By Ken Datzman

As president of the University of New Orleans, John Nicklow often told graduating seniors starting their careers "to be the best you can at what you’re doing, because sometimes opportunity is going to tap you on the shoulder when you least expect it."

When Florida Institute of Technology was seeking a new president and a nationwide search was underway, Dr. Nicklow’s name kept coming up as a possible candidate. "I was not looking for a job at all. I was happy where I was and was doing very well," he said.

His achievements at UNO stood out, including three years of enrollment growth for the first time since Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, gains in research productivity, improvement in student retention rates, and fundraising success. He was UNO’s president and CEO for seven years.

But after he was nominated the second time as a candidate for the Florida Tech presidency, Dr. Nicklow, a civil engineer, said he “started to think of this as an opportunity. I talked to people, did research on the school, and then decided to throw my hat in the ring. As an engineer, I had known of Florida Tech’s reputation.

Opportunity tapped him on the shoulder when he had least expected it.

Dr. Nicklow, a western Pennsylvania native, topped a list of more than 100 candidates for the Florida Tech presidency. On July 1, he became the school’s sixth president in its 65-year history, taking the reins from Robert King who served as interim president while the seven-member search committee narrowed the list to five finalists.

“I built some lifelong friendships and relationships in New Orleans. Now I’m ready to build some new ones in Brevard County,” said Dr. Nicklow. “Stacy and I are excited to be here. We’re excited about the future.”

Stacy Nicklow is Florida Tech’s First Lady. She has a doctorate degree in American literature from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. Her career includes years as an English professor. Their son, Ethan, is a Duke University graduate.

New Orleans is one of America’s greatest culinary destinations, and some of the friendships the Nicklows gained grew out of lunches and gatherings they had while at UNO.

“New Orleans has some 1,400 restaurants. The competition is fierce,” said Dr. Nicklow, who was an offensive tackle on the football team at Bucknell University, a Division I private school in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, where he earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in civil engineering.

Many of the restaurants in New Orleans have been run by generations of families. “Katie’s Restaurant and Bar in Mid-City is one of my favorites,” he said. “Commander’s Palace is a wonderful place, too. And Herbsaint Bar and Restaurant makes this amazing pasta dish that is topped with a fried poached egg. The pasta is made on-site. You know it’s good when you wake up dreaming about it.”

He added, “We have been getting around a little bit in the local market visiting various restaurants. Brevard has good restaurants, too. We’ll be exploring more of them.”

The first time he visited Florida Tech, in spring, Dr. Nicklow said he “felt a sense of family. It is a beautiful campus with great student engagement.”

The public is invited to the Florida Tech campus for the “Founders Day Celebration” from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 23. The event is set for the Panther Plaza. Dr. Jerome Keuper founded Brevard Engineering College, now Florida Tech, in 1958.

“I’m here at an interesting time in Florida Tech’s history,” said Dr. Nicklow. “The university has achieved some great things, but there is an opportunity to do more in different areas, such as growing our endowment, growing partnerships with business and industry, getting more students into the talent pipeline, and growing our research impact.”

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Please see Florida Institute of Technology, page 23
The NRL’s Blossom Point Tracking Facility provides command and control for Space Development Agency

The 13 satellites launching aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket are provided to the mission from commercial companies SpaceX, York Space Systems, and Lockheed Martin, and will join the 10 satellites already deployed in Launch 1 as part of the inaugural Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture (PWSA) to demonstrate the low–latency communication links to support the warfighter with a resilient network of integrated capabilities.

"NRL’s Blossom Point facility is ideally suited to solve the incredibly challenging command and control of this constellation," said Dr. Steven Meier, director of the Naval Center for Space Technology at NRL. “Our small and agile team provides space system mission management for government and commercial customers in every orbit regime.”

BPTF employs NRL’s Neptune C2 Software to automate ground resource monitoring and satellite tracking, telemetry, and commanding (TT&C). Neptune runs at more than 10 ground stations and operation facilities providing command and control for a diverse set of missions at all classification levels and can be interfaced with any mission–planning system and provide data to any payload data–processing system.

“All of the ground components are in pools of equipment and when a contact time comes up, it dynamically allocates all of those pieces in concert,” said Joshua Brooks, site manager of the Blossom Point Tracking Facility. “Neptune monitors all the components from the antennas to the workstations where our people are interacting with the system and is capable of swapping components in and out as needed as it executes the schedule of satellite contacts.”

The C2 challenge is in communicating with different types of satellites from different commercial providers, used for both communications and early missile warning systems, all in the same constellation.

The resulting lessons learned from the T0 mission will result in subsequent tranches with hundreds, if not thousands, of interoperable satellites in an adaptable, flexible, and persistent constellation.

In addition to C2, NRL’s Virtual Mission Management (VMOC) is used to manage a payloads’ planning and tracking. VMOC is a space–qualified, government–owned, cloud–based satellite mission planning framework providing offline and real–time mission planning capabilities through a web–based system.

“Neptune and VMOC function seamlessly together,” said Annie Lum, NRL Tranche 0 lean program manager. “Neptune keeps us in contact with the satellites and VMOC ensures the constellation is able to function together to include the ability to detect and track missiles with the Tracking layer and command and mission data transmission through the Transport layer.”

“This program demonstrates a critical partnership between government and industry that empowers U.S. space interoperability and provides our nation the advanced capabilities to guarantee our free and unfettered access to space,” said Meier.

