Brevard manufacturing outpacing state, nation; ‘Florida Scorecard’ a gem

By Ken Dotzman

Brevard’s robust manufacturing sector is fueling the kind of economic growth and job creation that has made it a clear leader among the state’s 67 counties. And manufacturing, which spurs entrepreneurship and innovation, is what makes communities economically strong, creating good-paying jobs that help families prosper.

Manufacturing on the Space Coast is reaching new heights and hundreds of businesses of all kinds and of all sizes are contributing to the uplifting environment. While Florida is shining brightly as a manufacturer, Brevard County is far outpacing other communities around the state and the nation in that particular segment of the economy.

“Brevard County’s manufacturing sector has really been humming over the last three years,” said Dr. Jerry Parrish, the chief economist and director of research for the Florida Chamber Foundation in Tallahassee, the non-profit, nonpolitical arm of the Florida Chamber of Commerce.

“One out of every six manufacturing jobs created in Florida has been created in Brevard County, So Brevard is the ‘superstar’ when it comes to job creation in manufacturing.”

He added, “When you look at job creation from 2015 to 2018, the U.S. has grown manufacturing jobs at 2.9 percent. Florida has grown manufacturing jobs at 8.5 percent. But Brevard has grown manufacturing jobs at 29.3 percent, or eight times the U.S. rate.”

Dr. Parrish said 25,641 people were employed in manufacturing in Brevard in 2018, with an “average annual wage of $89,536.”

Locally, some of the organizations that have been working to raise the visibility of manufacturing in the region include the Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast’s Regional Manufacturing Association, CareerSource Brevard, and the Space Coast Machinist Apprenticeship Inc., which runs a four-year state-certified apprenticeship program.

In early September, Dr. Parrish spoke at the EDC’s fourth annual “State of Manufacturing” event hosted at Craig Technologies in Cape Canaveral.

“There was good news after good news after good news.”

He said that 24.8 percent of the wages in Brevard last year came from manufacturing.

“The more money people make, the more tax revenue the county gets. That’s a great thing. I’ve always said we don’t need to raise any tax rates to generate more revenue, we just need to create more jobs. Jobs lift people out of poverty and jobs create sales-tax revenue.”

A typical manufacturing job creates another 2.2 to 2.4 jobs in a region. “So manufacturing has diversified the Brevard economy substantially over the last few years. I think Brevard is well poised. It’s a really good story here,” very positive,” said Dr. Parrish, who earned his doctorate degree in economics from Auburn University and is also an adjunct professor at Florida State University, teaching in the nationally ranked Master’s in Applied Economics program.

He also pointed out the importance of the hospitality and tourism industry in the Sunshine State. The roughly $111.7 billion hospitality industry represents 1.4 million employees, making it the state’s number-one industry.

A representative hotel with 100 occupied rooms supports more than 240 local jobs and generates $18.4 billion in guest spending, according to a report released in September and conducted by Oxford Economics for the American Hotel & Lodging Association. Hotels generate $196 billion that goes back to communities through local, state, and federal taxes.

Many young people start their careers in the hospitality industry and move up into management.

As it pertains to job creation in general, Dr. Parrish said Florida has been “on a good roll the last several years. It has created jobs at a substantially higher rate than the nation. The most recent year-over-year tally shows
There are success stories and then there is Suneera Madhani. In the past five years she has started her own company, raised $20 million in venture capital, seen triple-digit growth each year, expanded into multiple cities and hired 100 employees.

In doing so, she has disrupted the business payments and credit-card processing ecosystem and made her firm, Fattmerchant, the talk of the business world.

She has done it all by age 30.

Madhani will bring her inspirational story to Eastern Florida State College on Tuesday, Oct. 22, as part of the Simpkins Entrepreneur Series. The college and “Florida Today” co-sponsor the series with lectures free and open to students, faculty, staff and the public.

Madhani will speak at two locations:

The Bernard Simpkins Fine Arts Center on the Cocoa Campus at 9:30 a.m. — 1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa
The Melbourne Campus Student Union Conference Center at 11 a.m. — 3865 N. Wickham Road, Melbourne

After graduating from the University of Florida with a degree in finance, Madhani started at a top consumer products company and moved into merchant services. It was then she realized “how horribly non-transparent the payments world was where so many truths are hidden behind lengthy invoices, shady contracts and vague language.”

She struck out on her own and created Fattmerchant with the promise “to be transparent and provide value to every business that processes payments.”

“I worked with an incredible team and network to build the company from the ground up, and I’m so proud of everything we’ve accomplished. We’ve processed more than $2 billion in transactions,” she said.

Her accomplishments have led Madhani to be named among Florida’s 500 Most Influential Business Leaders by “Florida Trend,” and CEO of the Year and Young Entrepreneur of the Year by the “Orlando Business Journal.”

EFSC President Jim Richey calls Madhani “one of the most exciting speakers in the lecture series history” and says students and the public can learn much from her experience.

The lecture series is named after Bernard Simpkins, a highly successful entrepreneur and Space Coast business leader who established the sessions that have brought some of nation’s top business leaders to Brevard.

A Simpkins endowment also started the college’s Business Entrepreneurship Program to educate the next generation of business innovators.

For more information visit easternflorida.edu/go/entrepreneur

TITUSVILLE — The Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating “Small Business Saturday” by holding an event on Nov 30. Residents of North Brevard are encouraged to patronize local businesses, while shopping for the upcoming holidays.

Activities will launch from two locations, the Downtown Titusville Welcome Center and Titusville Mall. The Downtown Titusville Welcome Center is located at 419 S. Hopkins Ave. Titusville Mall is located at 3550 S. Washington Ave.

Beginning at 9 a.m. at the Welcome Center, visitors will enjoy special treats and the first 1,000 shoppers will receive a goody bag full of coupons, discounts and special offers. Prize drawings and spotlights on area businesses will take place throughout the day and on Facebook.

Shoppers can also visit the Pop-Up Market in Titusville Mall, which will feature home-based businesses.

This is a great opportunity for all businesses to draw in shoppers on this special day and throughout the holiday season.

Businesses can participate in multiple ways, including: be a vendor at the home-based Pop-Up Market at Titusville Mall ($25); add a coupon or discount to the goody bag (price varies); sponsor a giveaway ($250); and sponsor the event ($500).

Benefits of sponsorship include your business logo on goody bags and all promotions before, during and after the event.

Registration for sponsors and businesses offering discounts is available online. The deadline to submit coupons is Nov. 20.

For more information on this event, contact Carol Fondo at (321) 267–3036 or fondo@titusville.org.
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Fan fiction often met with suspicion, but it is where I found my expressive voice.

The spirit of fan fiction — if not the name — existed long before the Internet. We can even find examples in classical English literature. Shakespeare based Romeo and Juliet on a poem written 30 years earlier by Arthur Brooke, which was in turn based on a story from French and Italian literature. And isn’t Paradise Lost really an extensive Bible fan fic?

If we travel even further back through human history, we reach an inextricably collaborative and adaptable form of sharing fiction — oral storytelling. Without a definitive, printed version, stories were embellished and changed by whoever was telling them. Fan fiction continues this storytelling tradition today, by playing with the stories we love and making them our own.

For me and many others, fan fiction was a sandbox to play in before gaining the confidence to build castles on the beach. The world and characters had already been created, allowing me to focus on learning to craft a story. I explored tropes and pacing and dialogue; I attempted to wring emotion from my readers — often in a heavy-handed manner, but it was practice. Like an aspiring painter might experiment with other artist’s styles before finding their own, or a musician spends years studying and playing famous opus, I needed that time to develop my writing in a low-stakes environment.

I learned valuable lessons while writing and reading fan fiction that stick with me today as I craft my own stories. Writing fan fiction exposed me to readers’ opinions, both good and bad. I learned that you can’t please everyone — what one reader loves, another will hate — and that even if you say, “No flames, please!” (flame = an intentionally cruel comment), you can’t control anyone else’s actions. Some people just enjoy being mean.

I don’t worry when another writer has an idea similar to my own because fan fiction taught me that creativity isn’t solely based on ideas, but instead lies in each person’s unique take on a concept. A dozen people may write a fan fiction about Harry Potter’s secret twin, but none of their stories will be identical — each will reflect the style, influences and perspective of the writer.

But more important than the writing lessons or the practice was the community I found. For a shy 13-year-old who years ago spent most of her time nose-deep in a book, finding other people who loved the same stories as me, people who wanted to explore the possibilities of those worlds, was a revelation. I discovered the joy of sharing my passion with other people. I gained confidence in my writing and in myself, which has enabled me to embrace opportunities like participating in the UCF Forum columns for the next year.

I hope that everyone can find that place in the world (or the Internet) that helps them to express themselves. And if you don’t understand someone else’s chosen community and are tempted to mock it, just remember. No flames, please.

Emma Gisclair is a library technical assistant at the University of Central Florida Library’s Curriculum Materials Center. She can be reached at Emma.Gisclair@UCF.edu.

