FEDC Announces 2019 Florida Economic Development Week

Inaugural statewide celebration, taking place February 11-15, to highlight economic developers’ contributions to job growth, investment and workforce development

Tallahassee, Fla. – (Feb. 7, 2019) - The Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC), the statewide association of Florida’s economic, workforce, and community developers, has announced today at a press conference held in the Florida Capitol the official dates for its inaugural Florida Economic Development Week campaign. The campaign, taking place February 11-15, will highlight the significant contributions that economic development programs and professionals have on Florida communities and families.

“Economic development in all its various disciplines is vital to Florida’s competitiveness and prosperity,” said Crystal Stiles, director of economic development for Florida Power & Light and chair of the FEDC. “Our goal for Economic Development Week is to raise Floridians’ awareness of the role economic developers play in helping local businesses to grow, bringing high-wage jobs and capital investment to communities across the state, and connecting industry and higher education to make sure that our workforce has the skills today’s employers require.”

Today’s announcement included proclamation presentations from Senator Joe Gruters (R) – District 23 and Representative Fentrice Driskell (D) – District 63 recognizing Florida Economic Development Week. “I am proud to recognize our state’s economic developers for their valuable contributions and celebrate our first Florida Economic Development Week,” said Senator Joe Gruters. “The good work our economic developers and their partners do is helping more Floridians get on the path to economic prosperity each year.” Representative Driskell stated, “Sound economic development practice helped to pull our state out of the recession and propel us toward the thriving economy and low unemployment we are seeing today. The economic development ecosystem that includes our academic institutions, workforce agencies and state and local governments must continue working together to ensure that Florida can maintain its edge in an increasingly competitive global economy.”
Senator Gruters and Representative Driskell were joined by Florida Partners for Prosperity, Florida Economic Development Council, Enterprise Florida, CareerSource Florida, the Florida Chamber, Florida SBDC Network, Florida Realtors and the Florida State College System. Ava Parker, President of Palm Beach State College and Chair of the Association of Florida Colleges’ Council of Presidents, provided remarks to emphasize the importance of a strong talent pipeline to the success of business expansion and attraction.

“The partnerships Florida’s 28 colleges build with local industries help shape the talent pipeline and serve to ensure that the skills and programs taught at our institutions are the exact skills and talents needed to help our regional businesses thrive,” said Parker. “With more than 112,000 certificates and degrees awarded annually, our college system stands ready to continue providing the training necessary for in-demand, middle skill and high skill jobs across the ever-growing number of industries currently in Florida and the businesses that we want to attract to our great state.”

FEDC and its 150 member organizations, representing close to 500 practitioners, will celebrate Florida Economic Development Week with proclamations, events, seminars, and social media campaigns. Follow @FloridaEDC and look for the hashtag #FLEconDevWeek19 to keep up with the latest news and campaigns from around the state.

About the Florida Economic Development Council

The Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC) is a membership-based not-for-profit (501c6) corporation whose 500+ members engage business and government leaders in key economic development initiatives that improve local communities and elevate Florida’s global competitiveness. Since 1964, FEDC has invested in the professional development of its members, advocacy for sound economic development programs and policy, and recognition of excellence among economic, workforce and community development individuals and organizations. Learn more at www.fedconline.org.

About the Association of Florida Colleges

The Association of Florida Colleges represents all employees, presidents, and trustees associated within the Florida College System. It has become the most inclusive higher education organization serving any college system in the nation. Today, all 28 of the state’s colleges support the work of the Association through institutional dues as do nearly 7,000 regular and retired members through the sharing of their talents, time and energy.

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Who We Are

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Educate. Advocate. Connect.

FEDC aligns stakeholders around a common language and best practices in economic development. Members can customize their toolkit and influence changes in Florida’s economic development policy and programs.

FEDC advances Florida’s competitiveness by developing and promoting sound economic development programs and policy.

Join a statewide network of public and private economic development stakeholders and influence best practices, resources, and more!

