

# SMALL BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM SARASOTA COUNTY



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## THE SMALL BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

This booklet is intended to guide companies through the landscape of business assistance that exists in Sarasota County. There are a myriad of local organizations whose core missions are to help local businesses grow through the provision of workforce assistance, consulting services, regulatory assistance, industry expertise, networking, various grants, and incentives.

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Networking, community integration, training

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## MISSION

To provide a forum and build community amongst the stakeholders of Sarasota's Downtown Districts.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Downtown Sarasota Alliance is an alliance of downtown residents, merchants, businesses and owners of business properties all working together for a vibrant and thriving Downtown Sarasota community.

DSAsarasota.com is the site to visit frequently for downtown updates on parking, download the map, weekly events, the popular Friday Night Walks, shopping, dining, art galleries, and services in our downtown districts, and our best in Florida Farmers Market! It is the DSA's mission to make Sarasota the best city in America to live, work, visit and play! We encourage everyone to inspired, get active and get downtown to enjoy our wonderful city.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Merchant Support
  - Banner Program
  - Friday Night Walks
  - City Guide
  - Special Events
  - Speaker Events
- .....

## CONTACT

Administrative Manager

2705 Main Street, #6  
Sarasota FL 34237

Email: [dsa@dsasarasota.com](mailto:dsa@dsasarasota.com)  
Phone: 941.366.7040

[www.dsasarasota.com](http://www.dsasarasota.com)



## MISSION

Dedicated to Leading Economic Growth with a Balanced Voice between Local Businesses, Residents and Tourism that Creates Opportunities for our Community.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

The Englewood Florida Chamber of Commerce is the community's go-to resource for visitors, residents, and businesses! Englewood is unique in that its only local governance is split between Charlotte and Sarasota counties.

The Chamber works to bridge this divide, bringing together the resources of the state, counties, local businesses, and non-profit organizations to make Englewood a great place to live, work, and play.

The Chamber is a leading advocate for the business community with the objective is to advance the development of business and economic growth through professional and community services for the enhancement of Englewood and surrounding areas.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Business Advocacy
  - Economic Development
  - Environmental Education
  - Leadership Englewood
  - Networking Events
  - Marketing & Promotion
- .....

## CONTACT

Doug Izzo,  
Executive Director

601 S. Indiana Avenue  
Englewood, FL 34223

Email: [doug.izzo@englewoodchamber.com](mailto:doug.izzo@englewoodchamber.com)  
Phone: 941.474.5511

[www.englewoodchamber.com](http://www.englewoodchamber.com)



## MISSION

To be the premier organization for entrepreneurial Chief Executive Officers in the Gulf Coast area of Southwest Florida.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Forum's foundation is built upon its ability to build relationships, generate ideas, and formulate solutions. All three components are focused on the management and growth of the members' businesses. The CEO Forum is comprised of CEO's from entities with a minimum of 10 employees and annual revenues exceeding \$1.5 million.

With a focus on business leadership, the Gulf Coast CEO Forum. The need for second-stage companies to exchange information is critical to the learning curve of the CEO in charge.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

**The Gulf Coast CEO Forum provides a comprehensive yearly event schedule devoted to cultivating Relationships, Ideas and Solutions.**

- **Monthly Breakfast Meetings** feature a dynamic speaker and presentation with actionable takeaways on leadership, management, trending national topics and business performance.

### NOT YOUR AVERAGE NETWORKING

- **Social Events** are part of our regular programming, designed to keep you connected to your fellow members in a fun atmosphere with no solicitation.

### LEADERSHIP SECRET WEAPON

- **Roundtables** provide a confidential environment for members of non-competing industries to ask advice, tackle hard topics and glean ideas to keep their companies competitive. After all, it shouldn't be lonely at the top.
- .....

## CONTACT

Kimberly Manooshian,  
Executive Director

PO Box 592, Bradenton, Florida 34206

Email: [kimberly@gulfcoastceoforum.com](mailto:kimberly@gulfcoastceoforum.com)

Phone: 941.374.7779

[www.gulfcoastceoforum.com](http://www.gulfcoastceoforum.com)



## MISSION

To Connect, Educate, and Strengthen the business community in the Lakewood Ranch Region.

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## DESCRIPTION

Since 2005, the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance has served the Lakewood Ranch business community as the go-to membership organization for companies to network and gain professional and personal growth. Our tagline, "The Power of Connection," comes across in everything we do. From connecting you and your business to potential clients, to connecting you with the tools and resources you need to grow your business.

Today, we work with over 700 member businesses and 2,500 business professionals across a diverse range of industries, across Manatee and Sarasota Counties, and beyond.

A driving force behind economic advancement in the region, the LWRBA strengthens the business community in Lakewood Ranch by promoting business growth and advocating on behalf of member businesses. With over 100 events and programs each year, the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance provides opportunity to connect with other member professionals to help you grow your business. Additionally, the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance's educational programs equip professionals with the knowledge and tools needed to take their careers and businesses to the next level.

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

- Community Engagement - Alliance Gives Back!
  - Young Leaders Alliance
  - Executive Academy
  - East Meets West Expo
  - LWR Block Party
  - Events – CEO Rounds, Alliance LEADS, Lunch Speaker series, Monthly Social and The Sandies
- .....

## CONTACT

Dominic A. DiMaio,  
President/CEO

8430 Enterprise Circle, Suite 140  
Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202

Email: [domdimaio@lwrba.org](mailto:domdimaio@lwrba.org)  
Phone: 941.757.1664

[www.lwrba.org](http://www.lwrba.org)

## MISSION

To promote an environment that enhances business opportunities for members and maintains Longboat Key as a premier island community.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

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.

The Longboat Key Chamber advances the general welfare and prosperity of the LBK area so that its citizens and all areas of the business community shall prosper. Emphasis is given to the economic, civic, commercial environmental, cultural and educational interests of the area.

The Longboat Key Chamber's Official Visitors Guide and Business Directory is the most comprehensive source for all your vacation and business needs. It includes a complete Chamber member list of area restaurants, shopping, local businesses and accommodations for visitors.

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

- Networking
  - Education
  - Business Assistance
  - Advocacy
  - Marketing
  - Destination Advertising
  - Tourism
  - Special Events
- .....

## CONTACT

Gail Loefgren,  
President/CEO

5390 Gulf of Mexico Drive, #102  
Longboat Key, FL 34228

Email: [gloetgren@lbkchamber.com](mailto:gloetgren@lbkchamber.com)  
Phone: 941.383.2466

[www.longboatkeychamber.com](http://www.longboatkeychamber.com)



## MISSION

The mission of the Manasota Black Chamber of Commerce is to economically empower and sustain African-American communities through the entrepreneurship and capitalistic activity within the Greater Tampa Bay Area and via interaction with the Black Diaspora.

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## DESCRIPTION

The purpose of MBCC is to teach capitalism and expand access to capital, technical support, procurement opportunities, effective networking, and sharing of information for Black-owned and minority businesses. The main vehicle of disseminating information concerning this purpose is through the Black Chambers located throughout the United States and the entire Black Diaspora and via mass marketing.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Secure partnerships with committed corporations and ensure compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act at federal, state and local governments and with prime contractors.
  - Opening the doors to capital access by giving first-hand information on county contracts.
- .....