Brevard Federated Republican Women to host Recognition Dinner, Fundraiser

The Brevard Federated Republican Women will be hosting a Recognition Dinner and Fundraiser honoring veterans and military servicemen and servicewomen.

The dinner and auction are set for 5 p.m. on Nov. 2 at the Hilton Melbourne.

The guest speakers are retired U.S. Army Col. Mike McCalister and Patriot Gold Star Mother Susan Price. She will share the story of her son, Gun. Sgt. Aaron Kennefick, who was killed in action in 2009.

Lt. Col. Tim Thomas and members of the Viera JROTC will present the “Missing Man” ceremony. Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey will conduct an auction to raise funds for the veterans and military. Funds raised from the auction in 2017 totaled more than $16,000 and were distributed to many local veteran organizations, including the VOA Veterans Transitional House and Support Group, National Veterans Homeless Support, Honor Flight, Project Suds, Melbourne Transitional Housing, Liberty Bell Memorial Museum, Wounded Warriors, and Wraths Across America.

Admission is $75. To register, visit www.brevardfederatedrepublicanwomen.org.

The Brevard Federated Republican Women was established in 1950 and supporting the veterans and the military is one of its missions for the community.

Regular monthly meetings are held featuring speakers on current issues and in election years candidates. Three $1,000 scholarships are presented to Brevard high school students annually and “The World Dictionary” is given to third-grade students in area elementary schools.

Judicial Nominating Commission seeks Florida Bar applicants; deadline Dec. 16

The Judicial Nominating Commission has one lawyer vacancy for each of the 26 JNCs in the state. The Florida Bar has the opportunity to nominate three lawyers for each JNC to Gov. Ron DeSantis for his appointment. Each appointee will serve a four-year term, commencing July 1, 2020. Applicants must be members of The Florida Bar engaged in the practice of law and a resident of the territorial jurisdiction served by the commission to which the member is applying.

Commissioners are not eligible for state judicial office for vacancies filled by the JNC on which they sit for two years following completion of their term.

Persons interested in applying for these vacancies may download the JNC application from The Florida Bar’s website, or should call Bar headquarters at (850) 561-5757, to obtain the form.

Completed applications must be received by the executive director, The Florida Bar, 651 E. Jefferson St., Tallahassee, Fla. 32399-2300, or submitted via e-mail to jncform@flabar.org by Monday, Dec. 16. Resumes will not be accepted in lieu of the required application. The Board of Governors will review all applications and may request telephone or personal interviews.

NextDoor Writers Critique Group to meet Oct. 24 at the Palm Bay Public Library

The NextDoor Writers Critique Group will meet at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Palm Bay Public Library. This free program is open to people at all experience levels of writing. To learn more about this event, email lhdiveswrit@gmail.com. The library’s address is 3120 Port Malabar Blvd. NE.
See In re Bailey, 267 So. 3d 992 (Fla. 2019) (publicly reprimanding a judge for intemperate treatment of a lawyer in the presence of a jury during a criminal trial).

**Recommendation as to Discipline**

The Commission finds that by repeatedly using an intemperate tone and displaying other conduct that appeared to manifest a bias of the Court against one party, in view of the jury, and making injudicious comments during a sentencing proceeding, Judge Lemonidis’s misconduct was egregious enough that it harmed the integrity of the judiciary, as well as the public’s confidence in the judicial system.

As such, Investigative Panel of the Commission has now entered into a Stipulation with Judge Lemonidis pursuant to FJQC Rule 6(k) in which Judge Lemonidis admits that her conduct as alleged in the Notice of Formal Charges and these Findings violated the Code of Judicial Conduct and agrees to receive the sanction recommended below.

In this case, Judge Lemonidis’s lack of restraint resulted in conduct that created the appearance of bias, and undermined the impartiality and integrity of the judiciary. Accordingly, and in consideration of the facts, mitigation, and prior relevant precedent, the Commission hereby finds and recommends that the interests of justice will be well served by a public reprimand of Judge Lemonidis.

Page 10 of 11
By Jennie Kroeger  
jennie.kroeger@fsu.edu  
Florida State University

TALLAHASSEE — Florida State University’s College of Education has launched “Project ElevatED,” a new initiative aimed at raising the profile of careers in education and recognizing education professionals around the state for the difference they make in the lives of students.

“The initiative is designed to support the key influencers in the lives of Pre-K–12 students, whether they serve as teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, principals, superintendents, coaches, athletic directors or in other critical roles,” said College of Education Dean Damon Andrew. “In preparation for the launch of Project ElevatED, we critically examined the educational support we provide to these professionals and added new programs as needed over time.”

Within the past two years, the College of Education has launched online Ed.D. programs in educational leadership and policy and instructional systems and learning technologies, along with an online master’s in curriculum and instruction focused on autism spectrum disorder. This fall, the college redesigned and relaunched the M.S./Ed.S. program in school counseling, as well as an online graduate certificate in coaching, which is available to degree-seeking students at FSU and the larger community.

“Each of these programs was designed to prepare Pre-K–12 professionals to overcome the challenges they face today and in the future,” Andrew said. “For example, now more than ever, students need access to high quality school counselors. Students of today not only can face challenges at school, but also personal issues and struggles in their home life. School counselors are in a unique position to help students overcome these obstacles, and we hope our relaunching of this program will address this growing need.”

As part of these new program launches, an Interdisciplinary Center for Athletic Coaching, known as FSU–COACH, is being designed to meet the growing demand for well-trained athletic coaches at all levels of competition, from school and amateur leagues all the way to professional organizations.

“For some people, a coach can make as much of a difference in their lives as a teacher or even a parent,” Andrew said. “Training the next generation of coaches will have a tremendously positive effect on the lives of students and society at large.”

FSU–COACH will be led by College of Education Professor Tim Baghurst, a former professor at Oklahoma State University, where he helped develop the first-ever coaching science undergraduate and graduate certification programs in the state of Oklahoma.

As part of Project ElevatED, FSU alumni who are working as teachers in Florida will be sent a care package later this fall that includes a stuffed Cimarron, the official mascot of the Florida State Athletics Kids Club, which can be placed on their desks or other highly visible areas of their classrooms.

“This care package is a token of our appreciation for all that they do,” Andrew said. “We also want our alumni to be able to show their FSU pride. By having Cimarron in a prominent location, it will no doubt spur curiosity from their students about FSU and provide our alumni with the opportunity to talk about their time here and why they chose to go into education. We will continue to need high quality teachers in the future, and this initiative helps the next generation of students think about the profession of teaching as their way to positively impact society.”

Space Coast Credit Union donates $38,000 to Hurricane Dorian relief

Space Coast Credit Union (SCCU) recently donated $25,000 to the American Red Cross to support Hurricane Dorian relief efforts in the Bahamas.

The credit union also established an account to accept member and employee donations, and in two weeks raised an additional $13,000, bringing the total relief donation to $38,000.

“Our thoughts are with the Bahamian communities affected by the hurricane,” said Timothy Antonition, SCCU’s president and chief executive officer. “Many of our members and employees have ties to the islands as our markets are closely related. It will take time for them to recover, and we thank our members for their support and generosity, too.”

For additional information on supporting the disaster relief efforts sponsored by SCCU, call (321) 752–2222 or visit SCCU.com/storm.
We should continue to be nation of immigrants and take stance toward openness, not closed-door approach

By Lee H. Hamilton

I was talking with a friend the other day about immigration. It’s one of the most divisive issues of our time, and we, too, found ourselves divided. “Our country is full,” he quoted President Trump, who said this back in April. Let’s improve the country with the people we already have, my friend added.

I had a quote, too, and it’s one I still believe in. You’ll find it on the Statue of Liberty. “From her beacon-hand/Glows world-wide welcome,” it reads. And then, of course, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.”

I welcome new immigrants and want this country to set aside the nationalistic appeals and racial prejudice that often accompany calls for restrictions. And I believe firmly that immigration makes us stronger as a nation and represents the best of what we stand for. This country is a defender of individual rights, a beacon of tolerance and equality, and a champion of the notion that offering opportunity to all who live here — regardless of national origin — yields the innovation and hard work that drive our economy and culture.

I could take up the rest of this commentary just listing the immigrants who have enriched the United States, from Levi Strauss, Irving Berlin, and Albert Einstein to Liz Claiborne, Gloria Estafan, Yo Ma, and Patrick Ewing. But it’s not just names you’d recognize. I have a clear memory from my time in Washington, DC, of watching people who’d immigrated literally build the city: its stormwater system, its metro lines, the refurbished Union Station. The same is true in any big city you care to visit in this country — yields the innovation and hard work that drive our economy and culture.

I could take up the rest of this commentary just listing the immigrants who have enriched the United States, from Levi Strauss, Irving Berlin, and Albert Einstein to Liz Claiborne, Gloria Estafan, Yo Ma, and Patrick Ewing. But it’s not just names you’d recognize. I have a clear memory from my time in Washington, DC, of watching people who’d immigrated literally build the city: its stormwater system, its metro lines, the refurbished Union Station. The same is true in any big city you care to visit in this country — regardless of national origin — yields the innovation and hard work that drive our economy and culture.

