

Business Associations

Statewide Organizations – The Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County collaborates with numerous statewide partners to ensure that current and future businesses and employees are receiving the greatest benefit from all partners to create the best business climate in Florida.



Enterprise Florida – Our statewide economic development partner and is a public-private partnership between Florida’s business and government leaders and is the principal economic development organization statewide.



Associated Industries of Florida – AIF was created to foster an economic climate in Florida conducive to the growth, development and welfare of industry and business and the people of the state. “The good fortune of our state hinges on the prosperity of out state’s employers.”



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. CONNECT.

Florida Economic Development Council – Beth Kirkland bkirkland@fedconline.com www.fedconline.com
– The Florida Economic Development Council educates, advocates for, and connects Florida’s economic development professionals.



Florida Chamber of Commerce – Carolyn Johnson – cjohnson@flchamber.org www.flchamber.org – The Florida Chamber of Commerce is an organization devoted to the advocacy of private businesses in the state of Florida.



Film Florida – FilmFlorida.org – Film Florida is a state-wide not-for-profit entertainment production trade association that represents Florida’s film, TV & digital media production industry.

Regional Organizations



Tampa Bay Partnership – Rick Homans rhomans@tampabay.org www.tampabay.org – The Tampa Bay Partnership is a coalition of business leaders working together to address the region’s toughest economic challenges.



Sarasota/Manatee MPO – David Hutchinson dave@mympo.org www.mympo.org - The Sarasota/Manatee MPO is the regional transportation planning entity for Sarasota and Manatee Counties. MPOs are established by state and federal laws and through interlocal agreement to provide a process for local governments within the region to coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The MPO planning process is continuing, comprehensive and cooperative.



REALTOR® ASSOCIATION of Sarasota and Manatee

Sarasota/Manatee Realtors – Jeff Arakelian jeff@myrasm.com www.myrasm.com - The Realtor® Association of Sarasota and Manatee was formed on Jan. 1, 2015 with the merger of the Sarasota Association of Realtors® and the Manatee Association of Realtors®, two long-standing real estate trade associations with a century of histories in the region.

As members of an organized real estate association, Realtors® subscribe to a strict code of ethics and have access to numerous services and programs to enhance their professionalism. Educational programs and seminars help members gain new skills and professional designations. Regular meetings provide opportunities for networking and making a difference in the world of real estate.



Sarasota Area Manufacturers Association – Peter Straw pdstrawpds@comcast.net sama-fl.com -
Founded in 1971 to Improve the Manufacturing Environment in Sarasota & Manatee Counties.
Comprised of local companies we engage in industrial operations producing products for national and local distribution.



GCBX Mary Dougherty marydougherty@gcbx.org www.gcbx.org -

The **Gulf Coast Builders Exchange (GCBX)**, represents a broad cross section of the building industry, including contractors, suppliers and others from affiliated industries. GCBX's advocacy efforts on behalf of the building industry are conducted in Manatee and Charlotte Counties. Wholly owned by the membership, the Builders Exchange is a not-for-profit corporation operating as a non-profit organization under the guidance of a volunteer board of directors as representatives of the industry.



Manatee-Sarasota Building Industry Association – Jon Mast jon@ms-bia.org www.ms-bia.org - The Manatee-Sarasota Building Industry Association (MSBIA) is a membership driven networking and advocacy group focused on the needs of the building & development industry and related business in Manatee and Sarasota Counties.

No Logo?

Manasota League of Cities - The Florida League of Cities works closely with the local and regional leagues. Our members are their members and we all share the common goal of making Florida's cities the best in the nation.

County/Municipal Organizations



Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce – Kevin Cooper kcooper@sarasotachamber.com
www.sarasotachamber.com - The Greater **Sarasota Chamber** of Commerce works to cultivate Sarasota's prosperity and quality of life through our member businesses.



Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance – Heather Kasten heatherkasten@lwrba.org www.lwrba.org - The Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance's focus is to help grow the community through networking with local area business and ensuring all businesses are aware of various issues in Lakewood Ranch, whether political, social or economic. Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance's desire is to help local businesses create a voice for the area, provide a clear vision of the future and provide opportunities for them to increase their visibility.

The Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance strives to be a driving force behind the growth of the business community as well as bridging the divide between Sarasota and Manatee counties.