## CONTACT

Tarnisha Cliatt,  
President/CEO

PO Box 981  
Oneco, FL 34264

Email: [cliattt@manasotabcc.org](mailto:cliattt@manasotabcc.org)  
Phone: 941.702.2136

[www.manasotabcc.org](http://www.manasotabcc.org)





## MISSION

The MSBIA is an advocate for the housing industry, providing government affairs support so that its members can produce the American Dream of home ownership.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Manatee-Sarasota Building Industry Association (MSBIA) was chartered in August of 1962 by NAHB. We are a professional trade organization comprised of local builders and associated businesses involved in the homebuilding industry. The association is affiliated with both the (FHBA) Florida Home Builders Association and the (NAHB) National Association of Home Builders. The Manatee-Sarasota Building Industry Association region includes Manatee, Sarasota, and Hardee counties.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Members can get involved by serving on a committee or council, including Government Affairs, Developers Council, Custom Builder & Remodelers Council, Professional Women in Building, Sales and Marketing, Young Professionals, Membership & Retention.
  - Events include our award winning Parade of Homes, Sarasota Slam fishing tournament and Sales & Marketing Excellence awards.
- .....

## CONTACT

Jon Mast,  
Chief Executive Officer

1651 Professional Parkway W, Suite 102  
Sarasota, FL 34240

Email: [jon@ms-bia.org](mailto:jon@ms-bia.org)  
Phone: 941.907.4133

[www.ms-bia.org](http://www.ms-bia.org)  
[paradeofhomesinfo.com](http://paradeofhomesinfo.com)  
[www.sarasotaslamm.com](http://www.sarasotaslamm.com)



## MISSION

The mission of the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote and encourage business prosperity and to enhance economic development through advocacy, engagement and cooperation.

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## DESCRIPTION

The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the general welfare and prosperity of the North Port area so that its citizens and all areas of its business community shall prosper.

The 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 and to enhance economic development through advocacy, engagement and cooperation.

The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce believes in “Business and Community Growing Together”; a vibrant and successful business and happy community. To this end, the Chamber hosts several community events throughout the year, including the Annual Golf Tournament, Annual Business to Business Expo, Annual Business and Community Expo, and ribbon cuttings to welcome new businesses to North Port.

The Chamber also partners with the City of North Port as well as other non-profit organizations to support their own missions and special events.

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

- Breakfast Club Networking
  - Business After Hours
  - Networking @ Noon
  - Ribbon Cuttings
  - Lunch & Learn Workshops
  - Business & Community Expo
  - Business to Business Expo
  - Job & Career Fair
  - Leadership North Port
  - Entrepreneurial Academy
- .....

## CONTACT

William (Bill) Gunnin,  
Executive Director

1337 N. Sumter Boulevard  
North Port, FL. 34286

Email: [info@northportareachamber.com](mailto:info@northportareachamber.com)  
Phone: 941.564.3040

[www.northportareachamber.com](http://www.northportareachamber.com)



## MISSION

Create an environment where manufacturing can thrive.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1971, SAMA is raising the standard of living, and improving quality of life in Sarasota and Manatee counties through the advancement of manufacturing. Members include Manufacturers, Partner Members who provide services to help our manufacturers be more successful, and local education and workforce organizations.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

**SAMA – the number one resource for manufacturers in Sarasota and Manatee Counties for 50 years, helping members through:**

### ADVOCACY

- Representing manufacturers on the state and local legislative issues that impact our businesses and bottom lines, including:
- Building a collective understanding of manufacturing and its importance in the community.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Working closely with colleges and universities to create training programs that will prepare graduates for careers in manufacturing
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Manufacturing Pipeline (Florida Advanced Technological Education (FLATE))

## NETWORKING

- Discussing “Best Practices” with other manufacturers.
- Offering educational events with expert-driven content.
- Organizing plant tours of local manufacturers.

## BUSINESS ADVISING

- Partnering with FloridaMakes to offer free business assessments and evaluations for SAMA members.
- Providing discounted rates on FloridaMakes third-party services.
- Creating customized training tools.

## SUPPLY CHAIN OPTIMIZATION

- Connex Florida - helping Florida manufacturers better connect with each other, be discovered, and increase business opportunities.

## CYBERSECURITY EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

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## CONTACT

Rob Harris,  
Executive Director

PO Box 22228  
Sarasota, FL 34276

Email: [execdir@sama-fl.com](mailto:execdir@sama-fl.com)

[www.sama-fl.com](http://www.sama-fl.com)



## MISSION

The Siesta Key Chamber of Commerce is an association of businesses organized to encourage a strong local economy through marketing, member services, and tourism.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Siesta Key Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based, 501(c)(6) organization. Consequently, we are led by a 15-member board of directors. Each board member serves a three-year term of service to the Chamber. Furthermore, the Chamber has a four-person, full-time staff handling day to day operations. The Chamber operates the Siesta Key Visitor Center which is staffed by more than 50 volunteers. We serve the businesses and community of Siesta Key, FL.

## CHAMBER MEMBER BENEFITS

- Access to Information
  - Siesta Key Visitors Guide
  - Chamber Website
  - Siesta Key Visitor Center
  - Networking Events
  - Seeds to Leads
  - Membership Decal
  - Legislative Monitoring
  - News & Info
  - Member to Member Discounts
  - Member Event Marketing
- .....

## CONTACT

Ann Frescura,  
Executive Director

5114 Ocean Boulevard  
Sarasota, FL 34242

Email: [ann@siestakeychamber.com](mailto:ann@siestakeychamber.com)  
Phone: 941.349.3800

[www.siestakeychamber.com](http://www.siestakeychamber.com)



## MISSION

The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce works to cultivate Sarasota's prosperity and quality of life through our member businesses.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce's dynamic group of 1,200 member companies and organizations recognize the value of working together to accomplish what no single member could hope to achieve individually. Using our members' collective vision, resources and energy, we work to maintain a healthy environment in which our community can grow and prosper.

The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce (GSCC) is a major force in our community's economic prosperity and outstanding lifestyle. An award-winning not-for-profit membership organization, The Chamber provides the leadership to achieve a diverse balanced economy that enhances the quality of living and working in greater Sarasota.

The GSCC strives to keep programs current and responsive to the demands of Sarasota's modern business climate. In our continuously evolving marketplace, The Chamber is a bridge that links businesses, organizations and residents together with innovative programs that strengthen Sarasota's long-term economic vitality, business success, job creation and quality of life. By being a partner to our businesses we work to connect, promote, and support our members with opportunities to grow.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- YPG - Young Professionals Group
  - Leadership Sarasota
  - Engage Sarasota
  - Youth Leadership
  - CareerEdge Funders Collaborative
- .....

## CONTACT

Heather Kasten,  
President/CEO

1945 Fruitville Road  
Sarasota, FL 34236

Email: [hkasten@sarasotachamber.com](mailto:hkasten@sarasotachamber.com)  
Phone: 941.556.4050

[www.sarasotachamber.com](http://www.sarasotachamber.com)



## MISSION

- We are committed to the development of small business relationships and we are working to establish a network of small business providers to create a mechanism for the significant transfer of owners and aspiring entrepreneurs, ensuring continuity of services.
  - Create programs and events to develop the individual, expand workforce talent, advocate for innovative community initiatives, and inspire meaningful academic and business partnerships.
  - Ensuring the visibility of the organization to the public in multiple formats.
- .....

