the new facility. The project begins to fulfill the vision of USF President Judy Genshaft, who was part of building a similar research and entrepreneurship park while at the University at Albany. With more than 39,000 students and a budget of more than \$1 billion, USF is the second largest university in the Southeast. Its largest campus is in Tampa with regional campuses in St. Petersburg, Sarasota/Manatee and Lakeland. (Contact: Michael Reich 813-974-9047, reich@admin.usf.edu)

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center Doubles Size of Research Institute

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute recently opened a new \$182 million tower project that doubles the size of its research institute along with its outpatient clinic. Moffitt's research priorities include concentrated work on cell-based therapies (tumor vaccines), a build-up of genomics and proteomics research and establishment of a program of complimentary and alternative medicine. Moffitt has spent \$1 million on equipment for its cell-therapy lab which will allow the center to produce genetically engineered cells that can be used to attack cancer cells. (Contact: Andrea Brunais, 813-632-1478, brunaiac@moffitt.usf.edu.)

Coca-Cola Opens New Minute Maid Plant in Auburndale

The Coca-Cola Company held the grand opening of its Main Street Minute Maid Juice Plant in Auburndale on June 24. At 620,000 square feet, the Simply Orange juice manufacturing facility is Coke's largest juice plant in the world. The operation is expected to expand to one million square feet by 2006, when other product lines are added to the modern facility. Coca-Cola employs 100 persons earning an annual average wage of \$42,885 at the Auburndale plant. Employment is slated to grow to 400 persons when the juice plant reaches fruition. For more information, visit www.cfdc.org. (Contact Gene Engle, President of the Central Florida Development Council, at 863-688-3009, gengle@cfdc.org.)

Tampa Bay Named “Mega Market of the Year” for Second Year

The Tampa Bay region has earned Southern Business & Development’s award for “2003 Mega Market of the Year.” This is the second consecutive year the region has won this award. The mega-market category includes markets with populations of two million or more. The annual award is based upon an accounting of the top 100 business “deals” among the south’s seventeen states. (Tampa Bay Partnership contact Betty Carlin, 813-878-2208, bcarlin@tampabay.org; Southern Business & Development contact Mike Randle, 205-733-1970, mike@sb-d.com.)

7/1/03

Betty S. Carlin, Tampa Bay Partnership, 813-878-2208, bcarlin@tampabay.org,
www.tampabay.org