

## Highlights of Economic and Business Growth in the Tampa Bay Region

TAMPA BAY, Fla., June 12, 2008/PRNewswire/ -- News briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

### **New Cargo Service To Connect Tampa Bay With Mexico, South America**

In late July, Peruvian Amazon Line plans to add cargo service every 60 days between the Port of Tampa and Houston; Tampico, Mexico; Cartagena and Leticia, Colombia; Manaus, Brazil; and Iquitos, Peru. Headquartered in Lima, Peruvian Amazon Line has operated regular liner service between the United States, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Peru for 38 years, focusing on serving ports along the Amazon River. While the service sails every 60 days, Peruvian Amazon Line has plans to increase the service frequency to monthly. (John Thorington, 813 905 5120, [jtt@tampaport.com](mailto:jtt@tampaport.com))

### **Renewable-Energy Project Launched in Tampa Bay**

Florida Governor Charlie Crist and Jeff Lyash, president and chief executive officer of Progress Energy Florida (NYSE: PGN), unveiled plans for Sustainable Electrical Energy Delivery Systems (SEEDS), an innovative renewable energy technology that will be evaluated at two sites in St. Petersburg. The sites will serve as research hubs for unique technology that could be used as energy storage for future "Smart Grid" power systems. The SEEDS project combines photovoltaic panels and an advanced battery system to supply renewable energy during periods of peak power demand. SEEDS is a renewable energy initiative made possible through a public-private partnership with the University of South Florida, the City of St. Petersburg, Progress Energy Florida and the Florida High-Tech Corridor. For more information, visit <http://pcue.eng.usf.edu>. (Contact: Alexander Domijan, 813-974-6854, [alexnd@eng.usf.edu](mailto:alexnd@eng.usf.edu))

### **Lions Eye Institute Breaks Ground on Tampa Bay Ocular Research Center**

The Lions Eye Institute for Transplant & Research broke ground recently on a 12,000-square-foot ocular research center in Tampa. The expansion will allow the institute to provide more corneal transplants. Its transplant and research development facility procures, prepares and distributes human eye tissue for biomedical research to academic, government and industry markets. The nonprofit organization is the largest eye bank in the nation and has provided sight to more than 20,000 people through corneal transplant. (Contact: Jason Woody, 813-289-1200, [www.lionseyeinstitute.org](http://www.lionseyeinstitute.org))

### **Tampa Bay Manufacturer Breaks Ground on New HQ and Manufacturing Facility**

The LeverEdge recently broke ground on a new 94,110-square-foot corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility located in Odessa, Florida. The 10-acre site will house LeverEdge's executive offices as well as manufacturing facilities and warehouses for their water conditioning, solar domestic hot water, and solar pool heating products. LeverEdge plans a capital investment of \$8.4 million in land, building and equipment. LeverEdge currently employs 43 and expects to expand to 60 within three years, with an annual average wage of \$45,935. (Contact: Troy Millar, 727-559-0307, [www.theleveredge.com](http://www.theleveredge.com))

### **Tampa International Airport Earn 2008 IATA Eagle Award**

Tampa International was awarded the Eagle Award from the International Air Transport Association for outstanding customer satisfaction. The award is given to leading airports and air navigation service providers for outstanding performance in customer satisfaction, cost efficiency and continuous improvement. IATA noted that Tampa International lowered its cost per passenger to carriers from \$5.32 in 1995 to \$4.26 for the past two years, even while spending more than \$1-billion on construction and capital improvements. Average per-passenger cost charged by U.S. airports is between \$8 and \$8.50. (Contact: Brenda Geohagan, 813-870-8707, [bgeoghagan@tampaairport.com](mailto:bgeoghagan@tampaairport.com))

### **Software Company Expands in Tampa Bay, Adds Jobs**

Performance Software, headquartered in Phoenix, recently selected Pinellas County to expand with a new branch of operations. The expansion will add 30 new jobs over three years, each paying 200% of the average annual wage in unincorporated Pinellas County. Competing with Oregon and Iowa for the expansion, Pinellas County beat out Oregon and Iowa which were also competing for the expansion. A full life-cycle software development and verification company, Performance Software primarily serves businesses in the aerospace and defense industries – industries with a strong base in Florida. (Contact: Stacey Swank, 727-464-7332, [sswank@co.pinellas.fl.us](mailto:sswank@co.pinellas.fl.us))

### **Solamatrix, Inc. Opens Tampa Bay Headquarters and Manufacturing Facility**

Solamatrix, Inc. manufacturer of solar control window film products, recently opened its corporate headquarters and production facility in St. Petersburg, FL. After acquiring the assets of Film Technologies International in March 2008 including the 100,000-square-foot facility, manufacturing equipment and rights to all intellectual property, Solamatrix has already created over 60 new jobs and plans for continued expansion within the next two years. Solamatrix is a subsidiary of Novomatrix based in Singapore. It manufactures and globally markets a comprehensive family of solar control, safety and security window films for motor vehicles, homes and commercial property. (Contact: Angie Howard, 727-388-2107, [www.solamatrix.com](http://www.solamatrix.com))

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