## DESCRIPTION

The Latin Chamber of Commerce was incorporated to help the Hispanic companies to thrive in the general market of the SWFL region. As it developed over time, its diverse culture allowed the connection between Hispanic and mainstream businesses to thrive and prosper together.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- We are conducting more than 12 virtual programs where we are providing education, promotion and prevention for business owners focusing on health, biosecurity and development. In addition, we are conducting face-to-face events.
  - We have created an alliance with Intraespa Learning Center to develop the specialized technical program Sin Límites which is focused on entrepreneurs who do not speak English.
- .....

## CONTACT

Rebeca Forero,  
President

9040 Town Center Parkway  
Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202

Email: [president@thelatinchamber.com](mailto:president@thelatinchamber.com)  
Phone: 941.730.2733

[www.thelatinchamber.org](http://www.thelatinchamber.org)



## MISSION

Promoting business growth and success since 1925.  
The Venice Area Chamber of Commerce believes in creating a dynamic environment for a thriving, vibrant and prosperous business community for the greater Venice Area.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Venice Area Chamber of Commerce is a 1,000+ member business organization reaching over 35,000 employees. Also with our partnership with Visit Sarasota County, we are now an Official Visitor Center.

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

- Biz Tips
  - Business of the Year
  - Business Showcase
  - CEO Roundtable
  - Focus Forward Forum
  - Focus on Venice
  - Leadership Venice
  - PowerBites
  - Venice Area Young Professionals
  - Women Empowering Women
- .....

## CONTACT

Kathy Lehner,  
President & CEO

597 Tamiami Trail S  
Venice, FL 34285

Email: [klehner@venicechamber.com](mailto:klehner@venicechamber.com)  
Phone: 941.488.2236

**[www.venicechamber.com](http://www.venicechamber.com)**



## MISSION

We make Sarasota County a better place by promoting our community on the World stage. Vision: Creating a vibrant Sarasota County through tourism.

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## DESCRIPTION

Visit Sarasota County leads and supports the tourism industry in Sarasota County by providing the highest quality, and most innovative, marketing programs and promotions to ensure the continued growth of tourism and travel from visitors around the world. To learn more, visit [www.visitsarasota.com](http://www.visitsarasota.com). Visit Sarasota County is accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program, a program of the Destination Management Association International (DMAI). VSC meets the highest standards of professionalism, leadership, fiscal management, and ethical principles.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### SARASOTA VISITORS INFORMATION CENTERS

- VSC operates three official Sarasota Visitors Information Centers and a Visitor Information Vehicle.

### BRAND

- VSC has one of the most powerful and effective tourism media programs in the State – managing [VisitSarasota.com](http://VisitSarasota.com); placing media strategically; or assisting more than 250 travel writers annually from various media outlets, including print and online. Annually, the VSC is responsible for generating hundreds of millions of media impressions.

## VISITORS GUIDE

- VSC produces the only “Official Sarasota County Visitors Guide”, distributed to 100,000 potential visitors annually.

## PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

- Visit Sarasota County hosts exclusive networking opportunities for the tourism industry through Hospitality Connections and education.

## SALES

- Our Sales team is our “boots on the ground” department that connects those who can book group business to our industry, such as hotels, that can host. From meetings, incentive trips and leisure group business such as weddings or reunions – our Sales team actively recruits a variety of groups to ensure our hotel rooms stay full week days; weekends and year round.

## SARASOTA COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION

- The Sarasota County Sport Commission (SCSC) is a division of VISIT SARASOTA COUNTY. The primary focus of the SCSC is to generate new visitors through sports events, often referred to as “sports tourism.”
- .....

## CONTACT

Erin Duggan, CDME, Vice President

301 N. Cattleman Road, Ste. 203  
Sarasota, FL 34232

Email: [EDuggan@VisitSarasota.com](mailto:EDuggan@VisitSarasota.com)

Phone: 941.955.0991 ext. 108

[www.visitsarasota.com](http://www.visitsarasota.com)





## MISSION

To promote financial literacy.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Foundation for Financial Education is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing free educational resources to the public. We are partnering with the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota to provide free classes throughout our community. The first chapter began in Washington D.C. and has spread throughout the country as we expand on the importance of Financial Wellness.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

The Foundation for Financial Education is available to assist companies of all sizes and scopes. All our services are free of charge. We teach one hour classes over various financial and economic topics to employees. This is not only beneficial to the employee, but to the employer as we, as it helps with employee retention in this competitive market. Classes offered include:

- Social Security for Beginners
  - Advanced Social Security
  - Retirement Planning
  - Financial Fitness
  - Taxes and the IRS
  - Planned Giving
  - Medicare
  - Long-term Planning
  - 10 Steps to Financial Freedom
  - Estate Planning
  - Financial Pitfalls
  - Improving Your Credit
  - Introduction to Real Estate
- .....

## CONTACT

Hal Hammond,  
Director

1800 2nd Street, Suite 918  
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Email: [hhammond@f3eonline.org](mailto:hhammond@f3eonline.org)  
Phone: 941.366.6600

[www.f3eonline.org](http://www.f3eonline.org)



## MISSION

To provide guidance, strategies and resources for Sarasota County businesses to operate in an environmentally responsible manner.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Green Business Partnership is open to all businesses in Sarasota County. Certified Green Business Partners are recognized as environmental leaders in our community. Green Business Partners pledge to demonstrate their environmental stewardship by reducing waste and conserving natural resources, and by operating an environmentally responsible business. More than 250 businesses have earned certification.

Program certification includes an on-site verification of reduction, reuse and conservation practices in:

- Business Operations
  - Solid Waste Management
  - Recycling
  - Energy and Water Consumption
- .

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

**Green business partners receive the following benefits by participating in the program.**

- Official Logo Usage and Certificate
  - Green Business Website Business Listing
  - Free Waste and Energy Assessments
  - Media Exposure
  - Cost Savings
  - Technical Assistance
  - Increased Productivity
  - Community Recognition
  - Networking Opportunities
- .....

## CONTACT

Green Business Partnership Program  
Sarasota County UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability  
6700 Clark Road  
Twin Lakes Park  
Sarasota, FL 34241

Email: [greenbusiness@scgov.net](mailto:greenbusiness@scgov.net)

Phone: 941-861-5000

**[www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)**

Keyword: Green Business



## MISSION

Fund and mentor primarily early-stage startups in the Sarasota-Manatee region and throughout Florida.

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## DESCRIPTION

Bridge Angel Investors is a group of private, qualified investors who reside in the Sarasota-Manatee area funding startups from across Florida. The reason is simple: Florida is one of the most attractive states for both investors and startups. It is the mecca for wealthy retirees with successful careers as executives and investors who want to make a social impact by investing and mentoring young startups.

The data supports this. According to a Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council Florida is the fifth best state to start a business. Other reports cite the growing rise of angel funds, incubators, top universities, low cost of living and, of course, the weather. And the data just keeps getting better. Inc.com reported that 340 of its 2018 Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing private companies are located in Florida.

The outlook is also promising for young entrepreneurs, especially in the Sarasota-Manatee region. According to MoneyRates.com, they topped the list in 2017 as the best city in Florida to start their own business ventures. In June, 2019, Sarasota was recognized as the #2 Best Small City to Start a Small Business in a study conducted by Verizon.