North Port Chamber of Commerce – Bill Gunnin wgunnin@northportareachamber.com
www.northportareachamber.com - The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization designed to meet the needs of our business community, which in turn will benefit businesses, organizations, and individuals who are committed to our mission of promoting and encouraging business prosperity through advocacy, engagement and cooperation.



Venice Area Chamber of Commerce – Kathy Lehner klehner@venicechamber.com -
www.venicechamber.com – For more than 90 years, the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce has been promoting business growth and success, while cultivating a vibrant and engaged community. Our Chamber serves as our area’s visitor center, complete with area maps, information about local attractions and events, and a knowledgeable staff. The Chamber also takes pride in advocating for the area’s business community. Our Chamber family includes more than 1,000 member businesses with 2,500 representative members, and our goal is to connect you with people who will help you grow your business and expand your network.



Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce

Longboat Key, Lido Key and St. Armands Key

Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce www.longboatkeychamber.com – The Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce was incorporated in May 1958 and has 330 members. The Chamber strives to make Longboat Key, Lido Key and St. Armands Key great places to do business while respecting the residential character of the keys. Tourism is the Chamber’s main business, and besides being the information center of the islands and providing networking opportunities for its members, the Chamber seeks ways to support the community.



Englewood Chamber of Commerce www.Englewoodchamber.com - "Dedicated to Leading Economic Growth with a Balanced Voice between Local Businesses, Residents and Tourism that Creates Opportunities for our Community."

Government – The Sarasota County EDC works cooperatively with the county government as well as each municipality to ensure that economic development is vibrant in every corner of Sarasota County.



Sarasota County – Rob Lewis rlewis@scgov.net www.scgov.net



City of North Port – Ruth Buchanan rbuchanan@cityofnorthport.com



City of Sarasota Tom Barwin Thomas.Barwin@sarasotagov.com www.sarasotagov.com



Town of Longboat Key – Tom Harmer tharmer@longboatkey.org www.longboatkey.org



City of Venice Ed Lavallee elavallee@venicegov.com www.venicegov.com

Workforce Organizations – We work with all workforce organizations to ensure that our community is preparing today's leaders for vibrant jobs for years to come.



Career Source Suncoast Ted Ehrlichman tehrlichman@careersourcesc.com -CareerSource Suncoast is a private, non-profit corporation with a Board of Directors consisting of private business, economic development and education representatives, community and state agencies, and elected officials. Members of the Board represent the diversity of businesses, organizations and trades that operate in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. Our primary focus is to help businesses grow by providing workforce solutions for talent recruitment and development and helping job seekers and workers manage their careers. We offer programs and partnerships recognized locally and statewide. Our staff members are certified workforce professionals often recognized by their peers as leaders in workforce development.



Career Edge Funders Collaborative Mireya Eavey Mireya@careeredgefunders.org - CareerEdge was designed to work on both sides of the labor market – the supply side and the demand side – as well as among intermediary organizations, such as higher education institutions, in order to fuel the pipeline of skilled labor needed by the region’s employers.

Two of the most tangible goals are to help low-skill/low-wage workers advance into higher-skill/higher-wage careers, while providing employers with the workers they need to accelerate growth.

Education – The EDC works with all education partners to prepare tomorrow’s leaders for the future they deserve in the paradise we call home.



Sarasota School Board Todd Bowden todd.bowden@sarasotacountyschools.net - The School District of Sarasota County places learning at the center of its activities to enable all learners to lead productive, responsible, and healthful lives.

The School District of Sarasota County prepares students to achieve the highest learning standards by engaging a high-quality staff, involved parents, and a supportive community.



USF Sarasota/Manatee Casey Welch caseywelch@sar.usf.edu - At USF Sarasota-Manatee, we believe a personalized approach to learning makes all the difference. When you join our community, you're more than just another student. Our focus is on you every step of the way: your discoveries, your growth, your dreams.



State College of Florida Brian Thomas thomasb1@scf.edu - State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, guided by measurable standards of institutional excellence, provides engaging and accessible learning environments that result in student success and community prosperity.