FEDC Members are a Resource

FEDC members are subject matter experts in economic, workforce and community development with extensive experience in marketing the competitive assets of the communities they serve. We believe that coordinated economic development is critical to Florida’s success. The FEDC network of practitioners aligns Florida’s top leaders in industry, education & government to facilitate capital investment, job creation & a stable tax base resulting in increased prosperity for all Floridians.
FEDC 2018-19 Board of Directors

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Crystal Stiles – Chair
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Andrew Duffell – Chair Appointment to Board
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Board Appointments and Ex-Officios
Andra S. Cornelius, CEC – Ex Officio
CareerSource Florida

Jeff Hendry – Ex-Officio
EFI Stakeholders Council

Mike Myhre – Ex-Officio
Florida SBDC Network

Tim Vanderhoof – Ex-Officio
Enterprise Florida, Inc.

Mark Wilson – Ex-Officio
The Florida Chamber of Commerce

Maria Grulich – Ex-Officio
Florida Realtors

Kristi Bartlett, CEC – Chair Appointment to Board
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Ed Randolph – Chair Appointment to Board
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Helga Van Eckert – Northeast Regional Director
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Christina Morris, CEC – East Central Regional Director
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Jaksa Petrovic, MA, CEC, EDFP – Tampa Bay
Regional Director
Hillsborough County Economic Development Dept.

Sarah Pelham – South Central Regional Director
Hardee County Economic Development

Lucienne Pears – Southwest Regional Director
Babcock Ranch

Dyan Brasington, CEC – Southeast Regional Director
The Beacon Council
Sustaining Investors

Platinum

Gold

Silver
ABOUT THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM

The colleges of the Florida College System (FCS) provide responsive, affordable, accessible and superior quality learning opportunities for students. The open access mission combined with low tuition makes the colleges the preferred gateway for advanced workforce preparation or seamless transfer to Florida’s universities.

Here’s what makes our colleges exemplary:

- The Florida College System serves nearly 800,000 students annually
- More than 60% of all graduating seniors from Florida public high schools who go on to postsecondary education, enroll first in the Florida College System
- 82% of freshman and sophomore minority students in public higher education attend one of Florida’s 28 colleges
- 92% of FCS graduates are employed or continuing their education after graduation
- On average, FCS students are 25 years of age and 65% are enrolled part time
- Nearly 54% of juniors and seniors in the State University System graduate from the Florida College System
- The FCS serves local communities through the 28 colleges with 70 campuses and 170 sites, plus online options
28 colleges provide academic programs and serve nearly 800,000 students. On average students are 25 years of age; 65 percent enroll part-time and 59 percent identify as a minority race/ethnicity.

Florida’s colleges annually award more than 112,000 certificates and degrees.

ASSOCIATE & BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

FCS institutions offer degrees in high-demand careers:

- Nursing
- Business Administration
- Health Services Management
- Criminal Justice Technology
- Computer Information Technology

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

The highest enrolled programs are:

- Electrician
- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Fire Sprinkler Systems Technology
- Plumbing Technology
- Industrial Pipefitter

CERTIFICATES

More than 370 career certificate programs such as:

- Law Enforcement
- Fire Fighter I/II
- Dental Assisting

More than 1,000 college credit certificate programs such as:

- Business Specialist
- Business Operations
- Business Management
- Paramedic
- Accounting Technology Specialist
INVEST IN FLORIDA’S COLLEGES

DID YOU KNOW?
50% of juniors and seniors in the Florida university system started in a Florida College System institution.

The FCS is the primary access point for higher education in Florida.

9 out of 10 FCS graduates stay and work in Florida.

$2.90 returned to taxpayers for every $1 spent

$26.6B effect on Florida’s economy

9.4% return on investment rate for state government

83% job placement rate for FCS graduates

$43K+ average annual earnings for FCS graduates

76 programs across 27 colleges are offered at less than $10,000.