For these reasons, Bridge Angel Investors has become an important part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, playing its part to co-create wealth for its members and for the economy as a whole.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

Bridge's members are typically retired Fortune 500 senior executives and successful entrepreneurs. They can be new to investing or long-time investors. For this reason, Bridge provides educational seminars for its members on a wide variety of topics related to angel investing, an asset class of its own. Topics include best methods for screening, conducting due diligence, defining term sheets and quantifying the risks versus Return on Investment. For startups requesting to pitch to Bridge, mentoring and feedback are also offered to help startups be successful, if not in the short term then in the longer term. In order to fulfill that purpose, Bridge will provide feedback to the startups during the pre-funding screening and due diligence phases and mentoring post-funding. Even for startups not chosen to move forward to the next phase of due diligence, specific reasons are given and they are encouraged to return once they have worked on their respective issues. For startups that are funded, Bridge members will hold a Board seat or take on a role on the company's Advisory Board to continue to guide them on a path to success.

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## CONTACT

Wendi Chapman,  
Executive Director

Sarasota, Florida 34239

Email: [wendilchapman@gmail.com](mailto:wendilchapman@gmail.com)

Phone: 202.270.5607

[www.bridgeangelinvestors.com](http://www.bridgeangelinvestors.com)



**FLORIDA DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**  
CORPORATION

## MISSION

- The FDFC is designated as a state-wide, special development financing authority for economic development purposes. Our purpose is to assist new and existing businesses and organizations (for-profit and not-for-profit) with access to capital through financing that promotes business activity, job creation, and an improved standard of living for the citizens of Florida.

## DESCRIPTION

The FDFC supports economic development by assisting for-profit and not-for-profit businesses with access to capital for project financing. The primary mechanism for accessing the capital markets is tax-exempt and taxable bonds. Bonds issued to make loans to entities other than state or local governments are known as “conduit bonds”. The two main roles of the FDFC are i) fulfill federal notice and public hearing requirements to issue tax-exempt bonds (TEFRA) and ii) create securities that are sold by the Borrower’s financing team to banks or investors (bondholder). These securities are called private activity bonds (PAB’s).

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### BOND FINANCING

- The FDFC is a special development financing authority. We offer tax-exempt, low interest bond financing to qualifying projects or borrowers. These can include small manufacturers and 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.

- FDFC has been given authority in Chapter 288, Part X of the Florida Statutes to act as a state-wide conduit issuer for bond financing. Borrowers do not have direct access to the capital markets for bond financing, therefore, FDFC serves as a borrower for the borrower. This means that the responsibility for the repayment of debt falls solely on the borrower.
- The IRS Code outlines certain borrowers or projects that qualify for tax-exempt financing. These non-governmental bonds are known as Private Activity Bonds (“PAB”) or 501 C 3 Bonds. The Division of Bond Finance is given the responsibility for receiving Florida’s annual allotment from the federal government and for managing the process for PAB allocation.
- Property Assessed Clean Energy or “PACE” - A financing option that allows residential and commercial property owners to make improvements to their property pertaining to energy conservation, energy efficiency and wind-hardening and make the payment on their tax bill. PACE allows a property owner to utilize the equity or value built-up over time from their original ownership date to serve as the main basis for the extension of credit.

## CONTACT

Bill Spivey, Executive Director

156 Tuskawilla Road #2340  
Winter Springs, FL 32708

Email: [bspivey@fdfcbonds.com](mailto:bspivey@fdfcbonds.com)

Phone: 407.712.6355

[www.fdfcbonds.com](http://www.fdfcbonds.com)

## MISSION

As a federally regulated Certified Development Company (CDC), its primary mission is economic development and job creation throughout Florida and currently parts of South Alabama and Georgia.

## DESCRIPTION

Founded by the State of Florida in 1983 and licensed since 1984 by the Small Business Administration (SBA) as Florida's Original Statewide Certified Development Company. Florida First Capital Finance Corporation (FFCFC) was voluntarily privatized in 1997 and today operates as a fully self-supporting nonprofit organization.

Florida First Capital is chartered for the primary purpose of advancing the economic development and general welfare of the citizens of Florida by promoting and assisting the growth and development of small business concerns within the state. Florida First Capital has helped thousands of clients achieve their small business dreams through the SBA 504 Loan Program.

Florida First Capital strives to make the entire loan process as helpful, quick and easy as us. You can count on our staff to deliver the best and most complete service the industry has to offer.

Whether you are expanding, remodeling, converting, refinancing or just starting out, with Florida First Capital as your trusted SBA 504 lender, you'll spend less time worrying about your loan and more time doing what you do best – running your small business, creating jobs and supporting the economy.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Florida First Capital carries out its work through the administration of various government and private small business capital access programs. Most significant of these is the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan Program.
- Under the 504 Loan Program, Florida First Capital partners with banks, credit unions and other private-sector lenders to provide the state's small businesses with access to fixed-rate and long-term financing for the purchase of owner-occupied commercial real estate and/or heavy duty machinery and equipment, all at low down payments and below-market interest rates.

## CONTACT

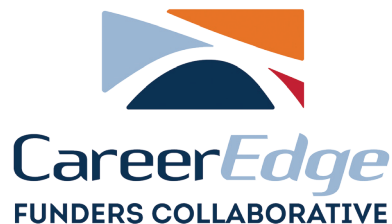
William A. Wilson, CCIM, CFP®,  
Business Development Officer

Serving the communities of Bradenton to Naples

Email: [william@ffcfcc.com](mailto:william@ffcfcc.com)

Phone: 239.691.4249

[www.ffcfcc.com](http://www.ffcfcc.com)



## MISSION

CareerEdge Funders Collaborative's mission is to provide an exceptional labor force to the region's growing industries by leveraging community assets and forming high-performing workforce partnerships.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

CareerEdge Funders Collaborative, a workforce initiative of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, strives to understand employer needs, designing a strategy to address needs while fueling economic growth for employers, workers and educators. Target industries include: healthcare, manufacturing, construction trades, TDL and insurance.

CareerEdge was designed to work on both sides of the labor market – the demand side and the supply 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 skilled workers they need to accelerate growth.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

**CareerEdge Funders Collaborative uses a formal process to develop its partnership strategy by:**

- Drawing on labor market information and other economic insight.
  - Engaging key stakeholders in the region.
  - Identifying the industry sector that has employment and advancement for workers in our region.
  - Generating system change by having a well-articulated strategy for generating change in public policy, institutional behavior and job quality.
  - Employer led industry partnerships based on market demand.
  - Serving under employed and middle skilled individuals by creating upward mobility opportunities.
- .....

## CONTACT

Mireya C. Eavey,  
Executive Vice President,  
CareerEdge & Education Initiatives

The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce  
1945 Fruitville Rd.  
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Email: [careeredgeinfo@sarasotachamber.org](mailto:careeredgeinfo@sarasotachamber.org)  
Phone: 941.556.4038

[www.careeredgefunders.org](http://www.careeredgefunders.org)



## MISSION

To recruit, train, and retain talent for employers on the Suncoast.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

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.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

CareerSource Suncoast offers a variety of no-fee and for-fee services to assist employers in recruiting, training, and retaining the workforce they need for the 21st Century.

### RECRUITING

- Job Postings at [www.employflorida.com](http://www.employflorida.com)
- Job Seeker Referrals
- Labor Market Information
- Onsite Hiring Events
- Drug and Background Testing
- Discounted Job Advertisements
- Job Fairs

### TRAINING

- Connections to all local colleges and schools
- On-the-Job Training Grants to fill future openings
- Employed Worker Training Grants, reimbursing costs for existing employees to get new credentials or certificates
- Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor
- HR and Benefits Services
- Workforce Training Resources
- State of Jobs Conference
- Skills Assessments

### RETENTION

- Incumbent Worker Training Grants
- Organizational Engagement Survey
- State of Talent Conference

### THRIVE

A Suncoast based business accelerator. It supports the regional entrepreneurial community with flexible and affordable workspace, tech-centric tools, and skill development resources.

