

Highlights of Economic and Business Growth in the Tampa Bay Region

TAMPA BAY, Fla., June 5, 2007/PRNewswire/ -- News briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

Tampa Bay Developer Leases 600,000-Sq.-Ft. of Warehouse Space; Two Companies to Add 270 Jobs

Meridian Development Group announced it is leasing 400,000-square-foot of its massive Sarasota Distribution center to United Natural Foods Inc., the largest publicly traded wholesale distributor to the natural and organic foods industry in the country. The new project will bring a projected 250 new jobs. In May, Meridian leased 200,000-square-foot of space to Bradenton-based department store chain Beall's Inc., for a new distribution center creating 15 to 20 jobs. Meridian Development Group acquired the 950,000-square-foot former Winn-Dixie distribution center for \$30 million in \$2006. (Contact: Steven Kossoff, Meridian, 727.539.7500 skossoff@MeridianDG.com)

Moffitt Receives Record Gift for Skin Cancer Research

Philanthropist Donald A. Adam donated \$20.4 million for the development of a Comprehensive Melanoma Research Center at H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute. This center will conduct research in melanoma and translate that into cutting-edge patient treatment. This represents the largest single gift in Moffitt's history. (Contact: Michelle Foley, 813-745-1505, michelle.foley@moffitt.org)

Tampa Bay Manufacturer Combines Units, Plans to Double Staff

Tissco LLC, a Brooksville manufacturer of beverage-dispensing equipment, is merging with its sister company Micro Matic and is moving into a 50,000-square-foot facility at the county's Corporate AirPark in the second quarter of 2008. Tissco has about 50 employees but plans to increase its staff to 100 in the next two years. After the move, Tissco will change its name to Micro Matic, a privately owned Danish company founded in 1953 with more than 1,000 employees worldwide. The company plans to invest more than \$3.4 million in the project. (Contact: Torben Toftegaard, (352) 544 1081, ttoftegaard@tissco.info.)

Military Manufacturer to Expand

Conax Florida Corporation, a manufacturer of military underwater and aerospace applications, announced it is expanding its St. Petersburg location with the addition of products previously manufactured by corporate affiliate H. Koch & Sons. Conax currently employs 180 employees in its St. Petersburg location and recently had its Aerospace Acquisition and Consolidation project approved by Enterprise Florida for State's Qualified Target Industry (QTI) program. This project is expected to create additional high-wage jobs and has a capital investment estimated at \$2.5 million. Visit Conax Florida Corporation at <http://www.cobham.com>. (Contact: Stacey Swank, Pinellas County Economic Development, 727-464-7332, info@pced.org.)

WUSF Public Broadcasting Testing Conditional Access for HD Radio

Adding to its lists of firsts, WUSF Public Broadcasting announced the deployment of conditional access for HD Radio, making it the first station in the country to use the cutting-edge technology. Field testing for conditional access began on March 18 and WUSF plans to continue the testing across the Tampa Bay region through the spring. With conditional access, WUSF can address a listener's needs individually; giving access to special channels of programming like the Radio Reading Service, a program designed for use by the blind. WUSF was the first radio station in Florida and the first public radio station in the US to unveil HD radio in 2003. (Contact: Nicole Hawker, 813-228-0652, nhawker@tuckerhall.com.)

USF Health to Open Preventative Medicine Centers

USF Health said it would be the first academic medical institution to join the U.S. Prevention Network, a planned national network of health systems. As the exclusive member of the network in Tampa Bay, USF Health also will introduce "The Prevention Plan," described in a release as a benefit that would make preventive health services available to thousands of area employees through their employers. Through the centers and the prevention plan, USF Health will offer extensive preventive services including an in-depth health risk assessment, clinically appropriate diagnostics, counseling and medical intervention. Services are expected to be available in Spring 2008. (Contact: Susanna Martinez, 813-974-2776, smartin1@health.usf.edu)

St. Petersburg Designated "Green City"

The Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) designated the City of St. Petersburg a "Green City" based upon its environmental initiatives including: one of the country's largest reclaimed water systems; recycling program and successful yard waste to mulch program; preservation of environmentally sensitive land and habitat restorations; and extensive parks and bicycle trails system, water conservation and environment education community programs. (Contact: Dave Goodwin, 727-893-7100, Dave.Goodwin@stpete.org)

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