Instead, I’d argue that immigration is an opportunity for the country. One of the first votes I cast in Congress was for the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which prohibited discrimination against immigrants on the basis of their nationality. Instead, it gave preference to professionals, people with skills the country needed, and relatives of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents.

That same principle is valid today. We have to use immigration to meet our needs, especially in the labor market. Every month for the last year and a half, the US economy has had more job openings than people looking for work. And in a twist from what you’d expect, it’s not the higher-end jobs that face the most acute shortages. It’s health-care, hotel, and restaurant workers who are in the highest demand. In an array of categories, from retail to food processing to landscaping, we don’t have the low-skilled laborers we need. The need for scientists, researchers, computer programmers and other knowledge workers hasn’t abated, either. And nor has the need for workers with skills that won’t soon be replaced by automation.

There was a time when both political parties in this country largely supported immigration. Not unanimously, of course, but they favored immigration in the national interest. I don’t know if those days are over for good; I hope not. Because there is simply no question that this country has been made stronger by its immigrants, and there is no reason to think that will change.

So while I’m not arguing that we should throw open our doors to all comers, we should lean toward openness, recognizing that we have limits and constraints that demand building immigration policy around a principle. And what should that be? That immigration is a powerful tool for meeting our needs, strengthening our labor markets, bolstering our pool of talent, and remaining a beacon to those everywhere who believe that their own hard work, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit can build their own lives and contribute to the communities around them.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Celtic Woman to celebrate 15th Anniversary Tour with concert at King Center

By Debbie Boutin

The Grammy-nominated, multi-platinum international music group Celtic Woman has announced a new North American tour to celebrate 15 phenomenal years of music-making. The tour includes a 7:30 p.m. concert on March 3 at the King Center for the Performing Arts in Melbourne.

“Celebration — The 15th Anniversary Tour” is a collection of their favorite songs that have made them one of the most successful all-female group in Irish history, with 1 billion online streams, more than 4 million tickets sold, 12 consecutive Billboard number ones, and 10 million albums sold.

Tickets begin at $53, including fees, and may be purchased by visiting kingcenter.com or by calling the King Center ticket office at (321) 242-2219.

The four Celtic Woman soloists — Tara McNeill on fiddle and Irish harp, who weaves her magic around the spine-tingling voices of Máiréad Carlin, Éabha McMahon and Megan Walsh — touch the hearts of a global audience with the centuries-old Irish tradition of telling stories through song: stories of the land, stories of love, and stories of dancing that bring a piece of Ireland to audiences everywhere.

Joined by a stunning band of two pipers, two drummers, traditional step-dancers, and backing vocalists, Celtic Woman celebrates Ireland’s rich musical and cultural heritage and combines the finest musical talent with epic stage productions to present a unique, inspiring live experience.

The band, favorites on PBS stations, transports audiences to Ireland with the siren call of Orinoco Flow, the playful energy of Teir Abhaile Riu, the power of the uplifting anthem You Raise Me Up, the soaring harmonies of Danny Boy, and a bagpiper-lead Amazing Grace.

For the complete Celebration tour schedule and ticket information, visit www.celticwoman.com/tour-dates.

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Remote working seems to be all the buzz. Apparently, 70 percent of professionals work from home at least once a week. Similarly, 77 percent of people work more productively, and 68 percent of millennials would consider a company more if they offered remote working. It seems to make sense: technology, connectivity, and culture seem to be setting the world up more and more for remote working. Oh, and homemade brewed coffee is better than ever too.

Here's the stark truth: remote working is not a panacea. Sure, it seems like hanging around at home in your jammies, listening to your antisocial music, and sipping on buckets of coffee is perfect, but it isn’t for everyone.

Some people need the structure of an office. Some people need the social element of an office. Some people need to get out the house. Some people lack the discipline to stay focused at home. Some people are avoiding the government coming and knocking on the door due to years of unpaid back taxes.

Remote working is like a muscle: it can bring enormous strength and capabilities if you train and discipline to stay focused at home. Some people need the structure of an office. Some people need more structure in their day. Sometimes I just need more sunlight. I will often work outside in the garden. Near the holidays I get more distracted, so I want more sunlight. I will often work outside in the garden. The digital distractions have a simple solution: lock out the distractions until I am done. I do this all the time with big chunks of work: I lock out the distractions until I am done. I then modify it as you learn your waves.

I have learned how I need to manage remote work, using the right balance of work routine, travel, and other elements, and here are five of my recommendations:

- You need discipline and routine (and to understand your “waves”).

Remote work really is a muscle that needs to be trained. Just like building actual muscle, there needs to be a clear routine and a healthy dollop of discipline mixed in.

Always get dressed (no jammies). Set your start and end time for your day (I work 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. most days). Choose your lunch break (mine is 12 p.m.). Choose your morning ritual (mine is email followed by a full review of my client needs). Decide where your main workplace will be (mine is my home office). Decide when you will exercise each day (I do it at 5 p.m. most days).

Design a realistic routine and do it for 66 days. It takes this long to build a habit. Try not to deviate from the routine. The more you stick to the routine, the less work it will seem further down the line. By the end of the 66 days it will feel natural and you won’t have to think about it.

Here’s the deal though, we don’t live in a vacuum (cleaner, or otherwise). We all have waves.

A wave is when you need a change of routine to mix things up. For example, in summertime I generally want more sunlight. I will often work outside in the garden. Near the holidays I get more distracted, so I need more structure in my day. Sometimes I just need more human contact, so I will work from coffee shops for a few weeks. Sometimes I just fancy working in the kitchen or on the couch. You need to learn your waves and listen to your body. Build your habit first, and then modify it as you learn your waves.

- Set expectations with your management and colleagues.

Not everyone knows how to do remote working, and if your company is less familiar with remote working, you especially need to set expectations with colleagues.

This can be pretty simple: when you have designed your routine, communicate it clearly to your management and team. Let them know how they can get hold of you, how to contact you in an emergency, and how you will be collaborating while at home.

The communication component here is critical. There are some remote workers who are scared to leave their computer for fear that someone will send them a message while they are away (and they are worried people may think they are just eating Cheetos and watching Netflix).

You need time away. You need to eat lunch without one eye on your computer. You are not a 911 emergency responder. Set expectations that sometimes you may not be immediately responsive, but you will get back to them as soon as possible.

Similarly, set expectations on your general availability. For example, I set expectations with clients that I generally work from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day. Sure, if a client needs something urgently, I am more than happy to respond outside of those hours, but as a general rule I am usually working between those hours. This is necessary for a balanced life.

- Distractions are your enemy and they need managing.

We all get distracted. It is human nature. It could be your young kid getting home and wanting to play Rescue Bots. It could be checking Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to ensure you don’t miss any unwanted political opinions or photos of people’s lunches. It could be that there is something else going on your life that is taking your attention (such as an upcoming wedding, event, or big trip.)

You need to learn what distracts you and how to manage it. For example, I know I get distracted by my email and Twitter. I check it religiously and every check gets me out of the zone of what I am working on. I also get distracted by grabbing coffee and water, which then may turn into a snack and a YouTube video.

The digital distractions have a simple solution: lock them out. Close down the tabs until you complete what you are doing. I do this all the time with big chunks of work: I lock out the distractions until I am done. It requires discipline, but all of this does.

The human elements are tougher. If you have a family you need to make it clear that when you are work, you need to be generally left alone. This is why a home office is so important: you need to set boundaries that mum or dad is working. Come in if there is emergency, but otherwise they need to be left alone.

There are all kinds of opportunities for locking these distractions out. Put your phone on silent. Set yourself as away. Move to a different room (or building) where the distraction isn’t there. Again, be honest in what distracts you and manage it. If you don’t, you will always be at their mercy.

- Relationships need in–person attention.

Some roles are more attuned to remote working than others. For example, I have seen great work from engineering, quality assurance, support, security, and other teams (typically more focused on digital collabo-
Remote Working
Continued from page 8

oration). Other teams such as design or marketing often struggle more in remote environments (as they are often more tactile.)

With any team though, having strong relationships is critical, and in–person discussion, collaboration, and socializing is essential to this. So many of our senses (such as body language) are removed in a digital environment, and these play a key role in how we build trust and relationships.

This is especially important if you are new to a company and need to build these relationships, are new to a role and need to build relationships with your team, or are in a leadership position where building buy–in and engagement is a key part of your job.

The solution? A sensible mix of remote and in–person time. If your company is nearby, work from home part of the week and at the office part of the week. If your company is further away, schedule regular trips to the office (and set expectations with your management that you need this). For example, when I worked at XPRIZE I flew to LA every few weeks for a few days. When I worked at Canonical (who were based in London), we had sprints every three months.

• Stay focused, but cut yourself some slack.

The crux of everything in this article is about building a capability, and developing a remote working muscle. This is as simple as building a routine, sticking to it, and having an honest view of your “waves” and distractions and how to manage them.