About the Blossom Point Tracking Facility

The Naval Research Laboratory’s Blossom Point Tracking Facility is the nation’s first satellite tracking facility. BPTF provides command, control, communications, network engineering, and management of new and on–orbit assets. BPTF provides a unique operational concept that utilizes full automation and enables lights–out satellite operations. BPTF supports spacecraft operations in all orbit regimes. BPTF complements and supports NRL’s skills in space systems by providing compatibility testing, pre–launch, launch, and post–launch support, flight operations, and mission data processing.

About the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory

NRL is a scientific and engineering command dedicated to research that drives innovative advances for the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps from the seafloor to space and in the information domain. NRL is in Washington, D.C., with major field sites in Stennis Space Center, Mississippi, Key West, Florida, and Monterey, California, and employs about 3,000 civilian scientists, engineers, and support personnel.

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CBRE ASSET SERVICES
NOMINATE A FLORIDA LAWYER FOR OUTSTANDING PRO BONO SERVICE, OCT. 4 IS THE DEADLINE

By Francisco Digon-Greer
probonoawards@floridabar.org
The Florida Bar

TALLAHASSEE (Aug. 21, 2023) — Nominations for the annual pro bono service awards, which honor lawyers, law firms and associations that have contributed extraordinary pro bono service as well as judges that have served the public as it relates to pro bono legal services, are now open.

The nomination forms are available on The Florida Bar’s website and must be submitted by 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 4.

Pro bono publico means “for the public good,” and pro bono legal service is just one way that attorneys do their part to help make their communities better.

Each year Florida Bar members report donating millions of hours and dollars to help Floridians who cannot afford a lawyer with civil legal matters. During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, Florida Bar members donated 1.5 million hours and over 6.8 million dollars to legal aid organizations.

Every year, in a ceremonial session of the Florida Supreme Court, more than two dozen lawyers are honored by the court and The Florida Bar for the free legal assistance they have provided. Judges are also honored for their outstanding and sustained service to the public as it relates to their support of pro bono legal services.

For each of these members of The Florida Bar, as well as a law firm and a voluntary bar association, this honor underscores a professional commitment to service and acknowledges the many hours of pro bono work performed to help children, victims of human trafficking, the elderly, refugees, the poor and countless others that wouldn’t be able to afford the legal assistance they so badly need.

The 2024 pro bono service awards ceremony will be held at the Florida Supreme Court at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 18.

The annual pro bono service awards ceremony begins now, with the call for nominations:

The Florida Bar and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court invite nominations from legal aid groups, civic organizations, fellow lawyers, and regular citizens who know of a special lawyer, judge, law firm or voluntary bar that has freely given their time and expertise in making legal services available to the poor.

The nomination forms are available for the following award categories:

- The Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award
  - Presented annually by the chief justice to a lawyer to recognize extraordinary contributions in ensuring the availability of legal services to the poor. Named for the late Miami civil rights lawyer Tobias Simon, the award represents the Supreme Court’s highest recognition of a private lawyer for pro bono service. All current recipients of The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Awards are considered for this prestigious award, as are direct nominees who have demonstrated exemplary pro bono service over the course of their careers.

- The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award
  - This award is given to an outstanding attorney for each of the state’s 20 judicial circuits and to an outstanding attorney among the out-of-state Florida Bar members.

- The Law Firm Commendation
  - This statewide award, presented by the chief justice, recognizes a law firm that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the provision of pro bono legal services to individuals or groups that cannot otherwise afford the services. This award recognizes extraordinary commitment on the part of a law firm to provide access to the courts for all Floridians.

- The Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award
  - Presented by the chief justice, this award recognizes a voluntary bar association that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the delivery of legal services on a pro bono basis to individuals or groups that cannot otherwise afford the services. This award recognizes an extraordinary commitment to provide access to the courts for all Floridians.

- The Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award
  - Presented by the chief justice, this award is given for outstanding and sustained service to the public, especially as it relates to support of pro bono legal services.

- About The Florida Bar
  - Founded in 1949, The Florida Bar serves the legal profession for the protection and benefit of both the public and all Florida lawyers. As one of the nation’s largest mandatory bars, The Florida Bar fosters and upholds a high standard of integrity and competence within Florida’s legal profession as an official arm of the Florida Supreme Court. To learn more, visit FloridaBar.org.

Email probonoawards@floridabar.org for additional information.

**JT’s Bluegrass brings Midwest band to Titusville for Sept. 21 concert**

By Joyce Wilden
joyce@buzzbizpr.com
BUZZ Biz Public Relations

TITUSVILLE (Sept. 4, 2023) — When it comes to authentic Midwest bluegrass, Special Consensus has been around the block. Though members have come and gone, the four-piece Chicago band has been making acoustic music with a banjo, guitar, bass, and mandolin for nearly five decades.

Special Consensus will make a tour stop in Central Florida for a 7 p.m. show on Thursday, Sept. 21, at Shepherd’s Hall, 2063 Garden St., in Titusville.

The contemporary bluegrass band has 21 albums to its credit and is a two–time Grammy Award nominee for Bluegrass Album of the Year (2012 and 2018).

