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Distinguished EDC Professional Joins St. Lucie EDC



The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) is realizing a milestone in its development as it welcomes a key new member to its team who will help lead the organization's core mission and implementation of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

"We are very excited to welcome Jill Marasa onboard," says EDC President Pete Tesch. "We're at an extremely important point in time for the future development and expansion of St. Lucie County and Jill's background and expertise are the perfect fit to help us move forward. She's a professional who brings an extraordinary wealth of experience and energy to her new position. We're very

fortunate."

Marasa officially steps into her new role as Vice President of Business Retention and Expansion on November 21. It's a perfect fit, promotion, and transition for Marasa, who for the past eight years has served as the Business Development and Finance Manager for the Business Development Board of Martin County. Her background fits hand-in-glove with her new responsibilities of managing prospect development, business recruitment, existing industry retention, and marketing for the EDC.

"Joining the EDC is a very exciting new chapter for me," stated Marasa. "I can't wait to get started. I look forward to being part of a dynamic organization and making an impact on business and the quality of life in St. Lucie. Whether I'm working with a business to secure an occupational license or to retain a company that provides 400 jobs, millions of dollars of capital investments, making a real difference – large or small – is what counts."

Making a difference is something Marasa has accomplished throughout her career, from shepherding multi-million dollar capital investment projects in Martin County to personal endeavors such as volunteering locally as a devoted math mentor to struggling elementary students. Her career continues to follow a distinguished path. Since 2009 she assisted in the

expansion of local targeted businesses in Martin County, announcing 1,900 new/retained jobs and \$59 million of capital investment. Likewise she secured more than \$560,000 in training grant awards for existing businesses.

Marasa has earned numerous prestigious national, state, and local awards during her career, including the 2016 Women of Distinction Award for civic and professional service presented by Soroptimist of Stuart; the 2015 Dan Webster Young Innovator in Economic Development Scholarship Award presented by the Florida High Tech Corridor and Florida Economic Development Council; and the 2013 Diane Lupke Economic Development Scholarship, awarded by the International Economic Development Council.

She also addressed skill set needs in Martin County by helping to create the Business ACCELERATOR Program, a twelve-week course for small business and entrepreneurial development in partnership with the Indian River State College. And, she led the development of the MartinConnects Small Business Resource Guide, earning first-place for outstanding efforts in a Business Retention & Expansion program from the Florida Economic Development Council in 2013.

Moreover, a broad knowledge of Treasure Coast partnerships, collaborations, and employers' needs are tailor-made for an expeditious start with the EDC. Very quickly she will begin working on the development and execution of the EDC's strategic plan, including conducting research within targeted industries and talent development that will diversify the economy. Marasa has implemented initiatives in Martin County that analyzed talent and training needs of the region, an experience that melds perfectly with the EDC's current Treasure Coast Skills Gap Study that will be completed this spring. Marasa will be part of the team that puts the findings of the study to work, developing the talent pipeline for high-wage, high value jobs in manufacturing, healthcare, and skilled trades.

"I'm looking forward to my new role, and I'm very excited for the opportunity to implement the business retention program in St. Lucie and work with their target sectors for high-growth businesses," says Marasa. "I'm a team player, ready to work alongside Pete and support the goals of the organization every step of the way."

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The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County, Inc. is a non-profit 501(C) 6 corporation established to attract new business, support expansion and retention of existing businesses, and advance community and economic development in St. Lucie County. The goal of the EDC is to develop high-wage, high-skill jobs in our community.