I see the world in a fairly specific way: everything we do has the opportunity to be refined and improved. For example, I have been public speaking now for over 15 years, but I am always discovering new ways to improve, and new mistakes to fix.

There is a thrill in the discovery of new ways to get better, and to see every stumbling block and mistake as an “aha!” moment to kick ass in new and different ways. It is no different with remote working: look for patterns that help to unlock ways in which you can make your remote working time more efficient, more comfortable, and more fun.

But don’t go crazy over it. There are some people who obsesses every minute of their day about how to get better. They beat themselves up constantly for “not doing well enough,” “not getting more done,” and not meeting their internal unrealistic view of perfection.

We are humans. We are animals, and we are not robots. Always strive to improve, but be realistic that not everything will be perfect. You are going to have some off–days or off–weeks. You are going to struggle at times with stress and burnout. You are going to handle a situation poorly remotely that would have been easier in the office. Learn from these moments but don’t obsess over them. Life is too damn short.

Jono Bacon is a leading community and management strategy consultant, speaker, and author. He is the founder of Jono Bacon Consulting, which provides community and management strategy, execution, and coaching. He also previously served as director of community at GitHub, Canonical, XPRIZE, OpenAdvantage, and has consulted and advised a range of organizations. He is the author of “People Powered: How Communities Can Supercharge Your Business, Brand, and Team.” Visit www.jonobacon.com for more information on his career, or connect with Bacon on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Linkedin.
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BREvard BUSINESS news / 10

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OCTObER 21, 2019
Florida Tech recognized for quality, faculty in new rankings; Niche also singles out school for diversity, value

By Adam Lowenstein
adam@fit.edu
Florida Tech News Bureau
Florida Institute of Technology

Florida Tech is among the best private universities in Florida, offering top professors and outstanding academics — as well as highly-regarded food — in a diverse setting and for a great value.

Those are the results in the “2020 Best Colleges” rankings from Niche, which annually provides data and reviews for more than 4,100 colleges nationwide. The 2020 rankings are compiled using multiple data sources, including admissions selectivity, professor quality, and academic resources based on U.S. Department of Education information, as well as millions of reviews from students and alumni.

“Unlike traditional college rankings, which rely almost exclusively on test scores and academic performance, Niche’s rankings provide a real-life view of what it’s like to attend a specific school,” the site says. “The platform combines rigorous analysis of U.S. Department of Education data, user input—reviews from current students, alumni, and parents—and a multifaceted analysis of factors for all aspects of college life, including academics, campus, dorm life, professors, and value for the financial investment.”

Among the Florida Tech rankings:
• Top Private Universities in Florida: #3 of 36
• Best Colleges in Florida: #7 of 73
• Colleges with the Best Professors in Florida: #7 of 73
• Colleges with the Best Academics in Florida: #7 of 52
• Best College Food in Florida: #7 of 39
• Most Diverse Colleges in Florida: #8 of 75
• Nationally, where the competition was among hundreds and even thousands of colleges and universities, Florida Tech excelled in several categories, as well.
• Best Colleges with No Application Fees in America: #51 of 515
• Most Diverse Colleges in America: #106 of 1,583
• Best Colleges for Engineering in America: #112 of 378

“We’ve worked hard to craft our rankings as a blend of student feedback alongside dependable data,” the site added. “This is why millions of prospective college students have come to rely on Niche for making one of life’s big decisions.” Find the full listings at www.niche.com/colleges/florida-institute-of-technology/rankings/.

Fifth Avenue Art Gallery accepting submissions for juried exhibition

The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery’s 14th annual juried exhibition, “100% Pure Florida,” is accepting submissions for the February 2020 exhibit. The deadline for applications is Dec. 14, 2019. This is the premier exhibition in Brevard County open to all Florida artists, 18 years of age and older. There is no subject limitation.

There will be cash awards for first place ($500 plus a solo exhibit in September 2020), second place ($300) and third place ($200). Additionally, there will be three or more Merit awards of $100. Visit FifthAvenueArtGallery.com/call-for-art for further details on this competition and to download the application.

The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery is located in the Eau Gallie Arts District of Melbourne. For more information on the Fifth Avenue Art Gallery, call (321) 259-8261.
Once a year, consumers have the opportunity to sign up for health insurance. This window of opportunity is known as the Open Enrollment Period. The 2020 Open Enrollment Period runs from Nov. 1 to Dec. 15 of this year.

If you don’t act by Dec. 15, you can’t get 2020 coverage unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.

Plans sold during Open Enrollment Period start Jan. 1, 2020.

If you don’t have health insurance through a job, Medicare, Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, or another source that provides qualifying health coverage, the Health Insurance Exchanges, can get you covered.

If you have job–based health insurance, you can still buy a plan through the Exchanges, but you’ll pay full price unless your employer’s insurance doesn’t meet certain standards. Most job–based plans do meet the standards.

Also, Medicare Open Enrollment started Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 15. Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to reshop their health care and drug coverage choices during this period. Each year, insurance companies can make changes to Medicare plans that affect out–of–pocket costs for monthly premiums, deductibles, and other things.

Businesswoman Cynthia “Cindy” Dropeski, president and owner of Intercoastal Insurance Inc. in Melbourne, said a fairly new health–insurance concept is gaining traction among small businesses is Level–Funded health plans.

As health–insurance costs continue to rise and benefits decrease, many businesses are looking for ways to reduce costs and take control of their health–care plans.

To better manage costs and customize benefits, some small businesses have switched to alternative insurance plans such as Level–Funded plans.

The primary difference between Level–Funded plans and fully insured plans is that unused funds in Level–Funded plans are returned to the business at the end of the year. “Level–Funded plans, which are also called self-funded plans, are seeing growth, especially as more employers become familiar with and learn about them,” said Dropeski, whose longtime independent agency helps businesses and individuals in Brevard pick the right insurance plan.

“Florida Blue just announced its Level–Funded plans. United HealthCare has a company called All Savers, which has been in the Marketplace for several years and sells the All Savers Alternate Funding plans for small businesses. And Aetna has a Level–Funded product. We market all those brands and others.”

Her company is celebrating its 30th year in Brevard. Dropeski built her business around customer service. And the team that delivers the service has been on the job at Intercoastal Insurance for many years, which has created a pattern of consistency for clients.

“The commitment is to customer service. That’s our top priority and it’s clearly spelled out in the company’s mission statement. We’re here to help people with their insurance needs. Most people don’t fully understand the complexity of health–insurance products. There are doctors, there are hospitals, there are laboratories, and so on. Sometimes it can be a little overwhelming. We break it down for them and put it in easy–to–understand language,” said Dropeski.

The Intercoastal Insurance team includes Tonya Snodgrass, Susan Cambra, and Julie Chiles, who have all worked for the agency for 20 or more years. The newcomer to the team is Emily Pittard.

“They are on top of all the new plans and the changes that have taken place since the last Open Enrollment Period,” said Dropeski, a Longwood University business graduate who played field hockey at the Virginia school.

“We have ongoing training to stay ahead of the curve and what’s going on in the marketplace. We’re always looking for ways to make it a more efficient process for our clients.”

To visit her company’s Health Exchange, go to https://Intercoastalinsurance.com. Pull down the header that says “Health Exchange & Insurance Quotes.”

With Level Funding, the employer pays a fixed monthly amount to cover the costs of administration, “stop–loss,” and claims funding, said Dropeski.

Health insurance experts say Level Funding is ideal for employers with 25 or more healthy employees.

“The concept with Level Funding is that after a period of time, generally 15 months, the employer has the potential of getting perhaps as much as 50 percent of their claims back. Right now, with a fully insured plan, if you don’t use your insurance, you don’t get anything back. So, Level Funding has a few interesting wrinkles,” she said.

With these plans, a portion of your monthly premium goes into a reserve account, which the insurance company uses to pay for medical care if you or any of your employees or dependents have a medical claim. Once your reserve account is empty, the insurance company takes over.
Space Coast Early Intervention Center is introducing its first fall fundraiser and is building the event around a fun cornhole competition, amateur barbecue teams squaring off for People’s Choice awards, and, yes, lawn–mower races, as well as a full slate of activities for youngsters.

All of the action will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 26, at Space Coast Harley–Davidson in Palm Bay. Tickets to attend the “BBQ & Cornhole Throwdown for the Kids” are $15. The price includes barbecue samples and lunch.

Tickets are sold at Space Coast Harley–Davidson, Space Coast Early Intervention Center on Dairy Road in Melbourne, or contact Sandy Withers at (321) 729–6858, extension 218, or Swithers@sceic.com.

She is the organization’s new fund developer and expects more than 1,000 people to attend the event.

If your business is interested in being a sponsor for this event, contact Withers. Barbecue teams interested in being part of the event should call Kelly McBride at (754) 245–7700 for more details.

“Interest is growing in the barbecue team competition,” said Withers. “We’re going to cap it at 20 teams. The Brevard County Sheriff’s Office just confirmed its team for the competition. We’re excited to be having this fundraiser at Space Coast Harley–Davidson.”