Their most recent album, Great Blue North, pays homage to the Canadian music community and is currently at number two on the Bluegrass Unlimited National Bluegrass Survey. The group has won six awards from the International Bluegrass Music Association. Band leader and banjo player Greg Cahill has been inducted into the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music in America “Hall of Greats.”

The Special Consensus concert opens the 2023–24 season for J.T’s Bluegrass, which has been bringing family–friendly top acts from the bluegrass world to Brevard County since 2007. Seats to see Special Consensus are $28 and can be reserved at JTSBluegrass.com or by calling (321) 222–7797.

Tuttleville bluegrass promoter J.T. Shealy said he is thrilled to open his next season of bluegrass music with the four musicians of Special Consensus.

“Titusville is Central Florida bluegrass country and we appreciate the real deal when we see it,” said Shealy. “I jumped at the chance to bring this fantastic group in to start off our new season of bluegrass.”

Special Consensus is led by banjo player Greg Cahill, and includes Dan Eubanks (bass), Greg Blake (guitar) and Michael Prevett (mandolin).

A full schedule of upcoming bluegrass events is available at JTSBluegrass.com, where visitors can sign up for concert notification.

**Orion180 is pursuing rating by AM Best**

Melbourne–based Orion180, which ranks No. 229 on the 2023 “Inc. 5000” list of America’s fastest–growing private companies, is seeking an AM Best rating. In the Sept. 11 issue of “Brevard Business News,” the Page 1 story on Orion180 stated that the company had an AM Best rating.

Orion180 is currently rated by Kroll Bond Rating Agency and Demotech.
IS THE EIGHTEENTH CIRCUIT AN ONGOING HUMAN TRAFFICKER?

BBN NOTE: John M. Stewart — a partner at Rossway Swan — is a past president of the 107,000 member The Florida Bar.

BBN 4138 PAGE 5
To Be Continued...
Industry veteran Eric Kmiec named editor-in-chief of the scientific journal ‘Gene and Genome Editing’

By Bill Schmitt
weschmitt@christianacare.org

WILMINGTON, Del. (Sept. 6, 2023) — Eric Kmiec, Ph.D., executive director and chief scientific officer of ChristianaCare’s Gene Editing Institute, has been selected as editor-in-chief of the scientific journal “Gene and Genome Editing.”

Kmiec served three years on the journal’s board before this new position.

“This leading journal in the field has created an environment where gene editing research can undergo rigorous review and provide the field with cutting-edge findings that benefit all,” Kmiec said. “We have a unique opportunity to fill a void in the field by focusing on clear messages about the foundational aspects of gene editing and accepting papers that cover groundbreaking gene editing discoveries.”

“I am delighted with Eric’s appointment and the plans he has to take the journal in a new direction,” said Susanne Steinginga, executive publisher of Gene and Genome Editing. “Eric comes with a wealth of knowledge, and every time I speak with him, I’m thrilled to realize how similar our goals and ambitions are for the journal.”

Kmiec is the founder and executive director of the ChristianaCare Gene Editing Institute. He is also the chief executive officer and scientific founder of CorriXR Therapeutics. He is widely recognized for his pioneering work in the fields of molecular medicine and gene editing.

Throughout his professional career, Kmiec has led research teams in developing gene editing technologies and genetic therapies for inherited disorders and cancer. His research has helped elucidate the regulatory circuitry that controls the gene editing of human cells. Current clinical research centers on developing CRISPR-based gene editing approaches for solid tumors. Squamous cell carcinoma of the lung and esophageal cancer are the lead protocols now advancing through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval process.

“I will encourage papers from scientists early in their career, and I hope to see scientists with strong voices publishing papers on the important molecular or biochemical aspects of the gene editing reaction,” Kmiec said. “I’d like to see the journal become the go-to publication not only for exciting therapeutic applications but, perhaps more importantly, for the foundational signs that will guide successful implementation.”

Other researchers and scholars in the field offer reflections about Kmiec’s appointment:

“The vision that Eric Kmiec has for this publication is very broad and all-inclusive, which is really great for the ‘applied science’ kind of people like me,” said Joseph Miano, Ph.D., distinguished university chair at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University. “There should be a space in the publishing world for initial reports on proven phenomena that doesn’t require years and years of work. If someone can put out a quick report on something that’s proven to be doable, that can ripple out and provide inspiration and backing for someone else’s genomic innovation. And that’s really what a journal is all about: reporting provable science for the benefit of everyone.”

“I’m a big fan of Kmiec’s pioneering work, and I’ve read many of his insightful studies on DNA repair machinery, homologous recombination and more recently leveraging CRISPR systems,” says Le Cong, Ph.D., assistant professor of pathology and genetics at Stanford University. “I am pleased to offer my support for his vision and work with Gene and Genome Editing, and I cannot wait to see how his knowledge of applied genome science and the world of rigorous scientific review combine to elevate scientists and their research.”

Gene and Genome Editing currently publishes methodological and translational research covering the spectrum of gene editing techniques and applications in any living organism. Its focus is on translational research with potential short- or long-term impact.

● About the Gene Editing Institute

The ChristianaCare Gene Editing Institute, a worldwide leader in CRISPR gene editing technology and the only institute of its kind based within a community health care system, takes a patient-first approach in all its research to improve the lives of people with life-threatening disease.