## CONTACT

Karima Hability,  
Business and Economic Development Director

3660 North Washington Boulevard, Sarasota, Florida 34234

Email: [khability@careersourcesc.com](mailto:khability@careersourcesc.com)

Phone: 941.315.9991

[www.careersourcesuncoast.com](http://www.careersourcesuncoast.com)



## MISSION

Creating a talent pipeline of skilled developers and I.T. professionals through quality training, mentoring, and networking opportunities.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

The **SCF Coding Academy** is a premiere training center, promoting technical talent development in Manatee, Sarasota, and surrounding areas to create economic opportunity in our communities.

We offer immersive courses, certificate programs, and seminars on in-demand technical skills. Through career preparation, social events, mentoring and networking sessions, we connect individuals with businesses and organizations seeking talent.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY TRAINING

We teach I.T. and programming skills needed for today's jobs, while also preparing and mentoring participants for jobs of the future. Bootcamps and workshops include:

- Software Development
- Web and Mobile App Development
- Data Science and Analytics
- Information Technology, and more!

## INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

We offer short-term, flexible technology certification courses, selected based on industry demand. Each course prepares participants to earn certificates that open doors to high-earning careers. By passing certain certification exams, students can also earn college credit.

## CORPORATE TRAINING

Our instructors design and deliver customized training to supplement employees' technical and professional skills. We ensure quality outcomes by using pre-assessment and post-assessment tools to measure our impact.

## CONTACT

.....

Desh Bagley  
Director, SCF Coding Academy

Email: [BagleyD@SCF.edu](mailto:BagleyD@SCF.edu)  
Phone: 941.752.5208

[www.coding.scf.edu](http://www.coding.scf.edu)





## MISSION

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.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

**Workforce Solutions** serves area business, industry and government by helping increase productivity and competitive advantage with staff development provided through quality training at an affordable price in areas such as leadership/management skills, software proficiency, manufacturing certifications, customer service, online courses and more. Flexibility is afforded through the availability of daytime, evening or Saturday scheduling either at your company site or at one of SCF's four locations in Bradenton, Venice, Lakewood Ranch or downtown Sarasota.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

Workforce Solutions partners with local and state agencies to obtain grant funding, which may cover some or all of the cost of training depending on the program. Such training includes:

### RECRUITING

- Effective communication, conflict management, personality assessments, managing change, difficult conversations, emotional intelligence, problem solving/decision making, customer service, sexual harassment, sales, time management, facilitating successful meetings, teambuilding, diversity, coaching, motivating employees, generations at work, etc.

## TECHNOLOGY

- Excel, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Access, Absolute Beginner, MS Project, InDesign, QuickBooks, netiquette, powerful presentations, social media, etc.

## MANUFACTURING

- Automated systems troubleshooting, MSSC CPT, MSSC CLT, CPIM, Kaizen boards, LEAN, OSHA 30, PLC basics, Six Sigma, etc.

## LANGUAGE

- Business writing, grammar review, workplace English, workplace Spanish, public speaking, etc.

## OTHER

- Keynote speakers, organizational development, staff retreats, employee coaching, financials for the non-financial manager, parliamentary procedures, active shooter, etc.
- .....

## CONTACT

Lee Kotwicki,  
Director, Workforce Solutions

7131 Professional Parkway East  
Sarasota, FL 34240

Email: [kotwicl@scf.edu](mailto:kotwicl@scf.edu)

Phone: 941.363.7218

[www.scf.edu](http://www.scf.edu)



## MISSION

Keiser University is a regionally accredited private career university that provides educational programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels for a diverse student body in traditional, nontraditional and online delivery formats. The main campus is located in Fort Lauderdale, with campuses located throughout the State of Florida and internationally. Through quality teaching, learning, and research, the university is committed to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary for successful employment. Inherent in the Mission is service to the community. This service includes community partnerships, involvement with various constituencies and various continuing education programs.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

Keiser University's goal is to develop career prepared individuals by providing an educational program that produce employable, skilled, educated, and responsible future citizens. Consequently, Keiser University students are prepared to provide professional, technical and marketable skills necessary to meet the projected needs of their communities. Inherent in the goals established for Keiser University is the belief that learning takes place through multiple delivery methods and in various settings. For this reason, Keiser University curricula are flexible, individualized, experiential, and instructional, and are structured in a sequential and cumulative fashion.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

Regionally accredited by SACS Commission on Colleges as a level VI University, offering Associates, Bachelors, Master's, and Doctoral degrees, Keiser University offers degrees in the following disciplines:

- Business Administration
- Technology
- Law Enforcement Operations
- Paralegal and Legal Studies
- HealthCare

## CONTACT

.....

Michele I. Morgan, DBA,  
Campus President/Associate Vice Chancellor

6151 Lake Osprey Drive  
Sarasota, FL 34240

Email: [mmorgan@keiseruniversity.edu](mailto:mmorgan@keiseruniversity.edu)  
Phone: 941.907.3900

[www.keiseruniversity.edu](http://www.keiseruniversity.edu)

## MISSION

As Florida's residential public honors college, New College of Florida prepares intellectually curious students for lives of great achievement.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

With a focus on transferable soft skill development in addition to cutting edge technical skills, New College students are fearless learners who embrace new challenges, critically analyze problems to develop innovative solutions, and persist to achieve goals. The Princeton Review named New College one of its 50 Colleges that Create Futures. The New College of Florida's Center for Career Engagement and Opportunity provides employers customized just-in-time recruitment consultation and services to source talented students needed to meet workforce needs including part-time, internship, and full-time roles.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Undergraduate programs:

- **Natural Sciences** including Computer Science, Applied Mathematics, Statistics, Marine Biology, Environmental Studies, Biology, Physics, and Chemistry.
- **Social Sciences** including Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, History, and Anthropology.

- **Humanities** including Chinese, Russian, French, German, Spanish, Art, Art History, English, Music, Philosophy, Classics, International Studies, and Religion.

Graduate program:

- **Data Science**

## RECRUITMENT SERVICES

Through the Center for Career Engagement and Opportunity, New College offers a variety of free or low-fee services to assist employers with connecting with students:

- Personalized Recruitment Consultation including developing job descriptions, recruiting strategies, interfacing with faculty and academic programs, communicating an employment brand, and developing an internship program.
  - Job Postings and Applicant Tracking at [joinhandshake.com](https://joinhandshake.com)
  - Career Fairs and Networking Events
  - Information Tabling and Presentations
  - Campus Interviewing
- .....

## CONTACT

Dwayne Peterson,  
Director, New College of Florida Center for Career  
Engagement and Opportunity

5800 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota, FL 34243

Email: [ceo@ncf.edu](mailto:ceo@ncf.edu)

Phone: 941.487.5002

[www.ncf.edu/ceo](http://www.ncf.edu/ceo)

## MISSION

The Center for Career Services provides students and alumni with current and cutting edge advice, services, resources, and access to employers, internships, work abroad, and techniques for professionally preparing and engaging in their career world. As experienced career advisors and program developers, we help our students thrive.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

If you're looking for the best in emerging creative talent, you've come to the right place. Through 13 challenging majors and industry professions, we sharpen students' skills and help them grow into their potential.