She added, “We wanted to come up with an event that stood out in the market. Cornhole is a fun game and the Florida Cornhole League will be there. Team Grace (a charitable entity) is sponsoring them because there is a fee to cover their travel expenses.”

The Florida Cornhole League was founded by Mike Barker in 2005. He makes custom boards, bags and accessories. The Florida Cornhole League puts on tournaments around the state.

Cornhole, which originated in North America, is a lawn game in which players take turns throwing 15– to 16–ounce bags of corn kernels at a raised platform (board), with a hole in the far end.

A bag in the hole scores three points, while one on the board scores one point. Play continues until a team or player reaches or exceeds the score of 21 by means of cancellation scoring.

Cornhole is popular on college campuses. In fact, the 2019 National Cornhole Championship is set for Myrtle Beach, S.C., the weekend of Dec. 27. The three–day event will include coverage by ESPN and $50,000 will be awarded by the end of the weekend.

Sponsors for the BBQ & Cornhole Throwdown for the Kids include Skinny’s BBQ, Rev–Cut Mower, Space Coast Harley–Davidson, L3 Harris, and the Florida Cornhole League. Rev–Cut is sponsoring the lawn–mower competition,” said Withers, who recently became a staff member of Space Coast Early Intervention Center after serving on its board the last two years.

“Sandy is a substantial addition to our team. We’re very excited she accepted the position,” said Terri Clark, executive director of Space Coast Early Intervention Center, a nationally recognized not–for–profit inclusive school and therapeutic center for children.

“We work incredibly well together. It’s a new position. With Sandy doing fund development and marketing, it allows me to go about the business of running the school. Sandy knows our organization as well as anyone, having been a volunteer for 22 years.”

“I’ve always enjoyed my time as a volunteer at Space Coast Early Intervention Center and serving on its board,” said Withers, who has experience as a small–business owner. “I do it for the kids. I have seen this organization evolve through the years and its future looks bright.”

Space Coast Early Intervention Center has an enrollment of 118 children, up from about 90 youngsters last school year. “We have filled our primary school (24 kids), which is outstanding. We have only six available spots in the entire school,” said Clark.

Having recently added primary grades, her school accepts students from six weeks through third grade.

Space Coast Early Intervention Center just expanded with a baby room for typically developing children. It was Withers’ first project as fund developer for the organization. “Sandy hit the ground running and the nursery has been a big success. Within two weeks, she had the cost of the project covered by donors,” said Clark. “We have one teacher for every three babies. The standard is one to four.”

Clark continued, “We want to give parents a phenomenal experience with their babies in our new baby room. If we provide them with an above–average experience, they likely will keep using our services at Space Coast Early Intervention Center. We launched the baby room to let the community know that we provide services for typically developing kids.”

The new room is named the Kathy Murphy Memorial Infant Room for typically developing children. The babies are Teddy and Evie.

Space Coast Early Intervention Center will host its first ‘BBQ & Cornhole Throwdown for the Kids’ on Oct. 26 at Space Coast Harley–Davidson in Palm Bay. The Florida Cornhole League will be participating in the public event. Sandy Withers, right, is the new fund developer for SCEIC. Terri Clark, left, is the organization’s executive director. They are in the new Kathy Murphy Memorial Infant Room for typically developing children. The babies are Teddy and Evie.
Saalex promotes Florida Tech graduate Thompson to chief operating officer; Bezduch director of programs

By Neal Stein
nealjstein@techprsolutions.com

Technology PR Solutions

ROCKLEDGE — Saalex Corp. has announced the promotion of Garrison Thompson to the new position of vice president and chief operating officer, as well as the promotion of Robert “Bobby” Bezduch to director of programs.

These role refinements are part of an ongoing growth strategy as Saalex transitions from a small to large company.

Before this promotion, Thompson served as Saalex’s director of process improvement and integration and was responsible for enterprise transformation initiatives. He has also served as chief engineer for numerous U.S. Army range training and U.S. Air Force space lift range systems modernization and sustainment contracts.

In 2002, NASA presented Thompson with the agency’s highest recognition, the Space Flight Awareness Launch Honoree Award for STS 111. Thompson is a Project Management Professional, a Lean Six Sigma Certified Black Belt, ITILv3 Foundations Certified and a Cisco Certified Network Associate.

He holds a bachelor’s degree, with honors, in aviation management and a master’s degree in systems management from the Florida Institute of Technology.

“I am excited to have Garrison in this role and utilize his 30-plus years of large prime experience in corporate operations,” said Travis Mack, Saalex president and CEO. “I look forward to his vision, guidance and insight on developing a first-rate large prime operating environment.”

As newly appointed director of programs, Bezduch will bring his business acumen and 15 years of program management experience to this new role.

“Bobby’s ability to tackle hard problems, support his team’s efforts, and keep our customers happy is a calling card of his abilities,” Mack said.

About Saalex Corp.


Mike Smith appointed public information officer

On Sept. 19, the Palm Bay Police Department announced the appointment of Lt. Mike Smith as its new public information officer. Smith has been with the department since 2007 and has served in the Uniformed Services Division and Internal Affairs.

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Florida Department of Health reminds area residents to protect themselves by getting a flu shot

By Anita Stremmel
anita.stremmel@flhealth.gov
Department of Health

VIERA — The Florida Department of Health in Brevard County (DOH–Brevard) is reminding all Floridians to get their flu shot before the height of the upcoming flu season. Flu activity can begin as early as October and last as late as May. The best way to avoid the flu this season is by getting a flu shot soon.

“You can protect yourself and others from getting the flu,” said Maria Stahl, DOH–Brevard administrator. “First and foremost, get vaccinated. In addition, you should avoid others who are sick, stay home if you are sick yourself, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, wash your hands often, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.”

The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone six months and older, including pregnant women. It can take up to two weeks after vaccination to develop protection against the flu.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting a flu vaccine every year as the first and most important step in protecting against influenza and its potentially serious complications. There are many different flu vaccine options this season, which include high dose and adjuvanted vaccine for adults aged 65 years and older.

CDC recommends getting a flu vaccine every year because flu viruses evolve quickly, and last year’s vaccine may not protect against the current year’s flu strain. Even if the flu vaccine does not fully protect against the flu, it may reduce the severity of symptoms and the risk of complications.

Getting vaccinated if you are healthy helps to protect our most vulnerable populations. People at higher risk for flu-related complications include children less than 5, adults over the age of 65, people with compromised immune systems, pregnant women and people who have existing medical conditions, such as asthma and obesity.

DOH–Brevard offers flu vaccines for children ages 6 months through 18 years of age at each of our clinic locations in Melbourne, Viera, and Titusville.

Visit FluFreeFlorida.com for more information on how to be a part of #FluFreeFL. For more information on influenza and influenza–like illness in Florida, visit www.floridahealth.gov/floridaflu.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @HealthyFla. For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.floridahealth.gov.

Reception set for Designers’ Holiday Craft Show

The 37th annual Designers’ Holiday Craft Show at Fifth Avenue Art Gallery in the Eau Gallie Arts District of Melbourne is “promising to be a wonderful experience for the holiday shopper.” The Opening Reception for the Designers’ Holiday Craft Show will be from 5:30–8:30 p.m. on Nov. 8. This year’s event will open Oct. 30 and will run through Jan. 4. The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery is located at 1470 Highland Ave. The phone number is (321) 259–8261 or visit www.FifthAvenueArtGallery.com.
By Mary Jane Kolassa  
mjkolassa@paradiseadv.com  
Paradise Advertising and Marketing

ORLANDO — From guided pony rides to nature trails for seasoned equestrians, and even horse yoga, Seminole County offers many wilderness areas and professionally run ranches to get your horse on!

Whether you’re an urbanite or country–raised, a Horse Experience at Hidden Palms ranch in Sanford will gain you an up–close understanding of the quote “The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit and freedom.”

Bring the kids (age 5 and up) for a one–hour encounter to brush a horse, learn horse safety, “tack up,” and a mini–riding lesson leading up to a horse ride.

Guided trail rides for up to five riders are also available for booking where eagle, osprey, hawk and even whitetail deer sightings occur.

CabaYoga LLC is an alternative holistic horse and yoga integration training and events program developed by founder Caitlin Terry. Here, trainers provide equine partners for ground and mounted yoga practice to help find balance and fearlessness. Equine yoga classes are offered seven days a week. For more information, visit, www.cabayoga.org.

Riding lessons and camps, guided nature trail rides, horse sales/leasing/boarding and birthday parties are all available at Equestrian Quest in Geneva. Private and group lessons are offered in: halter, hunt seat, saddle seat, Western pleasure, English pleasure, trail class and dressage.

Also in Geneva, on 22 beautiful acres, is Horse Power Ranch, which not only specializes in rental ponies for parties and events, but their facilities also feature an Airbnb farm stay, carriage rentals and a Rustic Barn Wedding or family reunion venue featuring full or a la carte package services.