Since 2015, researchers at the Gene Editing Institute have been involved in several groundbreaking firsts in the field, including the development of the first CRISPR gene editing tool to allow DNA repairs outside the human cell which will rapidly speed therapies to patients and a unique version of CRISPR called EXACT that reduces the number of off-target edits to other areas of the genome, which is vital for further research and patient applications. Its researchers are currently developing a patient trial for lung cancer using CRISPR technology.

● About ChristianaCare

Headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, ChristianaCare is one of the country’s most dynamic health-care organizations, centered on improving health outcomes, making high-quality care more accessible and lowering health-care costs.

ChristianaCare includes an extensive network of primary care and outpatient services, home health care, urgent care centers, three hospitals (1,430 beds), a freestanding emergency department, a Level I trauma center and a Level III neonatal intensive care unit, a comprehensive stroke center and regional centers of excellence in heart and vascular care, cancer care and women’s health.

It also includes the pioneering Gene Editing Institute.

ChristianaCare is nationally recognized as a great place to work, rated by Forbes as the second best health system for diversity and inclusion, and the 29th best health system to work for in the United States, and by IDG Computerworld as one of the nation’s Best Places to Work in IT.

ChristianaCare is rated by Healthgrades as one of America’s 50 Best Hospitals and continually ranked among the nation’s best by U.S. News & World Report, Newsweek and other national quality ratings.

ChristianaCare is a nonprofit teaching health system with more than 260 residents and fellows. With its groundbreaking Center for Virtual Health and a focus on population health and value-based care, ChristianaCare is shaping the future of health care.

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Global advisory, investment firm Gordon Brothers acquires leading Germany–based electronics firm Telefunken

By Lauren Nadeau
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Senior Director
Head of Marketing & Communications
Gordon Brothers

BOSTON (Aug. 14, 2023) — Gordon Brothers, the global advisory and investment firm, has acquired the global consumer electronics brand Telefunken.

Based in Frankfurt, Germany, Telefunken has become one of the leading names in the electronics sector with a diverse portfolio of products ranging from video, e–mobility, domestic appliances, and audio.

Gordon Brothers will invest in the brand to drive further growth of the already successful enterprise within its existing product categories and bring Telefunken products to a younger consumer segment. The firm will focus on partnering with Telefunken’s current licensees and expanding the licensee portfolio internationally by leveraging Gordon Brothers’ relationships so the brand can continue to reach consumers globally.

The acquisition expands Gordon Brothers’ current portfolio of home and lifestyle brands to include consumer electronics, a vertical in which the global brands business has deep experience and expertise.

The firm previously revitalized Polaroid and helped the iconic consumer electronics brand find new life after acquiring it out of bankruptcy, transforming Polaroid into a licensing platform and once again making it relevant to consumers.

“We are honored to continue the incredible legacy Telefunken started in 1903 and grow the brand with current and new partners,” said Frank Morton, chief investment officer of Gordon Brothers. “Telefunken has opportunities for expansion and is well positioned to benefit from global industry growth within the consumer electronics, appliance and e–bikes markets.”

“Telefunken’s asset–light model is a natural fit for our portfolio of brands,” said Tobias Nanda, head of brands at Gordon Brothers. “Our expertise in the consumer electronics sector will help build upon Telefunken’s 120–year history.”

“Telefunken is poised for growth and enhanced global outreach,” said Henjo Klein, the former chairman and founder of Telefunken’s holding company. “Having developed and established a working partnership with Gordon Brothers over the last several years, I am more than confident they will uphold the brand’s legacy and steer Telefunken through the next chapter of growth.”

Gordon Brothers has been actively investing in, repositioning, and growing some of the world’s most iconic brands since 2003. As owners of several brands, including Laura Ashley® and Nicole Miller, the firm prioritizes expanding licensees and franchisees to bolster their e–commerce presence and develop more strategic wholesale and retail relationships.

About Gordon Brothers

Since 1903, Gordon Brothers (www.gordonbrothers.com) has helped lenders, management teams, advisors and investors move forward through change. The firm brings a combination of expertise and capital to clients, developing customized solutions on an integrated or standalone basis across four services areas: valuations, dispositions, financing, and investment. Whether to fuel growth or facilitate strategic consolidation, Gordon Brothers partners with companies in the retail, commercial and industrial sectors to provide maximum liquidity, put assets to their highest and best use and mitigate liabilities. The firm conducts more than $100 billion of dispositions and appraisals annually and provides both short– and long–term capital to clients undergoing transformation. Gordon Brothers lends against and invests in brands, real estate, inventory, receivables, machinery, equipment, and other assets, both together and individually, to provide clients liquidity solutions beyond its market–leading disposition and appraisal services. The firm is headquartered in Boston, with over 30 offices across five continents.

About Telefunken

Telefunken was founded in Berlin in 1903. With a pioneering spirit, Telefunken established over 20,000 patents in a broad array of global industries and has been known as the “Innovation Company.” Its landmarks include the first radio broadcast, first voice recorder, and inventor of the electronic TV camera. The company became a leader in electronic communication and a global player in consumer electronics, within audio, video, TV and information technology, industrial applications with data transfer, mobile communication, security, and solar technology supporting NASA’s space program with the first space solar panels. Based in Frankfurt, Telefunken has licensees throughout Asia, Europe, North America, and South America.
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Our business services are free. We look forward to helping you build your team and find the talent solutions you need to succeed.
Orion Space Solutions establishes consortium to accelerate collaboration between U.S. government, its partners

By Bill Adams
bill.adams@orionspace.com
Orion Space Solutions

LOUISVILLE, Colo. (Aug. 31, 2023) — In an era where quantum capability will delineate national security and strength in space exploration, Orion Space Solutions (Orion) has established the Consortium for Space Quantum Innovation (CSQI) in support of ongoing and future visions and needs.