Creativity is the most sought after skill in the world, and at Ringling College we develop students who can think and lead critically and creatively and come up with the most innovative design solutions available. In addition, our students bring with them the most advanced technical skills in their major and faculty with the most professional facilities, equipment, and technology in the world.

Through a number of experiential learning programs, our students are guaranteed the opportunity for professional work experience, bridging the gap between student work and client work before they graduate.

But don't just take our word for it. See for yourself—visit our campus, meet our students, or see what other recruiters and employers are saying about our extraordinary students and graduates.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Employer and position recruitment insights: content for position descriptions, recruiting strategies, faculty and academic departments activities, website job listings, and establishing and expanding your internship program
  - Job Postings & Applicant Tracking through College Central Network
  - Multi-college Career Fairs and Networking Events
  - On-campus speakers' program and trainings for candidates' preparation
  - Participation in established on-campus recruiting program
  - Alumni mentoring program and talent identification
  - Referrals to college Collaboratory for interdisciplinary team work on projects through experiential learning engagements
  - Information presentations
  - Campus Interviewing
  - Company visits
  - Accessing international and diversity candidates
- .....

## CONTACT

A.Charles Kovacs,  
Director, Center for Career Services

2700 North Tamiami Trail  
Sarasota, FL 34234

Email: [ckovacs@ringling.edu](mailto:ckovacs@ringling.edu)  
Phone: 941.359.7502

[www.ringling.edu](http://www.ringling.edu)



## MISSION

Suncoast Technical College provides quality technical education to meet workforce development and community needs.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

Suncoast Technical College is a multi-faceted postsecondary institution offering courses to adults and high school students in our community. We offer day and evening classes in over 40 technical programs that focus on competencies and outcomes driven by local workforce needs. STC students also have an opportunity to enroll in academic programs that include Adult Basic Education, Adult High School, Adult and Community Enrichment, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and GED® Preparation.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### CAREER CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

STC "Career in a Year" Programs offer professional training and industry certifications in high skill, wage, and in-demand careers.

- Career Counselors
- Financial Aid Counselors
- Certification Testing Center
- Job Placement Services

## COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

STC partners with a variety of organizations and businesses to offer unique programs to fulfill community workforce needs.

- Two Generation Program
- Apprenticeships
- Internships
- Career Express Programs

## MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

- Sarasota Campus
  - North Port Branch
  - Newtown Branch
  - Alta Vista Branch
- .....

## CONTACT

Dr. Ron DiPillo,  
Executive Director

4748 Beneva Road  
Sarasota, FL 34233

Email: [ronald.dipillo@sarasotacountyschools.net](mailto:ronald.dipillo@sarasotacountyschools.net)  
Phone: 941.924.1365

[www.suncoast.edu](http://www.suncoast.edu)

## MISSION

The Innovation Station mission connects region's industry to the UF College of Engineering with the goal of economic development through expertise, research, technology, talent and workforce development.

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## DESCRIPTION

The UF Innovation Station Sarasota County is an extension of the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering. Its primary goal is to extend engineering resources into the community to provide economic impact and workforce development to Florida companies, communities and citizens. UF Development services to Florida industry facilitate product and project development and technology commercialization.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **Talent and Technology Pipeline:** Key success drivers in the 21st-century economy include access to a robust engineering research engine, a talent pipeline to faculty experts, and opportunities to recruit interns and employees into the region who contribute to engineering leadership and innovation

- **Industry Engagement:** Access to faculty and facilities of a world-class research university gives startups-to-large high-tech companies the ability to attract funding, expand process and product development, prototype new ideas and expedite technology commercialization.
- **Workforce Development:** With the expansion of high-tech, high wage jobs, Florida is becoming a nexus for international technological leadership. Through distance learning and workforce development, citizens can advance their careers and contribute to the growth of the state's innovation economy.
- **K-12 Initiatives:** Exposure and participation in targeted engineering outreach programs encourages bright young minds to become the technology leaders of tomorrow and serve as role models for future generations.

.....

## CONTACT

Allen Carlson,  
Innovation Station Regional Director

1468 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota, FL 34236

Email: [acarlson@eng.ufl.edu](mailto:acarlson@eng.ufl.edu)

[www.eng.ufl.edu/sarasota](http://www.eng.ufl.edu/sarasota)

## MISSION

The University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee campus provides high quality bachelor's and graduate-level education and scholarly activity in a personalized learning community that prepares successful leaders and responsible citizens.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

The University of South Florida Sarasota Manatee campus is part of a Preeminent Research University which is dedicated to empowering students to maximize their potential for lifelong success. Led by outstanding faculty and professional staff, the University of South Florida conducts innovative scholarship, creative activity and basic and translational research, and delivers a world-class educational experience promoting the success of our talented and diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. As a public metropolitan research university, USF, in partnership with our communities, serves the people of Florida, the nation, and the world by fostering intellectual inquiry and outcomes that positively shape the future - regionally, nationally and globally.

## SERVICES/BENEFITS

- **Innovate with USF:** USF is a major public research university that serves as a catalyst for innovation, generating new solutions to complex problems, and improving lives. There are many ways for your business to benefit from USF's research, innovation and knowledge enterprise.
- **Recruit at USF:** The Office of Career Services offers recruitment services designed to serve industries, organizations and agencies from all employment sectors. Whether you need to fill a part-time

job, an internship, or a full-time professional position, the Office's can help you find the talent you need.

- **Learn at USF:** USF is committed to meeting the Tampa Bay Region's continuing education and corporate training needs. From degree completion programs to test preparation, graduate certificates, and industry certifications, we offer online and in-person educational options.

If your company needs customized training or is interested in learning which of our educational offerings may meet your specific knowledge and training goals, contact Innovative Education to explore how a partnership with USF could benefit your team and your business.

- **Improve Communities:**  
The Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships (OCEP) serves as a bridge between Florida communities and the expertise and resources of the University of South Florida. We carry out this goal by creating mutually beneficial partnerships for service-learning, community sustainability and high impact research and scholarly activities.
- .....

## CONTACT

Jay Riley,  
Director of Business Outreach and Community Engagement  
8350 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL, 34243

Email: [jayriley@sar.usf.edu](mailto:jayriley@sar.usf.edu)

Phone: 941.359.4694

[www.usfsm.edu/engage](http://www.usfsm.edu/engage)



## MISSION

The SCF Technology Incubator & Accelerator is a place for start-ups and entrepreneurs to learn and grow in collaboration with financial, legal, marketing and other business mentors to convert disruptive ideas into viable business models.

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## DESCRIPTION

SCF's Business Incubator, a community where entrepreneurs can learn and grow. Join an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Meet other founders and collaborate with successful mentors. Get the tools you need. Ready to create or grow an innovative and disruptive startup?

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **Veterans Business Incubator**  
We know that your service meant sacrifice. SCF created the Veterans Business Incubator (VBI) to help recognize that professional and personal sacrifice. We provide the resources, expertise, and mentors you'll need to launch and grow your business.
  - **Business Growth Lab**  
The startup journey is hard. The Growth Lab can be your guide. Share your pitch deck, business model or let us know where you're stuck. We'll provide feedback on where you might need to reposition or see if we can connect you with the right contact.
  - **Growth and Venture Incubator**
- .....