Satellite Beach Library board to meet Nov. 12
The library board of Satellite Beach Public Library will meet at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12. The library’s address is 751 Jamaica Blvd. For more information on this meeting, call the library at (321) 779–4004.
Cape Canaveral Hospital library to offer patients, associates books to read as part of new program

By Michael Polarchy
michael.polarchy@hf.org
Health First

Patient delight is found in many ways throughout Health First’s Integrated Delivery Network. A new way comes in the form of books — and a lot of them.

“They came in droves and we have bags and bags of books,” said Leonne Sherr, manager of volunteer services at Health First’s Cape Canaveral Hospital. “It was unbelievable.”

Sherr said more than 1,000 books were donated during the summer to help fill the bookshelves in the new hospital library, a patient–driven initiative that will soon open.

“The books were stacked up everywhere,” Sherr said. Now, they’re properly shelved in Cape Canaveral’s Medical Plaza building on the second floor, where the library is located. It will provide a quiet place where patients, visitors and associates can select a book, sit back and unwind — page after page.

Each book has been carefully sanitized and its content examined closely to make sure it is appropriate for patients. “The books are color–coded with dots, and there’s a key that explains whether it’s an action, romance or adventure book,” Sherr said.

She said the goal of having a library is to give patients a way to enjoy a complimentary book that is hand–delivered to them.

Patients, visitors and associates will be able to open a link (cchbooknook.libib.com) on their smartphone or tablet, which shows what books are available in the library at that time. Once selected, a Health First volunteer or associate will pull it off the shelf and personally bring the book to the patient to enjoy.

“We try to make it really easy for the person we’re serving,” Sherr said. “These books are donated for the enjoyment of our patients, visitors and associates.”

This includes not taking a book from someone who hasn’t completed it when it’s time to leave. The patient will be allowed to take the book home. It is a small token of comfort that helps improve the wellness and health of the community we serve.

The library will have a grand opening soon.

Artisan Market at the Great Outdoors
scheduled Nov. 9; holiday gift shopping

The Community Services Association at the Great Outdoors in Titusville will host its annual “Artisan Market” from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9. A select group of local crafters “will present the best of their art.” Whether you are looking for seasonal decor, or gift buying, “you will find everything necessary to get you in the holiday spirit.”

More than 30 artists will display basketry, jewelry, laser engraving, crochet and knitted items, woodwork, crystal design shirts, Christmas trees and ornaments, tasty jams and more. Gift baskets will be raffled off with proceeds going to Relay for Life. And don’t miss the many varieties of handmade chocolates with proceeds benefiting local charities.

The Artisan Market is held inside the Plantation Manor at 145 Plantation Drive. Tell the security gate attendant that you are going to the Artisan Market.

For information on this event, contact Pat Thomas at (321) 360–2542 or email patsteve67@gmail.com.
PMC’s Primary Stroke Center recertified by Commission; recognized for its continuous stroke treatment excellence

By Kathleen Betancourt
kathleen.betancourt@parrishmed.com
Parrish Medical Center

TITUSVILLE — Parrish Medical Center has earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval and the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association’s Heart—Check mark for primary stroke care.

PMC’s recertification as a Primary Stroke Center extends its first—in—Brevard County achievement for area patients endangered by stroke’s potentially debilitating effects.

“Primary Stroke Center Certification recognizes health care organizations committed to fostering continuous quality improvement in patient safety and quality of care,” says registered nurse Mark Pelletier, chief operating officer, Accreditation and Certification Operations, and chief nursing executive. The Joint Commission.

“We commend Parrish Medical Center for using certification to reduce variation in its clinical processes and to strengthen its program structure and management framework for stroke patients.”

“We congratulate Parrish Medical Center for this outstanding achievement,” said Nancy Brown, chief executive officer, the American Heart/Stroke Association.

“This certification reflects its commitment to providing the highest quality of care for stroke patients.”

Stroke is a leading cause of death in Florida. Growing research shows, however, that stroke patients’ outcomes can be significantly improved when they receive treatment from an organized stroke system of care.

“The Joint Commission established the Primary Stroke Center program to set a care standard to protect and saves lives,” said George Mikitarian, PMC president and CEO. “Meeting that standard takes tremendous commitment, resources, and work, but we have long dedicated ourselves to providing the highest levels of patient safety, clinical quality, and healing patient experiences on behalf of the people and communities we serve.”

He added, “This Joint Commission’s Gold Seal affirmation of PMC’s quality stroke care means that patients and families can have confidence in the objective measurement, accomplishment, and results, of PMC’s treatment program.”

In 2010, PMC became the first hospital in Florida to participate in the Mayo Clinic telestroke program. Via a remote presence robot that stands five—feet tall, neurologists at Mayo Clinic’s Comprehensive Stroke Center in Jacksonville can remotely evaluate acute stroke patients and assist with diagnosis and treatment.

Quick administration of a drug called tPA to dissolve a stroke—causing blood clot and restore blood flow is part of The Joint Commission’s standards followed by PMC, said Dr. Gregory Cuculino, emergency department medical director.

“In many cases the drug results in the patient having minimal or no neurological damage from the stroke,” said Dr. Cuculino. “It’s one aspect of our approach to stroke care, which includes prevention, treatment and rehabilitation while always working as a team.”

Hospitals began to apply voluntarily for PSC certification from the Joint Commission in 2003 in response to proposed organized stroke system of care by the Brain Attack Coalition in 2000. The proposed stroke system of care promotes EMS routing acute patients to Primary Stroke Centers (PSCs), and Comprehensive Stroke Centers able to provide proven stroke care reliably and rapidly.

In 2004 PMC became the first health system in Brevard and third in the state of Florida to earn The Joint Commission’s PSC certification. And, every two years since 2004, The Joint Commission has evaluated and recertified PMC’s PSC. The most recent evaluation, in 2019, resulted in the latest recertification.

Effective July 1, 2019, Senate Bill 1460 mandates hospitals to be stroke certified by a nationally recognized certifying organization that is approved by AHCA by July 1, 2021. The Joint Commission PSC certification meets this requirement.

Florida Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary to host ‘Hoot in the Park’

Florida Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary will host “Hoot in the Park” from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 23, at the Wickham Park Pavilion in Melbourne.

Festivities will include a dog lure course ($15), live ambassador animals from Florida Wildlife Hospital, food, activities, and vendors with holiday gift ideas. The Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Animal Services Mobile Adoption Unit and its K—9 Unit will be there, too. Santa will be at the event for photos with children and families.

The lure course is great fun for dogs and spectators alike. You can reserve your spot ahead of time at www.lurecoursebrevard.com. A smaller lure course will be available for those who would like to try it for the first time.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit Florida Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary’s care for pets. Hoot in the Park is seeking sponsors. For more details on being an event sponsor, contact Tracy Frampton, executive director, at (321) 254—8843, extension 204.

The Florida Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to aiding sick, injured and orphaned native Florida wildlife and migratory birds, and to return them to the ecosystem.
HRAs will benefit roughly 800,000 employers and more than 11 million employees and family members, including many Americans who were previously uninsured, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Under the rule, starting in January 2020, “employers will be able to use what are referred to as individual coverage HRAs with tax-deferred funds to pay for the cost of health-insurance coverage that workers purchase in the individual market, subject to certain conditions,” said Dropeski.

The HRA rule, a new effort by the Trump Administration, increases workers’ choice of coverage, increases the portability of coverage, and will generally improve worker economic well-being, says the Department of Health and Human Services.

This new rule allows workers to shop for plans in the individual market and select coverage that best meets their needs. Eighty-percent of employers that provide coverage offer only one type of health plan to their employees, “leaving workers and their families with no choices and plans that may not meet their needs,” according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Because HRAs are tax-preferred funds, workers who buy an individual market plan with an HRA receive the same tax advantages as workers with traditional employer-sponsored coverage.

In addition to allowing individual coverage HRAs, the HRA rule creates an “excepted benefit” HRA. In general, this aspect of the rule permits employers that offer traditional group health plans to provide an excepted benefit HRA of up to $1,800 per year (indexed to inflation after 2020), even if the employee doesn’t enroll in the traditional health group plan, and to reimburse an employee for certain qualified medical expenses, including premiums for vision, dental, and short-term, limited-duration insurance.

This provision will also benefit employees who have been opting out of their employer’s traditional group health plan because the employees’ share of the premiums is too expensive.

Another new feature to roll out this Open Enrollment Period will give consumers’ improved access to health-plan quality information.

For the first time, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, or CMS, will require the display of the Five-Star Quality Rating System available nationwide for each health plan offered on the Health Insurance Exchanges, including Healthcare.gov.

Under the Five-Star Quality Rating system, Exchange health plans are given a rating on a 1-to-5 scale, with 5 Stars representing the highest quality.

Star ratings are based on a number of factors, including how other enrollees rate the doctors in the plan’s network and the care they receive, how well the plan’s network providers coordinate with enrollees and other doctors to give members health care that achieves the best results, and the overall administration of the plan including customer service and availability of information.