The Consortium aims to accelerate collaboration between the U.S. government and its partners, industry partners, and academia to advance leadership in the realm of space quantum information science. This effort is in response to the National Quantum Initiative Act and serves as a pioneering platform emphasizing the relationship between quantum technology advancements in the space domain and national defense imperatives.

CSQI will chart evolutionary trajectories for research, development, and most critically, seamless integration of quantum technologies that are customized for space domain awareness.

Recognizing the evolving dynamics of space as a domain, the Consortium encapsulates a proactive blueprint for development of an integrated ecosystem of quantum spacecraft, sensors, and data platforms tailored for evolving customer needs in low earth, geostationary, and cislunar space. Through CSQI, Orion strategically anchors quantum technologies for the research, science, defense, and intelligence ecosystem.

Chad Fish, Orion’s chief operating officer and CSQI’s executive director, articulates the Consortium’s pioneering ethos. “The main goal of Orion’s CSQI is to both strategically and tactically anchor space quantum technologies within the operational epicenter of the nation’s defense, intelligence, and civilian priorities. It identifies and addresses the needs for enabling technology, standards, and a workforce to strengthen leadership in quantum science and to fortify integrated deterrence, synergizing joint force space integration and refining space operations interoperability.”

“This consortium stands as a paragon of collaborative synthesis and will work with stakeholders in the U.S. government and its partners, academia, and industry to identify and address needs for enabling priorities, technology and standards to support the emerging space quantum domain,” said Rachel Hauser, Orion’s vice president for strategic communications and deputy executive director of CSQI. “Establishment of CSQI is our deep commitment to elevating space domain awareness and operations capabilities into a realm of unparalleled quantum excellence.”

Equally paramount is the consortium’s focus on quantum standardization, aiming to institute stringent quantum benchmarks. This ensures an architecture of interoperability and reliability tailored to the idiosyncrasies of space operations.

Dr. Samih Fadl, senior vice president and chief quantum information scientist at Orion, who also heads up the company’s quantum physics efforts, highlights the strategic imperative behind their pioneering initiatives.

“Space is one of humanity’s last uncharted territories. Our primary objective is to provide the United States and its partners with the ability to integrate Space Quantum Sensing and Communication capabilities with interconnected spacecrafts and sensors into our NEXUS Electro-magnetic Data Mesh Network for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (the NEXUS Space Network). As chair of the Consortium, my priority is to ensure that we will increase our ability to conduct space quantum science and to bolster national defense, while advancing space quantum technology.”

HII’s Ingalls Shipbuilding division awarded $154 million contract

By Kimberly K. Aguillard
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Huntington Ingalls Industries, Inc.

PASCAGOULA, Miss. (Aug. 29, 2023) — HII’s Ingalls Shipbuilding division awarded a $154.8 million contract modification today for the modernization of USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000).

“This is an honor to serve the sailors of Zumwalt and to welcome them to our community,” said Ingalls Shipbuilding DDG 1000 ship construction manager Bruce Knowles.

“The Ingalls team is ready to support you in completing this important work.”

USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000) arrived in Pascagoula on Aug. 19 after leaving San Diego earlier in the month. The ship will enter a modernization period and receive technology upgrades including the integration of the Conventional Prompt Strike (CPS) weapon system, ensuring USS Zumwalt remains one of the most technologically advanced and lethal ships in the U.S. Navy.

In January 2023, Ingalls was awarded a $10.5 million contract for the modernization period planning of Zumwalt-class guided missile destroyers, USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000) and USS Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001). USS Michael Monsoor will receive the CPS install at Ingalls during a future modernization period.

Additionally, Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002) arrived at Ingalls in January 2022 and is undergoing a combat systems activation.

Zumwalt-class destroyers feature a state-of-the-art electric propulsion system, wave-piercing tumblehome hull, stealth design and are equipped with the most advanced warfighting technology and weaponry. These ships will be capable of performing a range of deterrence, power projection, sea control, and command and control missions.

In the last five years, HII has invested nearly $1 billion in the infrastructure, facility, and toolsets at Ingalls, enabling their people, improving product flow and process efficiency, and enhancing product quality. As a long-standing partner in the construction and system activation of Navy destroyers, Ingalls is able to leverage their 85-year shipbuilding legacy and modernized facilities to support future generation systems and platforms.

About HII
HII is a global, all-domain defense provider. HII’s mission is to deliver the world’s most powerful ships and all-domain solutions in service of the nation, creating the advantage for our customers to protect peace and freedom around the world.

As the nation’s largest military shipbuilder, and with a more than 135-year history of advancing U.S. national security, HII delivers critical capabilities extending from ships to unmanned systems, cyber, ISR, AI/ML and synthetic training. Headquartered in Virginia, HII’s workforce is 43,000 strong.

For more information, visit HII https://www.HII.com.
Chart Industries, 8 Rivers Capital to collaborate on commercial opportunities for hydrogen technology solutions

By John Walsh
john.walsh@chartindustries.com
Vice President, Investor Relations
Chart Industries, Inc.