The average full-time annual tuition and fees for a workforce baccalaureate degree in the FCS was $3,647 in 2017-18.
NEW ROAD EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Gadsden County Development Council (GCDC) announces the opening of Four Star Way, a road in Midway, Florida made possible by a Rural Infrastructure Fund Grant to Gadsden County from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO).

Four Star Way connects to Brickyard Road, just west of Highway 90. The DEO grant for the road and utility infrastructure was $465,205. Four Star Way and the related utility infrastructure were done in conjunction with the construction of Four Star Freightliner’s new heavy and medium duty truck dealership. Four Star Freightliner’s $5 million sales, maintenance, and repair facility will employ 32 people and generate in excess of $5.4 million annually for Gadsden County. Also, the road and the related utility infrastructure will make an additional forty acres available for development.

Antonio Jefferson, Chairman of the Gadsden County Development Council, said, “Economic development is a marathon and not a sprint. It is about taking a long-term approach to make your community attractive to investment. It can take significant time from the first encounter with a company until a celebration such as today occurs. This project was over two and a half years in the making. I congratulate Four Star Freightliner on their beautiful facility and thank them heartily for their commitment to jobs and job training in our community. Their support of a new diesel mechanic training program at Gadsden Technical Institute is very significant to bringing well-paying jobs to Gadsden County.”
Gadsden County Chairperson, Brenda Holt, said “Two and a half years ago, the Gadsden County Development Council and I had the privilege of meeting Jerry Kocan and his team from Four Star Freightliner for a discussion about building a permanent home in Florida. After a detailed search for the right location, Four Star Freightliner settled on where we are today. DEO’s partnership with Gadsden County made a desirable location work. I would like to recognize and thank landowner, Devoe Moore, for donating the Right-of-Way for the road to the County so that we could utilize the state’s Rural Infrastructure Fund program. I commend my fellow Board of County Commissioners for their fiscal leadership in accepting responsibility for infrastructure maintenance and making the partnership with the State of Florida possible."

Wanda Range, Mayor of the City of Midway, said, “It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome Four Star Freightliner to the City of Midway, Florida. Midway is one of six municipalities in Gadsden County. Each of us is committed to bringing good jobs and job training to our communities. Four Star is an exemplary partner on both fronts. It is our sincere hope that Four Star Freightliner’s new and expanded presence will benefit Four Star Freightliner and the citizens of Midway and Gadsden County for many years to come.”

Jerry Kocan, Four Star Freightliner Dealer Principal, is grateful for the leadership in Midway and Gadsden County for helping to make this project a reality. “There were several people and entities that played essential roles in Four Star opening a permanent home in Gadsden County. I want to especially thank Gadsden County Chairperson Brenda Holt for her leadership and Gadsden County Development Council’s Executive Director Beth Kirkland for working more than two years on this project. However, none of this would have happened without the support of the people of Gadsden County. In addition to opening a new dealership in Midway, we are excited about the new diesel technician program that will start as a result of our partnership with Gadsden Technical Institute. The average diesel technician with five or more years’ experience has the potential to make $80k a year. So it’s exciting for Four Star Freightliner to be part of helping to grow and develop jobs in this great county.”

Cissy Proctor, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, said, “Four Star Freightliner’s new facility is another sign that Florida’s business-friendly policies are having significant positive impacts on our rural local economies. We are proud to partner with Gadsden County to provide opportunities that enhance economic development and provide Floridians a chance to live their American dream.”
MARK HUEY: Coding academy grant is a key win in closing tech-skills gap

By Mark Huey
Posted Jan 28, 2019 at 2:01 AM

A chronic challenge for the Sarasota County area is the gap between the skills many companies in our growing technology sectors need and the skills of the employees available. This challenge is only expected to get worse in the next five years with the creation of an estimated 2,700 new local technology jobs.