The overall Star rating is based on three categories: Medicare Care, Member Experience, and Plan Administration.

During the 2017 and 2018 Open Enrollment Periods, CMS conducted a pilot and displayed Star ratings on HealthCare.gov in two states, Virginia and Wisconsin. The pilot was expanded to include three additional states during the 2019 Open Enrollment Period. The display of Star ratings will now be expanded to every state during the upcoming Open Enrollment Period.

Intercoastal Insurance provides resources to help people understand and prepare for health-care costs during their working years and into retirement. Financial planners should include an insurance professional when creating a retirement plan for a client. “Health care is a significant expense over the long term and you have to plan ahead,” said Dropeski.
Welcoming Orthopedic Surgeons

Brevard County’s trusted surgeons and joint pain specialists join Steward Medical Group.

Orthopedic Surgeons and Joint Pain Specialists Kenneth Sands, MD and Anthony Lombardo, MD will be joining Steward Medical Group on October 31.

To make an appointment at their new location please call 321-541-1777 or visit melbourneregional.org.

Indian River Chamber honors Marine Bank & Trust CEO Bill Penney with Loy Community Service Award

VERO BEACH — Bill Penney, the president and CEO of Marine Bank & Trust, has been awarded the Alma Lee Loy Community Service Award by the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce.

Established by the Chamber in 1995, the award recognizes citizens of Indian River County who distinguish themselves professionally through excellence and privately through commitment to the community.

Since its inception, winners of this award have been community leaders known for their selfless service to our community.

Penney received the award at the Chamber’s Sept. 12 annual Awards Dinner at the Grand Harbor Golf & Beach Club. The award was presented to him by Alma Lee Loy herself, who said, “Thank you Bill Penney for your extra effort donated to your community and the people you love.”

“Bill Penney is a remarkable businessman, mentor and community leader in Indian River County,” said Dori Stone, president of the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce. “Since meeting Bill, I’m impressed with his ability to balance all the aspects of his life as he continually finds time to lend his support to community causes and needs. He gives 100 percent to everything he’s involved in and is easily one of the most approachable people I’ve gotten to know in this community.”

“Bill’s leadership in both the banking profession and his community service has made him a mentor for many that have followed in his footsteps,” added Chamber Chairman Robert Paugh. “He truly exemplifies the definition of being a servant leader throughout our community.”

“To be recognized for doing what comes natural and what feels right is rewarding, but to receive an award named for and presented by a local, living legend is humbling,” said Penney. “To me, this is not recognition for past service, but a remarkable inspiration to earn this honor on a daily basis. I thank the Chamber and its leadership for this opportunity. At Marine Bank, we take the distinction of being a community bank very seriously. Like Alma Lee, our goal is to give our ideas, hearts, and resources toward making our wonderful community an even better place. May her passion and grit continue to motivate us for generations.”

Alma Lee Loy, a native Floridian, was the first female elected to the Indian River County Commission, in 1968, and one of the first women in Florida elected chairwoman of a county commission.

She was appointed by Gov. William Haydon Burns to the Florida Association of Women’s Safety Leaders, served on the original board of Indian River Medical Center, and was appointed by Gov. Charlie Crist to serve on the Indian River County Hospital District board. In 2018, the Florida Commission on the Status of Women awarded her the “Spirit of Community Award,” for her service to the community as a positive role model for women and girls.

About Marine Bank & Trust

Marine Bank, chartered in 1997, has $273 million in assets with four full-service branches in Vero Beach, Sebastian and Melbourne. As the only community bank headquartered in Indian River County, the bank’s growth ties into the national trend of customers choosing to bank local.

Marine Bank has earned the coveted 5-Star Superior rating from Bauer Financial, the nation’s premier bank rating firm. In 2018 and 2019, Marine Bank & Trust was named among the “top extraordinary banks in the United States” by The Institute for Extraordinary Banking and received the Institute’s Banky Award for its commitment to strong community banking.

Marine Bank & Trust is an active community supporter, providing over $200,000 to more than 125 local nonprofit organizations in the market over the last five years. For more information on this bank, visit www.marinebank.bank.

Candlelighters to host event at the American Muscle Car Museum

INDIALANTIC — Candlelighters of Brevard will present its “Cars and Casino Night” from 5–10 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 2, at the American Muscle Car Museum in Melbourne.

“We are preparing for another spectacular event featuring a one-of-a-kind collection of muscle cars, a variety of casino games, complimentary beer and wine, catering by Wassi’s Meat Market and exciting prizes,” said the Candlelighters of Brevard’s Carolyn LaRock, adding that the prizes will include raffle baskets and a Big Green Egg grill. A vacation will be auctioned, too.

“We look forward to providing an unbelievable night and humbly request the community consider joining us as an event sponsor.”

Individual tickets for this fundraiser that benefits programs and services are available for a donation of $100. Sponsorships and individual tickets can be reserved at www.carsandcasino19.givesmart.com.

For more information on this event visit the website above or contact the Candlelighters staff by email at carolyn@candlelightersofbrevard.org or by phone at (321) 728–5600.
Infant Room. She recently passed away and her family donated a “substantial amount of money” to Space Coast Early Intervention Center. Kathy Murphy was a longtime volunteer for the Tim Wakefield Golf Classic and for Cycle Jam for the Kids event that raises money for Space Coast Early Intervention Center.

“She was a true friend to the organization,” said Clark. “She was totally dedicated to helping our organization. So we named the baby room in her memory,” said Clark.

“We will also have individual plaques on the cribs with the donors’ names,” added Withers. “Each donor provided $500 to sponsor a crib, which included the mattress, sheets and other items. And we have all 10 cribs sponsored. We’re pleased with the response from the community.”

The Kathy Murphy Memorial Infant Room is nicely furnished and the cribs are made of solid wood. “As a parent and having taken hundreds of parents through Space Coast Early Intervention Center on tours, they are looking to see if our facility is clean and appealing. Our goal was to create a baby room that was extremely impressive. It is bright and colorful with a lot of natural light. We do not believe there is another nursery like ours in the region. We’re proud of the Kathy Murphy Memorial Infant Room,” said Clark.

At Space Coast Early Intervention Center, children with diagnoses such as Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental challenges learn and grow alongside their typically developing peers.

“The inclusion model is a wonderful way to educate and care for our children,” said Clark, who has a master’s degree in education from the University of Florida and holds certifications in specialty areas within her field.

“The children with disabilities need to interact with typically developing peers so they can model the behavior. The typically developing children learn leadership skills, empathy, and caring, by helping their peers. She says Space Coast Early Intervention Center’s “unique inclusion program provides equal learning opportunities for all children — regardless of their ability — to ensure they receive the academic and social skills needed to succeed in life.”

Over the last three decades, Space Coast Early Intervention Center has provided high-quality education to children with and without disabilities in small classroom settings, she said.

Research has shown that these types of blended classrooms are advantageous for all students.

Space Coast Early Intervention Center’s primary school works to create an intellectually challenging curriculum that builds a strong academic foundation and love for learning, said Clark.

Students learn through strategic thinking, exploration, self-directed projects, and mastery level learning.

“We see beyond a set curriculum and into the distinct needs of each learner. What separates us from other schools in the area is that we facilitate the progress of our students through custom-fit curriculum to meet unique learning styles and developmental levels,” she said.

As a foundation, her school follows the Standards of the International Literacy Association and the standards set forth by the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics.

Space Coast Early Intervention Center uses curriculum provided by a variety of publishers that meet both national and state standards.

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Space Coast Early Intervention Center uses curriculum provided by a variety of publishers that meet both national and state standards.

The school also surpasses local and state licensing requirements through Apple accreditation.

Donations from individuals and businesses have helped Space Coast Early Intervention Center expand its programs, facilities, and services.

“We are very thankful for the support we have received from the community,” said Clark.

Her school has some of the area’s nicest playground spaces for youngsters, with slides and all types of fun activities. The facility was designed by area architect Dave Nagrodsky of DNA Architects and built by W&J Construction of Rockledge.

Space Coast Early Intervention Center is governed by a board of directors. The board chairman is Dr. Henry Perez of Florida Institute of Technology. He’s joined by Joshua Adams, vice chairman, Rock Paper Simple; Valerie Bohren, treasurer, Habitat for Humanity of Brevard County; and Sandi Lee, secretary, L3 Harris.

Rounding out the board are: Marcus Ingeldsen, MH Williams Construction Group; Brian Solomon, Volk Law Offices, P.A.; Kelly McBride, Coastal Behavioral Therapy; Randy Jones, parent representative; Dan Singleton, Brevard County Sheriff’s Office; Scott Thewes, Millennial Brands; Nick Stewart, Brevard Public Schools; Clark, executive director; and Tim Wakefield, director emeritus, who was a star pitcher with the “Boston Red Sox.”