ATLANTA (Aug. 10, 2023) — Today, Chart Industries Inc. (NYSE: GTLS) (Chart), a leading global engineering design firm and manufacturer of highly engineered equipment servicing multiple applications in the clean energy and industrial gas markets, announced that it has executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with 8 Rivers Capital LLC (8 Rivers).

8 Rivers is a climate technology company leading the energy industry toward achieving “net zero,” to evaluate 8 Rivers’ portfolio of proprietary licensable technologies and processes and identify where Chart’s technologies and systems can complement or bring added value to the 8 Rivers offerings.

This collaboration includes developing equipment for 8 Rivers technologies backed up by Chart’s decades of experience in the design and manufacture of cryogenic, compression and process technologies, to assist 8 Rivers in delivering a reliable and cost–effective solution to their customers. The companies will work together to identify and develop commercial opportunities to integrate Chart offerings into 8 Rivers projects.

8 Rivers is dedicated to pioneering the clean energy and climate future. It has developed new technologies such as 8RH2, a process to generate ultra–low carbon hydrogen with full carbon capture, and the Allam–Fetvedt Cycle, a revolutionary process which helps to generate low–cost power from carbon–based fuels without producing air emissions.

Through this collaboration, Chart would become one of the suppliers of choice for various liquefaction, refrigeration processes, or liquefaction and refrigeration equipment technologies, cold boxes, heat exchangers, compressors, fans, liquid hydrogen storage tanks and trailers, and other associated equipment needed to implement 8 Rivers’ technologies.

Cam Hosie, CEO of 8 Rivers, said, “I am thrilled to announce this significant partnership with Chart that will propel us closer to our goal of achieving net zero, driving rapid deployment of clean energy systems globally. Together, we can harness the power of shared vision, collective expertise, and a shared commitment to a sustainable future.”

“We’re looking forward to collaborating with 8 Rivers and building upon our combined expertise, in particular bringing our gaseous and liquid hydrogen solutions to our joint customers looking to achieve their net zero targets,” said Jill Evanko, president and CEO of Chart.

● About Chart Industries

Chart Industries is an independent global leader in the design, engineering, and manufacturing of process technologies and equipment for gas and liquid molecule handling for the Nexus of Clean™ — clean power, clean water, clean food, and clean industrials, regardless of molecule. The company’s unique product and solution portfolio across stationary and rotating equipment is used in every phase of the liquid gas supply chain, including engineering, service, and repair and from installation to preventive maintenance and digital monitoring. Chart is a leading provider of technology, equipment and services related to liquefied natural gas, hydrogen, biogas, and CO2 capture amongst other applications. With 64 global manufacturing locations and over 50 service centers from the United States to Asia, Australia, India, Europe and South America, the company maintains accountability and transparency to its team members, suppliers, customers, and communities. To learn more, visit www.chartindustries.com

● About 8 Rivers Capital

8 Rivers Capital is a Durham, North Carolina–based climate technology company. Founded in 2008, 8 Rivers is pioneering the clean energy and climate future through the invention and commercialization of infrastructure–scale technologies that enable the global energy transition. 8 Rivers develops technologies and delivers projects across multiple energy categories including clean fuels, ultra–low carbon hydrogen and ammonia production; clean power, transformative zero–emissions power cycles; carbon removal, hyper–efficient direct air capture; and clean industry, retrofit–ready post–combustion carbon capture for steel, cement, and power generation.

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Local company ‘Ask an Adjuster’ now the largest public adjusting firm in Florida with offices around the state, advocates for policyholders, educates consumers

By Ken Datzman

In 2006, University of Florida finance graduate Kevin Downs founded "Ask an Adjuster." Today, the Melbourne-based business is the largest public adjusting firm in Florida, having helped over 50,000 claimants recover more than $1 billion from insurance carriers.

A public adjuster advocates exclusively for policyholders. They are licensed and trained professionals who work to ensure that policyholder claims are settled in a fair and efficient manner.

"Ask an Adjuster" has offices around the state, including in Orlando, Tampa, Fort Myers, and Sebring. "We have the ability to get to any property within the state in about one hour," said Adam Copenhaver, a licensed public adjuster with Ask an Adjuster in Melbourne. "We have adjusters who live throughout Florida and we have support staff in our offices as well."

About 150 people work for Downs’ growing company, including more than 80 adjusters. The business serves both residential and commercial markets.

"Kevin Downs is an outstanding leader and an outstanding trainer in this industry," said Copenhaver.

"One of the things he teaches people across the state is how to use the tool called 'insurance.' If you are paying for something, you should be educated on how to use it if you need it."

Downs spent the first five years of his career selling insurance policies. Then back-to-back hurricanes in Florida in 2004 and 2005 put him on the path to entrepreneurship and creating a business that involves educating people about the role of public adjusters.

"Kevin saw that people were needing help with their property insurances, following those back-to-back hurricanes," said Copenhaver, a liberal arts graduate of William Penn University in Iowa.

In the aftermath of a hurricane or natural disaster, such as Hurricane Idalia, which hit parts of Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, policyholders may have questions about the insurance process, including what is covered and what isn’t covered.

"Public adjusters have worked in this state for more than 50 years to protect property owners. Before that, policyholders didn’t have anyone working on their behalf. When the insurance company sends an adjuster to assess property damages, that adjuster works on behalf of the insurance company. We are the advocate for the property owner," said Copenhaver.

