

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

TAMPA BAY, Fla., March 14, 2006/PRNewswire/ -- News briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

High-tech instrument maker signs global marketing deal

Sarasota-based Ultrafast Systems LLC, which designs and manufactures nano- and femtosecond laser spectrometers, has signed a contract with Newport Corp. for exclusive global marketing and distribution of Ultrafast's products. Newport is a major player in the world photonics market, and the relationship will allow the companies to combine Newport's lasers and Ultrafast's spectrometers to meet clients' needs. Ultrafast's instruments are used to study the extremely fast dynamics of the interaction between light and matter. Commercial applications include using nanoparticles for water purification, nano-sized biological sensors, and photothermal cancer therapy. Ultrafast relocated to Sarasota from Ohio in 2005. (Contact: Alex Gusev, Ph.D., Director, 941.360.2161, www.ultrafastsystems.com)

Euro-Bake Opens New Manufacturing Facility

Euro-Bake, a commercial bakery located in St. Petersburg, Florida, recently held its grand opening of a new 55,000-square-foot manufacturing facility. The company provides a variety of breads and specialty bakery items to an array of resorts and bakeries across the United States, including Disney World. The new building features state-of-the-art technologies which will allow Euro-Bake to triple production at the location. City officials worked with the company to design a creative redevelopment plan to meet their expansion needs. Euro-Bake purchased a one-half block parcel, while the city secured the other half which was languishing due to Brownfield issues. Using federal grant funds, the city remediated the site and resold the land to the bakery. The new production facility will allow the company to double its existing 75 person workforce. (Contact, Cindy Margiotta, City of St. Petersburg, 727-893-7100, cindy.margiotta@stpete.org)

Tampa Has Nation's First IB Middle School

Williams Middle School, a Tampa international studies magnet school, has been selected to house the nation's first standalone International Baccalaureate program for middle school. Tampa Bay now boasts eight IB schools. The rigorous global education program, sanctioned by the International Baccalaureate Organization, teaches children about world societies, politics, languages, sciences and the arts and is offered in 1,722 schools in 122 countries. For more information on the unique educational assets of the communities of Tampa Bay, visit www.TampaBay.org.

Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg to Showcase the Region

Tampa Bay is revving up for the Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, the IRL IndyCar® Series only street-circuit event to be held on the streets of downtown St. Petersburg April 1-3, 2006. The race will take place on a picturesque 14-turn, 1.8-mile temporary course framed by the city's waterways and incorporating part of a runway at Albert Whitted Municipal Airport. In 2005, the race marked the first-ever IndyCar Series race run on a non-oval track. City officials are estimating 60,000 people will attend the event, which will also receive live coverage on ESPN television. (Contact: Tim Ramsberger, 727-824-7223, tramsberger@gpstpete.com.)

Local medical school wins design award

The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Bradenton has won the Best All-Precast Concrete Design in the 2005 Design Awards competition sponsored by the Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute. The \$25 million, 100,000-square-foot medical teaching school was designed and built in 14 months and includes a 200-seat auditorium, two 200-seat amphetheater-style classrooms, laboratories for anatomy, microbiology/histology and osteopathic manipulative medicine classes, plus a dining area and library with a two-story atrium. The school will be featured in the January-February issue of the PCI JOURNAL. (Contact: Lisa Cambridge 941-756-0690 x5927 www.lecom.edu/bradenton)

Moffitt Cancer Center Finds Promising Treatment for Late Stage Lung Cancer Patients

Dr. Dmitry Gabrilovich and Dr. Scott Antonia of the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute conducted a clinical trial with Introgen Therapeutics, Inc. and positive results were found for patients with advanced lung cancer. Following INGN 225 treatment (an investigational p53 based immunotherapy) and chemotherapy, 62 percent of patients demonstrated tumor responses to immunotherapy. Historically, response rates to second line chemotherapy in this disease range from only five to 25 percent. Similar patients with this type of lung cancer do not have a good prognosis and most live less than six months but patients on this study survived for almost 12 months. (Contact: Michelle Carlyon, Moffitt, 813-745-1505, carlyom@moffitt.usf.edu.)

Gov. Bush Presented with BIO Governor of the Year Award

Florida Governor Jeb Bush was presented with the "BIO Governor of the Year" Award at the Eighth Annual BioFlorida Conference in February. The Biotectechnology Industry Organization (BIO) presents the award annually to a governor who stands out in his/her efforts to improve the business and regulatory climates for biotechnology companies. Among his initiatives, Gov. Bush signed into law the Technology Development Act, which established the Emerging Technology Commission and dedicated \$30 million to create the Centers for Excellence which will research and commercialize new medicines and technology to improve healthcare. (To learn more about the growth of biotechnology and life sciences in the Tampa Bay region, contact Jennifer Taylor, Tampa Bay Partnership, 813-872-2809, jtaylor@tampabay.org.)

Tax Shelter America Receives Training Grant

Tax Shelter America, a financial services firm headquartered in Clearwater, Fla., more than doubled its staff over the past two years. "As we expanded our business to provide services for four diverse school districts in a short period of time we knew that adapting to meet our customers' needs was paramount to our long-term business strategy," explained Ron Giovino, President of Tax Shelter America. Key to Tax Shelter America's planning was training and preparing current employees for the next steps in their careers. With the assistance of Pinellas County Economic Development, the company submitted a training proposal for Florida's Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Grant and received over \$5,000 for employee training. For more information about Tax Shelter America's services, visit www.taxshelteramerica.com. (To learn about IWT grant funding, contact Pinellas County Economic Development at www.pced.org, or call 727-464-7332.)

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