## CONTACT

Matthew Harper,  
Director Incubator / Accelerator

SCF Bradenton Bldg. 8  
5840 26th St W.  
Bradenton, FL 34207

Email: [harperm@scf.edu](mailto:harperm@scf.edu)  
Phone: 941.752.5449

[www.innovate.scf.edu](http://www.innovate.scf.edu)



## MISSION

To grow, diversify, and sustain the economy of Sarasota County while enhancing our unique, natural and cultural environment.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County is a public-private partnership focused on growing existing businesses and strategically diversifying the economy of Sarasota County. It assists new and existing businesses by providing confidential project management, rapid permitting, building/site review, market research, workforce assistance, incentives/financing, and export assistance.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

The Economic Development Corporation is available to assist companies of all sizes and scope. All EDC services are free of charge. The EDC's Business Development Services include:

### EXPANSION ASSISTANCE

- Building and Site Review
- Market Research
- Confidential Project Management

### WORKFORCE ASSISTANCE

- Labor Market Research
- Customized Training
- Training Grants

## EXPORTING ASSISTANCE

- Export Training
- Trade Missions
- Strategy Advising

## FINANCING AND INCENTIVES

- State of Florida Incentives
- Sarasota County Incentives
- Small Business Innovation Research
- SBA Business Loans
- Traditional Commercial Financing

## SARASOTA COUNTY INCENTIVES PROGRAMS

- Ad Valorem Tax Exemption
  - Mobility Fee Mitigation
  - Economic Development Incentive Fund
  - Rapid Permitting Program (SMART)
- .....

## CONTACT

Destin Wells,  
Vice President, Business Development

1680 Fruitville Road, Suite 402  
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Email: [dwells@edcsarasotacounty.com](mailto:dwells@edcsarasotacounty.com)  
Phone: 941.309.1200, ext. 101

[www.edcsarasotacounty.com](http://www.edcsarasotacounty.com)

## MISSION

To expand and diversify the state's economy through job creation.

.....

## DESCRIPTION

Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) is a public-private partnership between Florida's business and government leaders and is the principal economic development organization for Florida. In pursuit of its mission, EFI works closely with a statewide network of economic development partners and is funded both by the State of Florida and by private-sector businesses.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **Capital Investment Tax Credit** is an annual credit, provided for up to twenty years, against the corporate income tax. The amount of the annual credit is based on the eligible capital costs associated with a qualifying project. Eligible capital costs include all expenses incurred in the acquisition, construction, installation, and equipping of a project from the beginning of construction to the commencement of operations.
- **Research and Development Tax Credit** is available to a business enterprise that has qualified research expenses in Florida in the taxable year exceeding the base amount and, for the same taxable year, claims and is allowed a research credit for such qualified research expenses. The credit is equal to 10 percent of the excess qualified research expenses in Florida that exceeds the average Florida qualified research expenses allowed to the previous four tax years (base amount).

- **Sales and Use Tax Exemption on Machinery and Equipment Used for Research and Development** is available on machinery and equipment used predominantly for research and development are exempt from sales and use tax. Eligibility "Machinery and equipment" includes, but is not limited to, molds, dies, machine tooling, other appurtenances or accessories to machinery and equipment, testing and measuring equipment, test beds, computers, and software, whether purchased or self-fabricated, and, if self-fabricated, includes materials and labor for design, fabrication, and assembly.

.....

## CONTACT

Tim Vanderhoof,  
Senior Vice President, Business Development

800 North Magnolia Avenue Suite 1100  
Orlando, FL 32803

Email: [tvanderhoof@enterpriseflorida.com](mailto:tvanderhoof@enterpriseflorida.com)

Phone: 407.956.5679

[www.enterpriseflorida.com](http://www.enterpriseflorida.com)



## MISSION

The Florida High Tech Corridor Council is an economic development initiative of the University of Central Florida (UCF), the University of South Florida (USF) and the University of Florida (UF) with a mission to grow high tech industry and innovation – and the workforce to support it – in a 23-county region.

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## DESCRIPTION

Co-chaired by the presidents of UCF, USF and UF, The Corridor Council facilitates collaboration in the areas of research, marketing, workforce development, STEM education and entrepreneurship between more than 25 local and regional economic development organizations, 14 state colleges, 12 CareerSource boards and representatives of high tech industry from the Gulf Coast to the Space Coast.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **The Corridor Council's Signature Matching Grants Research Program** (MGRP) facilitates applied research between high tech companies in the 23-county region and researchers from UCF, USF and UF. By matching investments in research and development, The Corridor Council enables companies to maximize their budgets and tap into the expertise of faculty and student researchers from three of the nation's largest research institutions. Students often become employees of the companies they work with in the program and industry partners routinely form lasting research relationships with the universities.

- **stemCONNECT** inspires middle school and high school students to pursue STEM education by connecting them with professionals in the field. With online video conferencing tools, subject-matter experts from across the region offer presentations and tours of their workplaces to teach students how their classroom lessons could lead to high tech career opportunities in Florida. The program reached more than 13,000 students in 2019 alone.
- **Talent Forum** is an annual event hosted by The Corridor Council and CareerSource Central Florida to support workforce development by building the region's talent pool. It maximizes time and investment in campus recruiting by convening career center professionals from 50 nationally recognized institutions in one place to meet with hiring managers from regional high tech companies. Employers learn about recruiting strategies, while discussing their talent needs and promoting job opportunities in The Corridor.
- **The Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center** (FLVEC.com) is an online resource directory for entrepreneurs, featuring a master calendar of events and a sortable database of over 900 business resource agencies across the state. FLVEC also fosters community, bringing together entrepreneurs from across the state on a monthly call to ask questions, share best practices and learn about available resources to build their enterprises.

## CONTACT

Elizabeth Nelson,  
Program Director, Florida High Tech Corridor Council  
University of South Florida System

Email: [ernelson1@usf.edu](mailto:ernelson1@usf.edu)

Phone: 813.974.3291

[www.floridahightech.com](http://www.floridahightech.com)



## MISSION

Improve the productivity and technological performance of Florida Manufacturers.

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## VISION

FloridaMakes is recognized as a statewide initiative which has significantly and measurably advanced Florida's manufacturing economy.

## DESCRIPTION

We are a nonprofit statewide industry led partnership. These partnership(s) include involvement with Florida's Regional Manufacturer Associations, the State of Florida and as part of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP). These partnerships are designed to provide talent development, technology assistance and business growth service to improve the overall performance of individual firms. Deliverable/measurable economic impacts are the metrics of success.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **Enterprise Assessment:** Helps identify capabilities and potential shortcomings of the business
- **Business Growth and Innovation Services:** ID strategies for Growth; from identifying new customers to product development

- **Technology Acceleration:** Provide cost/benefit analysis of new technology
  - **Export and International Market Development**
  - **Workforce Training and Development:** FloridaMakes leverages local and national services as well as internal training
  - **Supply Chain Optimization:** Provides step by step road map to help address risk, increase visibility and create opportunity
  - **Process Improvement:** LEAN, Toyota KATA, Six Sigma efforts and ISO Quality Management – to name a few
  - **Grants:** Much of the cost of these program improvement efforts can be offset by ITW and ETW grants offered by the state. Reimbursement of employer spend can range from 50% to 75%
- .....

## CONTACT

David Ferguson,  
Business Advisor

800 N. Magnolia Ave., Suite 1850  
Orlando, Florida 32803

Email: [david.ferguson@floridamakes.com](mailto:david.ferguson@floridamakes.com)  
Phone: 941.628.6185

[www.floridamakes.com](http://www.floridamakes.com)



## MISSION

As the largest energy company in Florida and one of the state's largest employers, we believe we have a responsibility to advance the state's economic development activities.