Damage caused by wind and debris is covered by a residents’ homeowners insurance policy. However, that policy does not cover flood damage. This is covered by flood insurance, which is a separate policy provided by the National Flood Insurance program managed by the Federal Emergency Management Administration or other private insurance providers.

“Our biggest challenge as public adjusters is getting the typical property owner to understand that we have the knowledge, tools, and resources to help them in time of need, and to let them know they have rights. One of the first things we give property owners, if they need our help, is their policyholder rights under Florida law. Often, it’s the first time they have ever heard of it. So, it’s truly an educational process for us letting people know how we can help them," he said.

The “Homeowner Claims Bill of Rights,” as outlined in Florida Statutes, relates to the insurance claims process and the consumer’s responsibilities as a homeowner insurance policyholder.

For example, your insurance company must send you a claim acknowledgment within seven days after you submit the claim. Within 30 days after you submit a complete “Proof of Loss Statement,” if you requested it in writing, your insurance company must send you confirmation that your claim is covered in full, partially covered, denied; or being investigated.

Within 60 days after you submit the claim, you should receive full payment or payment of the undisputed portion of your claim, or a written denial of your claim, according to the Florida Department of Financial Services.

Many people have difficulty understanding the technical language of the insurance policy and the complicated procedures they must follow to comply with the policy’s terms.

“Our goal is to become an educational platform for property owners,” said Copenhaver.

“There is a lot of misinformation about filing claims. For instance, some people think they will be dropped from their insurance company if they file a claim with a public adjuster, or their rates will increase. A policyholder cannot be dropped from their insurance carrier by filing a claim that has to do with an act of nature," he said.

Employed exclusively by a policyholder who has sustained an insured loss, public adjusters manage every detail of the claim, working closely with the insured to provide the most equitable and prompt settlement possible.

A public adjuster inspects the loss site, analyzes the damages, assembles claim support data, reviews the insured’s coverage, and determines current replacement costs.

Most public adjusters charge a percentage of the total claim payout. "We work on a contingency fee basis," said Copenhaver. "The Florida Department of Financial Services licenses public adjusters, oversees them, and sets their recovery fees. If we have a successful claim and deliver a check to the property owner, there is a 20 percent recovery fee that is paid to Ask an Adjuster from the property owner. If we do not deliver a check, the service is free."

Every year, public adjusters help thousands of Floridians navigate the complex process of filing insurance claims, protecting policyholders and helping them secure fair compensation because of loss or damage to a home or business.

Please see Ask an Adjuster, page 19
Igna Young’s 8–koi marks 15th year in business, its headquarters building in Suntree leasing 7,000 square feet; health–care division earns ISO certification

By Ken Datzman

Fifteen years ago, Igna Young launched 8–koi Inc. in Melbourne and the company has made big strides in the government contracting arena.

The woman–owned small business has grown to support millions of dollars in government contracts and employ hundreds of people over the years. Her business operates four divisions: construction, design engineering, technical services, and health care.

She credits her success to the encouragement she received from her parents who migrated from Asia and pursued advanced degrees in science and technology, with her mother fulfilling a lifelong dream as a senior scientist at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center.

The number “8” in the company name “represents the cyclic nature of systems. The koi fish represents embracing adversity through the persistent focus on positive outcomes,” said Young, a University of Florida accounting graduate.

One of Young’s goals was for her company to have its own facility. And in 2021, 8–koi purchased a 20,000–square–foot facility at 2725 Center Place in the Wickham Road Business Center. The building sits on 2 acres.

Young invested in a renovation of the two–story building, with plans to lease some of the space. Her company moved into the new headquarters last year.

Now, it is looking to bring aboard a tenant or tenants to fill the 7,000 square feet of space 8–koi has available for lease. The space is currently set up with offices. The Wickham Road Business Center is zoned light industrial.

“We can divide the space for a couple of clients or have one business take all 7,000 square feet,” said Young, president of 8–koi. “There are a lot of options for the lessee.”

“We have a construction division so we can modify the space as needed for the client. Also, if a potential client needs SCIF space, we can make the adjustments and build out the space. SCIF space is for businesses or organizations doing classified work for the government,” she added.

SCIF stands for sensitive compartmented information facility. This type of space features an enclosed area.

Young said the tenant amenities include use of all the common areas of the building, such as the lobby, conference room, breakroom, and restrooms, as well as the services of the on–site receptionist.

“The tenant or tenants will also have their business name or names on our marquee sign in front of the building.”

The wooded Wickham Road Business Center is close to Interstate 95, U.S. 1, Viera, and Patrick Space Force Base.

In addition to purchasing its own building, 8–koi reached another milestone this year when it was awarded ISO 9001:2015 certification for its health–care division. The company received the certification July 4 which includes processes for human resources and personnel credentialing.

“That was a six–month process,” said 8–koi Chief Operating Officer Dean Rosenquist. “Our health–care division has been growing to serve our federal customers over the years and this was the logical next step to ensure that our operations were consistent and competitive for our next stage of growth.”

“The investment in ISO for a small business is significant, and we anticipate seeing returns in the way of more satisfied customers, management, and employees, which results in greater cost–savings overall,” he added.