“We have a great board of directors. Marcus Ingeldsen is the chairman of board development for Space Coast Early Intervention Center and he has done an outstanding job bringing on mission-driven board members. The school is in an incredibly good position right now. Everyone has worked really hard to get where we are today,” said Clark.
Suneera Madhani  
*Founder and CEO, Fattmerchant*

- As a technology innovator who revolutionized the payment/credit card landscape, Madhani offers a friendly platform of transparency, and a better overall experience for her merchants.
- Fattmerchant has experienced explosive growth raising almost $20 million in venture capital funding and employing almost 100 people.
- Madhani has been named 2019 Most Influential Women in Payments (Payment Source), Florida 500 Most Influential Business Leaders (Florida Trend), CEO of the Year (Orlando Business Journal), Top 40 Under 40 (Orlando Business Journal), Young Entrepreneur of the Year (IACC)

**FREE & OPEN TO STUDENTS, FACULTY & THE PUBLIC**

**Tuesday, October 22, 9:30 a.m. • Bernard Simpkins Fine Arts Center**  
EFSC - Cocoa Campus • 1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, Florida 32922

**Tuesday, October 22, 11 a.m. • Bldg. 16, Conference Center**  
EFSC - Melbourne Campus • 3865 N. Wickham Road, Melbourne, Florida 32935

The Simpkins Series is named after Bernard Simpkins, a highly successful entrepreneur and Brevard County business leader who established the sessions that have brought some of the nation’s top business innovators to Eastern Florida State College.
Florida Chamber Foundation

Continued from page 1

Florida growing jobs at 2.5 percent versus the U.S. at 1.4 percent. I certainly expect Florida to continue to grow jobs at a higher rate than the U.S. in the coming year.

The Metropolitan Statistical Area of Melbourne, Palm Bay, and Titusville has the second most diversified economy in the state. “And Florida has the 18th most diversified state economy, according to the latest data,” he said. “Many businesspeople in the state don’t realize that. They typically guess we are 35 to 45 when I ask at business luncheons. So Brevard and Florida are substantially more economically diversified than the U.S.”

Another good sign for Florida’s economy is the September rise in consumer confidence. The University of Florida’s “Consumer Sentiment Index” ticked up 3.9 points in September to 97.3 from August’s revised figure of 93.4.

The outlook toward future economic conditions improved in September. Expectations of personal finances a year from now jumped increased 2.5 percentage points from 104.5. Floridians indicated they have “high hopes” for U.S. economic conditions over the next year, with that component jumping 6.9 points, from 90.4 to 97.3, the greatest increase of any reading in September.

“Things are looking good right now, though there is a little uncertainty in the market,” said Dr. Parrish. “But if you’ve got to bet on a state to perform well, it’s Florida. You absolutely have to right now. And if you’ve got to bet on a county that has proven itself — as far as being able to attract businesses and retain businesses — it’s Brevard County.”

Dr. Parrish, who travels the state addressing groups of businesspeople, was the speaker for GrayRobinson’s Melbourne Community Leader Forum hosted Oct. 4 at the Hilton Melbourne.

“We have about 25 of these forums statewide, and probably 25,000 people in the various communities attend them on a yearly basis,” said attorney Erik Shuman, managing director for GrayRobinson’s Melbourne office.

“They are fascinating forums. We have leaders such as Dr. Parrish who come in and speak to our clients and friends of the firm. The attendees have the opportunity to learn more about what’s going on in their communities. We were delighted to have Dr. Parrish as our speaker.”

Shuman added that his firm’s local attorneys and staff have input on who the speaker will be for the Melbourne Community Leader Forum.

Deeply rooted in Florida, GrayRobinson is a full-service law and lobbying firm with attorneys and government relations professionals throughout offices spanning the state and Washington, D.C. Shuman practices in the areas of estate planning, guardianship, trusts and estates, elder law and Medicare planning.

The Florida Chamber is the only state Chamber in the country that has a fulltime chief economist. “We are heavy resource–rich online system that the business community, nation to have a fulltime chief economist. “We are heavy

Ten quick–read numbers on the Unemployment Rate, Income Migration, Sales Tax Revenue, Third Grade Reading Scores, Poverty Rate, Voter Participation, State of Florida Visitors, Consumer Sentiment, Chance for a Recession, State Housing Starts and Sales, High School Graduation Rates, and Land in Conservation.

All this at one site — 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A lot of the compiles are indicators of Florida’s future. The Florida Scorecard, at TheFloridaScorecard.org, provides leaders around the state and local stakeholders with metrics needed to measure progress within their own community.

“The Florida Scorecard has been one of the most rewarding things for me personally because it is helping communities,” said Dr. Parrish. “I’m an economist. I crunch numbers and tell stories. To watch the momentum of this project really take of round the state have been great. It is rewarding things for me personally because it is helping communities.”

He added, “When I started The Florida Scorecard, there were more than 1 million people in poverty in the state. Now we’re down to about 900,000 people and we’re chipping away every month. And we have a big prosperity movement underway at the Florida Chamber. There are a lot of exciting things going on at the Florida Chamber and the Florida Chamber Foundation.”

At the Melbourne Community Leader Forum, Dr. Parrish spoke about and emphasized the importance of grade–level reading and asked businesspeople to “adopt a classroom” in their neighborhoods. “It’s absolutely rewarding.”

Research shows that proficiency in reading by the end of the third grade enables students to shift from learning to read to reading to learn, and to master the complex subject matter they encounter in the fourth–grade curriculum. Most students who fail to reach this critical milestone faller in their later grades and often drop out before earning a high school diploma. Two–thirds of U.S. fourth– graders are not proficient readers, according to national reading assessment data.

At the local level, United Way of Brevard and Rolling Readers Space Coast are some of the organizations working to increase grade–level reading proficiency in schools.

The Florida Scorecard information is broken down county–by county — which is one of the reasons why this venture is unique — and positions Dr. Parrish’s organization as a leading go–to source for so many different metrics in Florida.

Generally, national statistics and state statistics are fairly easy to find on the internet, but when it gets down to the community level — where everything really begins — this information becomes more difficult to locate and the data is often outdated.

One of the closely watched metrics on The Florida Scorecard is the “Probability of a Recession,” found under the header “Business Climate and Competitiveness.”

Dr. Parrish asked his students in the Master’s in Applied Economics program at FSU, where he’s taught for the past seven years, to come up with a “recession indicator” as part of their degree work.

“They did a great job. I took it to the Ph.D. level. So every month, typically the fourth Monday of the month, I come out with a new probability of Florida being in recession in the next nine months. The percentage is updated on The Florida Scorecard. We get job numbers on the third Friday of the month. I work over the weekend calculating all the numbers.”

Florida’s percentage chance of facing a recession late next year is not “super high.”

“We’re seeing a global slowdown and there is uncertainty in the market. Still, there is less than four chances out of 10 that Florida will be in a recession in the next nine months, according to my model,” he said.

In addition to The Florida Scorecard, the Florida Chamber came up with an ambitious “Florida 2030” blueprint initiative. The Florida Chamber Foundation created the Six Pillars system, an organizational framework that identifies key factors that drive the state’s future economy, and helps communities and entities “speak with one voice.”

The Six Pillars are: Improving Florida’s Talent Pipeline for a Better Workforce; Creating Jobs by Diversifying Florida’s Economy; Preparing Florida’s Infrastructure for Smart Growth and Development; Building a Perfect Climate for Business; Making Government and Civics more Efficient; and Championing Florida’s Quality of Life.

At the highest estimate, Florida’s population is projected to increase to 26 million people by 2030, from 21.5 million people in 2015. Florida is now the third most populous state. Of that growth, more than half will occur in just 10 counties, one of which will be Brevard.

While the growth could potentially create issues with congestion, water availability, and increased need for schools and other public works, there are opportunities for a booming real estate market, business expansion, and increased capital investment.

The two–year 2030 research project engaged business and community leaders in each of Florida’s 67 counties, said Dr. Parrish, and identified key trends and factors that drive their regional economies.

More than 10,000 people in each of the 67 counties shared their views on what Florida needs to get right to succeed in 2030 and beyond, he said. They provided input at business meetings, luncheons, and other functions around the state, which resulted in creation of the Six Pillars to help guide Florida’s future.

“I am pretty confident saying I don’t think anybody has ever done anything like this, and we know why, because it is expensive,” said Dr. Parrish. “You can always hire an outside group to do a strategic plan, but this was Florida people providing the input. It is an awesome thing. Out of it came 39 goals for the state. They are posted at Florida2030.org. We believe nobody has done this in a state as large as Florida with 67 counties.”

According to the blueprint, Brevard County’s 2030 population range comes in at 649,200–704,000. Presently, 589,162 people live on the Space Coast. The number of net–new jobs needed in Brevard by 2030 is 29,647, according to the research.

The Six Pillars framework will help communities prepare for projected shifts in Florida’s labor market and the changing landscape of skills required for 21st century jobs, and much more.

“For all of our Florida Pillars we have multiple goals. They are goals we need to hit to be globally competitive, prosperous, and have a great quality of life in Florida. That was our mission in doing this project,” said Dr. Parrish.