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## DESCRIPTION

FPL serves more than 5 million customer accounts across Florida, and its commercial/industrial rates are about 40% below the national average. FPL's service reliability is better than 99.98%, and its fuel-efficient power plant fleet is one of the cleanest among electric companies nationwide. FPL was recognized in 2019 as one of the most trusted U.S. electric utilities by Escalent. A leading Florida employer, FPL is a subsidiary of NextEra Energy, which with its affiliated entities is the world's largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and sun and a world leader in battery storage.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

### DISCOUNT RATE PROGRAMS

- **Economic Development Rider (EDR):** Designed to help attract new investment to the Sunshine State and create more jobs for Floridians. Eligible companies receive discounts on new electric demand for up to five years.
- **Commercial Industrial Service Rider (CISR):** Designed to attract new, large power users to the state as part of a competitive site location project.

## POWERINGFLORIDA.COM

- **Explore Florida Tool:** Community profile data. This tool contains the state's most complete property database for growing businesses.
- **Small Business Tool:** Comprehensive market analysis, the ability to map potential customers and suppliers, research demographics, labor force and consumer expenditure data.
- **Community Profiles:** Explore and compare community key statistics like demographics, educational attainment, labor force, industry and local business, consumer spending patterns, housing market, transportation and more.
- **Infrastructure Assessments**
- **Workforce Analysis**
- **Business Energy Manager**
- **Site Selection Support**
- **35 Mules** - an innovation hub powered by FPL, a NextEra Energy Co.
  - Targeting startups creating the next generation of energy, energy adjacent and water technology.
  - Startups will have access to subject matter experts and executive coaches while working at FPL's headquarters for 12-18 months, and will be given a grant to put toward their venture.
  - Apply at **35Mules.com**.

## CONTACT

Crystal Stiles,  
Senior Director, Economic Development at FPL  
700 Universe Blvd., Juno Beach, FL 33408

Email: [Crystal.Stiles@fpl.com](mailto:Crystal.Stiles@fpl.com)

Phone: 561-694-4112

[www.poweringflorida.com](http://www.poweringflorida.com), [www.fpl.com](http://www.fpl.com)



## FLORIDA VIRTUAL ENTREPRENEUR CENTER

*Powered by The Corridor*

### MISSION

To make life easier for new entrepreneurs, local businesses and companies expanding or relocating in Florida.

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### DESCRIPTION

FLVEC is powered by Florida High Tech Corridor, a regional economic development initiative of the University of Central Florida, the University of South Florida and the University of Florida.

In addition to an up-to-date master calendar of business and entrepreneurship related events and a sortable database of over business resource agencies, FLVEC has interviewed and captured the journeys of more than 700 entrepreneurs from 36 counties throughout the state. The businesses featured range in size from 1 to over 5,000 employees with industries covering the entire spectrum from manufacturing, aerospace, engineering, high tech and construction to hospitality, travel, retail and professional services.

### SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- Entrepreneur profiles directory featuring the stories of more than 900 Florida-based companies with the option to send a direct message on every profile.
  - Resource agencies directory offering access to support with business plans, funding, mentorship, hiring and more.
  - One-stop calendar of business events curated from more than 50 event sources.
  - Centralized business news page showing what's happening across Florida.
  - Exclusive offers from your peer business owners.
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### CONTACT

Michael Zaharios,  
Director,  
Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center

601 Innovation Way, Suite 123  
Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Email: [michael.zaharios@flvec.com](mailto:michael.zaharios@flvec.com)

Phone: 386.341.9868

[www.flvec.com](http://www.flvec.com)

## MISSION

To provide strategies, resources and support to second-stage companies for next level growth.

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## DESCRIPTION

GrowFL dedicated to support and accelerate the growth of second-stage companies throughout Florida, by providing their leaders focused, efficient, and timely access to resources they deem important, such as connections with other second-stage company leaders, and to professional organizations whose expertise, experience, and products lead to the second-stage company's continued growth and prosperity resulting in diversification and growth of Florida's economy. Second-stage growth companies have at least 10 employees and a \$1 million in revenue and possess an intent and desire to grow beyond second-stage.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

Second-stage companies face unique challenges as they grow and GrowFL's Business Growth Program is designed to help their leadership overcome these obstacles by providing methods proven to help take their companies to the next level.

- CEO Roundtable
  - Strategic Research, Marketing & Sales Expansion
  - CEO Forum
  - Florida Companies to Watch
  - Tampa Bay Regional Chapter
- .....

## CONTACT

Tammie Sweet,  
Director

12424 Research Parkway, Suite 355  
Orlando, Florida 32826

Email: [tsweet@growfl.com](mailto:tsweet@growfl.com)  
Phone: 239.253.1688

[www.growfl.com](http://www.growfl.com)



## MISSION

To foster vibrant small business communities through mentoring and education.

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## DESCRIPTION

SCORE, America's premier source of free and confidential small business advice for startups and established businesses, is a nonprofit resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration with over 300 chapters and 10,000 volunteers nationwide. To support small business success, two local SCORE Chapters continue to partner with local community organizations to serve Southwest Florida's Manatee, Sarasota, and Charlotte Counties. Over 120 local volunteer experts help clients achieve their goals to start, grow, buy, sell, or exit their businesses and solve problems through mentorship and education. SCORE's entrepreneur online business resource center has a wealth of information including workshops, webinars, blogs, how-to guides, videos and podcasts.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

Free mentoring for existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs

- Low cost local learning events for existing and new businesses
  - Business podcasts, SCORE TV
  - Extensive online business resource library
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## CONTACT

SCORE Manasota

2801 Fruitville Road, Suite 280  
Sarasota, Florida 34237

Email: [manasota@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:manasota@scorevolunteer.org)

Phone: 941.955.1029

[www.manasota.score.org](http://www.manasota.score.org)

Port Charlotte SCORE

1777 Tamiami Trail Suite 411  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Email: [port.charlotte@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:port.charlotte@scorevolunteer.org)

Phone: 941.743.6179

[www.portcharlotte.score.org](http://www.portcharlotte.score.org)





## MISSION

To provide businesses the expertise and resources to succeed.

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## DESCRIPTION

The Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at University of South Florida assists existing and emerging businesses in Sarasota county, through no-cost confidential business consulting, information, and low-cost training. Our professionally credentialed consultants have the real-world experience and expertise to help you make the right business decisions. Our consultants expertise focuses on areas that are vital to owning and operating a successful business, including: strategic market research, market expansion and revenue growth, business and strategic plan development, access to capital and loan packaging assistance, financial analysis and assessment, accounting systems and financial literacy, feasibility analysis and start-up assistance, disaster preparedness and cybersecurity.

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

- **Growth Acceleration** provides in-depth business assessments and strategic planning for qualified businesses to develop sustainable growth strategies.
  - **Export Marketing Plans** position qualified manufacturing small businesses in Florida who are “new-to-export” to identify growth strategies through the development of specialized plans.
  - **Government Contracting** assists established businesses to expand by reaching new markets through federal, state and local government contracting.
  - **Small Business Certification** could present growth opportunities for your woman, minority, or Veteran-owned business.
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## CONTACT

Scott Carpenter,  
Business Consultant

1680 Fruitville Road, #402  
Sarasota, FL 34236

Email: [scott70@usf.edu](mailto:scott70@usf.edu)

Phone: 941.309.1200 ext 107

[www.sbdctampabay.com/manasota](http://www.sbdctampabay.com/manasota)