

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

TAMPA BAY, Fla., September 9, 2004/PRNewswire/ -- Here are some news briefs concerning the economic and business growth in the Tampa Bay Region from the Tampa Bay Partnership:

Creative Cities Summit 2004 Draws Worldwide Audience to Tampa Bay

Leading practitioners and thinkers in the creative economy from around the world will be gathered in St. Petersburg, Fla. today, September 9, for the Creative Cities Summit 2004. The event is presented by Creative Tampa Bay which has gathered an impressive slate of speakers who will focus on putting creative economy theories into practice. Sessions include building the creative workforce; developing networks; new trends in economic development; industry focus panels – digital media, design and film; marketing the creative city; and financing the creative enterprise. Panelists include the director of cultural planning in Chicago; Charles Landry, Partner, COMEDIA, United Kingdom, and author of *The Creative City: A Tool Kit for Urban Innovators*; and Florida Secretary of State Glenda Hood. Visit www.creativecitysummit.com for more information.

Business Accelerator Opens in Pinellas County

STAR Technology Enterprise Center (STAR TEC), the Tampa Bay area's first technology and manufacturing business accelerator, recently opened in Pinellas County, Fla. Starting with 20,000 square feet of space in the Young-Rainey Science, Technology and Research Center in Largo, a former Department of Energy facility, and seed funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and Pinellas County, the new business accelerator has space for about 10 tenants. STAR TEC supports the growth of early stage manufacturing and technology-based companies, enabling them to migrate their product/service to market more rapidly and effectively. More information about STAR TEC is available on the accelerator's Web site, www.startecflorida.com or by contacting Tonya Clark, Executive Director, at 727-549-6435.

St. Petersburg Race Added to IndyCar Series Schedule

Officials from the Indy Racing League and the City of St. Petersburg announced the addition of St. Petersburg to the IRL IndyCar Series schedule for road/streetstyle events. The Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg will be held on the streets of downtown St. Petersburg on April 3, 2005. The 14-turn, 1.806-mile temporary course incorporates a runway at Albert Whitted Airport and features a stretch along the St. Petersburg waterways. The event will mark the IndyCar Series' first visit to Florida's west coast. The addition of the Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg gives the IndyCar Series a 17-race schedule for the 2005 season, its 10th year of competition. Contact John Griffin, IRL at (317) 492-6579, jgriffin@indyracing.com or Tom Savage, IRL at (317) 492-6566, tsavage@indyracing.com.

Life Sciences Forum to Explore Global Trends in Biotechnology

Local businesses, government leaders, venture capitalists and university officials will be discussing the emerging trends that are making Florida the innovation hub for life sciences at a statewide conference to be held in Tampa, September 30 – October 1, 2004. The conference will include informative seminars, planning sessions, and networking opportunities focused on improving Florida's business climate for the life sciences. For more information or to register, visit www.eflorida.com/lforum or contact Rachelle Legg at (407) 316-4500.

Tampa Bay Hosts U.S.-Panama Free Trade Negotiations

Tampa hosted the fourth round of trade negotiations between the United States and Panama which included a Trade Forum hosted by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. More than 300 members of the U.S. and Panamanian public and private sectors attended the events focused on future trade opportunities between the two regions, particularly the port and maritime services, government procurement and the services sector. Speakers highlighted geographic and business linkages that already exist between the Florida/Tampa Bay and Panama, positioning the areas for future two-way trade and investment. For more information on the Foreign Direct Investment Research or investment opportunities in the Tampa Bay region, contact Chris Steinocher at 813-878-2208 or E-mail at info@tampabay.org.

University Community Hospital Center Receives Chest Pain Center Accreditation

The Society of Chest Pain Centers has granted the designation of Accredited Chest Pain Center to University Community Hospital, making it the sixth facility in Florida and 48th in the nation to be accredited. The Chest Pain Center at University Community Hospital achieved the designation by meeting or exceeding a wide set of stringent criteria and completing on-site evaluations by a review team from the Society of Chest Pain Centers. UCH will be expanding its research and heart care treatment facilities with the opening of the Pepin Heart Hospital & Research Institute in Spring 2005. Contact: Liz Nolan at (813) 615-7537 or enolan@mail.uch.org.

USF Has Record-Breaking Year with \$290 Million in Research

The University of South Florida had its eighth consecutive record-breaking year in 2003-04 for the amount of research contracts and grants, one of the key benchmarks for research universities nationwide. USF researchers brought in \$290 million in research during the year, 14 percent more than last year and 40 percent more than the 2002-funding total. The colleges receiving the largest grants were those that support USF's emphasis on bioengineering and life sciences. Contact: Rebecca Puig at (813) 974-5465 or rpuiq@research.usf.edu.

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