Which is why it was such a huge win when State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota was awarded a $3.6 million grant by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity to create a Center for Advanced Technology and Innovation in the old SCF library on the Bradenton campus and a regional coding academy that will include a location in downtown Sarasota. The coding academy is aimed specifically to address this skills gap.

“This is an incredibly important initiative to make the workforce competitive while offering students an alternative path with real-world application," said Anand Pallegar, CEO of atLarge, which is located in downtown Sarasota and was one of several players critical to the success of SCF’s grant application. “This will be an integral part of building a competitive workforce. We'll definitely be drawing from the coding academy.”

SCF’s plans have many exciting elements that will benefit the area, but the Economic Development Corp. of Sarasota County was particularly focused on the visioning, vetting, planning and advocacy of the coding academy as the key to filling business-skills gaps and positioning the grant for approval.

It was important to make sure that the private sector was engaged and enthusiastically supportive — and it really stepped up. Dozens of local companies participated at some level in the grant process. Civic leaders like the Gulf Coast Community Foundation and the Barancik Foundation also provided support, as did Sarasota County government. There was tremendous regional cooperation
with the Bradenton Area Economic Development Corp. and our local legislative delegation leader, Sen. Joe Gruters, provided key support.

“We are proud to partner with our region’s economic development leaders through the SCF Center for Advanced Technology and Innovation to deliver market-responsive training and education to meet the needs of our community and industry,” said Dr. Carol Probstfeld, president of State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota.

The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application was submitted several months ago and there was enormous competition for limited funding. Our community’s vision and regional cooperation, along with the tech-job creation opportunity, put us over the top.

“We need to make Sarasota more tech-focused, and we need to build a pipeline, and traditional school systems are not really set up to get these kids trained,” said Pete Petersen, CEO and managing partner of Dealers United.

In part, coding academies provide the solution by being short but very intensive training sessions.

“A lot of people like this region and want to support it by hiring here — not offshoring it,” Petersen said. “This is a great way to bring high-paying jobs to the region.”

Petersen, another important player in getting the grant, frequently travels to Silicon Valley; Austin, Texas; and New York for business, all of which have multiple coding academies in operation.

Many high-tech positions are no longer found only at tech companies. Petersen points out that most companies of any size now have developers and IT staff, increasing demand and further broadening the skills gap.

With the grant application and award announcement behind us, now the real work begins.

“It’s an awesome opportunity for our community,” said Pallegar, who has been helping determine how the coding academy should be established and run. “But we have to get it right.”
Most of these coding academies’ programs last for about 16 weeks. They jump-start intensive training, sort of like binge-watching on Netflix, and offer many types of instruction, from front-end designers for a basic user interface to more full-stack training in databases and logic.

“In one semester, a coding academy can get people from knowing nothing to being totally ready,” Petersen said.

And that is the promise that SCF, the EDC, tech community leaders and all the partners are committed to realizing.

Contact Mark Huey, president and chief executive officer of the Economic Development Corp. of Sarasota County, at mhuey@edcsarasotacounty.com. EDC is the public/private partnership leading economic diversification efforts by working with community and regional partners.
Hillsborough Community College & Regional Economic Development

Welding

Brief History
In 2010, HCC was approached by employers at Port Tampa Bay, most notably Tampa Tank, because they were experiencing a severe shortage of skilled welders. One year later, HCC launched its’ first cohort of 7 welding students.

Current Status
Fast forward eight years and HCC’s welding program is now nationally accredited, serves approximately 75 students each term, and operates classes from 8:00am until 10:00 pm Monday-Thursday. Employers attend graduation in order to interview and hire HCC graduates. Our graduates earn an average of $38,000 per year and those who take overtime opportunities can earn up to $60,000. This is for completing an 18-month training program.

Public/Private Partnerships: Approximately $3.5M
Expansion of the welding program would not have been possible without public/private partnerships including Hillsborough County, Florida Legislature, JP Morgan Chase, and Bank of America.