New College Dr. Donal O'Shea doshea@ncf.edu - *New College offers a liberal arts education of the highest quality in the context of a small, residential public honors college with a distinctive academic program which develops the student's intellectual and personal potential as fully as possible; encourages the discovery of new knowledge and values while providing opportunities to acquire established knowledge and values; and fosters the individual's effective relationship with society.*



Ringling College of Art and Design Larry Thompson lthompson@ringling.edu - Since 1931, creatives from every corner of the world come to Ringling College of Art and Design to deepen, transform, and explore their passions. Our 1,400 students are fueled by a need to create—and we

deliver the tools to turn passion into profession: an [award-winning faculty](#), cutting-edge technology, and a supportive, creative community.

We offer the BFA in ten disciplines and the BA in two. Beyond our [rigorous curriculum](#)—pairing studio and liberal arts—we excel in propelling students outside of the classroom through [client projects](#), [substantive internships](#), and [national competitions](#), stopping at nothing to shape our students into tomorrow's leaders of art and design.



C4 Consortium Dr. Laurey Stryker lstryker@comcast.net - The Cross College Alliance is comprised of five institutions dedicated to higher education and community building along the West Coast of Florida. We are colleges, universities and campuses with our own, distinct identities and offerings that share a common vision: to build a network among the region's educational organizations that amplifies and expands learning opportunities for our students and the communities that surround us.



Sarasota County Technical Institute Ron Dipillo Ronald.dipillo@sarasotacountyschools.net - The Suncoast Technical College provides quality technical education to meet workforce development and community needs.

We believe each individual has varied abilities and talent, and it is Suncoast Technical College's goal to help each reach his/her highest potential. It is the responsibility of the staff to assist in the identification

of these abilities and talents, to offer learning experiences to help guide the student toward gainful entry level employment and personal satisfaction, to develop the student's employability skills and work ethic, to enhance existing employment skills, and to establish learning situations in which the student can experience success in all phases of the learning process.

Other Key Partners



UF Innovation Station Al Carlson acarlson@eng.ufl.edu - The UF Innovation Station Sarasota County is the first physical extension of the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering in Florida providing access to unique and high-value UF resources. The UF Innovation Station Sarasota County focuses on establishing and growing partnerships with the private, academic, and public sectors in the region with the focus set clearly on growing the region's innovation economy.

The UF Innovation Station Sarasota County is establishing opportunities for students from K-12 and through college careers and ultimately infusion as industry and entrepreneurial innovation leaders in the region's creative class. Working with public-private and academic sector partners, the Innovation Station is implementing programs to provide life-changing opportunities for students at critical points in their career advancement and resources for companies to start and grow.



SRQ Airport Fred Piccolo Fredrick.piccolo@srq-airport.com - The Sarasota Manatee Airport Authority was created as a public agency by the State of Florida to operate and manage the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport. The Airport Authority is tasked with the power to acquire, construct, improve,

finance, operate, and maintain the airport facilities for the primary purpose of meeting the air transportation needs of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The commitment of the Sarasota Manatee Airport Authority is driven by its sense of responsibility to the people they serve.



Nathan Benderson Park Joe Barbetta? - The Suncoast Aquatic Nature Center Associates, Inc. (SANCA), is a not-for-profit 501c3 business created to manage Nathan Benderson Park, a community/public asset and world class, multi-use sports venue. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for our community and be an economic generator for our region.

SANCA's primary purpose is to develop and promote Nathan Benderson Park as a world class event center, team training site and Sarasota County Park, while providing outreach programs through recreation, safety training, education and volunteering as a service to our community.



Mote Marine Dr. Michael Crosby mcrosby@mote.org - [More than 200 staff members](#) — including more than 30 Ph.D. scientists — call the Lab home. From our Sarasota base of operations, we conduct research on six of the world's seven continents. Our education programs engage students in science and learning locally, nationally and internationally. We are continuously helping to create a more ocean literate society.

Mote Marine Laboratory will be a leader in nationally and internationally respected research programs that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, healthy habitats and

natural resources. Mote Marine Laboratory's research programs will positively impact diverse public policy challenges through strong connections to public outreach and education.



Roskamp Institute Dr. Fiona Crawford fcrawford@srgbio.com - The Roskamp Institute, a **501(c)(3)** nonprofit organization located in Sarasota, Florida, is devoted to understanding causes and finding cures for neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders and addictions. The Institute utilizes a broad range of highly advanced scientific approaches to understand the causes of, and potential therapies for, these disorders. From this work novel treatments developed by The Roskamp Institute are in clinical trials in Europe and the U.S.