By following the ISO 9001 Standard, businesses of all sizes can formalize key processes and develop a “quality manual” that outlines procedures to continually improve their processes within the “Quality Management System.” According to American Society for Quality.org, “ISO 9001 is based on the ‘Plan–Do–Check–Act’ methodology and provides a process–oriented approach to documenting and reviewing the structure, responsibilities, and procedures required to documenting and reviewing management in an organization.”

The initial certification is valid for a period of three years, until July 3, 2026. There are more than 1 million companies and organizations in over 170 countries certified to ISO 9001, according to ISO.org.

Young said 8–koi “will continue to build on our ISO certification. We plan to have the entire company certified, one division at a time.”

Her company currently supports health–care–related programs at Patrick Space Force Base, Fort Detrick in Maryland, and Walter Reed National Medical Center, among others.

8–koi employees are currently working within the division across the nation. The company’s capabilities and technical support services include medical simulation and training, medical administration, professional and ancillary medical staffing, and medical records, coding, and credential support.

Young said 8–koi’s health–care division was recently awarded a government contract for more than $500,000.

And Krista Dupell, 8–koi’s health–care program manager, has secured two new prime vendor relationships with InSource and AndaMeds. With access to dedicated account representatives and nearby distribution centers in Jacksonville and South Florida, 8–koi anticipates “greater efficiency and cost–savings” when provisioning supplies for their health–care division customers.

“In order to follow through on 8–koi’s promise to do business with a human touch, I pursued a relationship with these companies for medical supplies and some medications because they operate with the same values as we do,” Dupell said.

“These agreements greatly enhance our customer service when working with government and institutional health–care clinics and providers so we can offer a

BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Businesswoman Igna Young is president and founder of ‘8–koi Inc.’ She started her business from her home. In 2021, her company purchased a 20,000–square–foot building at Wickham Road Business Center in Melbourne. After renovating the facility, 8–koi moved its headquarters there, with the intent to lease some of the space. It is now seeking a tenant or tenants for 7,000 square feet. The space includes a host of amenities, including access to all common areas of the building. Young is president of the Women in Defense Space Coast Chapter and will be attending the national conference.

Please see 8–koi Inc., page 21
LSU biological engineering professor, team create advanced wound-healing technology; nanoparticles

By Joshua Duplechain
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BATON ROUGE, La. (July 17, 2023) — A new means of wound-healing technology could be available to surgeons and patients in the near future, thanks to a team of researchers from LSU Biological Engineering, Texas Children’s Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine, and Inha University in the Republic of Korea.

By injecting a lignin composite made of two types of nanoparticles — one is lignosulfonate, which is the byproduct of wood pulp production using sulfite pulping, and the other is lignosulfonate including calcium peroxide — at the site of the wound, researchers were able to enhance the rate of tissue granulation, the formation of blood vessels, and the infiltration of smooth muscle actin fibroblasts over the course of seven days. At 28 days after surgery, the lignin composite doesn’t need to be removed via secondary surgery.

In short, the wound was healed with minimal scarring. “Our hypothesis is that the dual function of the lignin composite — antioxidation and enhanced vascularization with locoregional supply of oxygen — will significantly improve the rate and fate of wound healing,” said LSU Biological Engineering Assistant Professor Philip Jung, principal investigator on the project. “The process is rather simple. Just one injection of the pre-cursor to the wound site and crosslinked with ultraviolet light for 30 seconds.

“In our experiments, we applied transparent film dressing after UV crosslinking. Then, we just waited. A surgeon doesn’t need to suture these wounds. Since the lignin composites are also subject to degradation after two weeks or so, the lignin composite doesn’t need to be removed via secondary surgery.”

Currently, Jung and the team are working through the commercialization process with LSU’s Office of Innovation & Technology Commercialization with the goal of making this technology as widely available as possible. They are also seeking funding from the National Institutes of Health to further the project and conduct undergraduate student training in tissue engineering for educational and workforce development purposes.

“The ultimate goal is to help patients suffering from this disease, and we will push this forward to clinical trials,” Jung said.

“Even though we cannot completely fix it sooner, we want to deliver this to patients to alleviate their pain and suffering to any extent. Occasionally, I remind my students that our project is not just a research project but also potentially one that is influencing therapeutics for those suffering from wound-healing issues every day.”

About the LSU Office of Innovation & Technology Commercialization

The Office of Innovation & Technology Commercialization works with the university research community to facilitate the evaluation, protection, and licensing of intellectual property created at LSU. This work maximizes the university’s impact on the intellectual, economic, and social development of Louisiana and beyond. LSU ITC’s mission is to advance innovation by serving faculty, supporting the research enterprise, and partnering with entrepreneurs and businesses to commercialize inventions that enhance the economy and benefit the public. To learn more about this and other technologies available for licensing from the ITC, visit ITC at LSU.edu.
Florida Tech earns high marks in new state and national rankings

By Adam Lowenstein
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Florida Institute of Technology

MELBOURNE (Sept. 5, 2023) — Florida Tech’s overall excellence and its individual strengths in a host of academic disciplines as well as faculty, food service, diversity, residence halls and more were on full display in the new rankings from Niche, a leading digital platform connecting students and families with colleges and schools. The 2024 Niche College Rankings, with updated data for 4,048 colleges nationwide, ranks schools in both state and national categories. Florida Tech received an overall grade of A–.

In the rankings involving Florida universities only, Florida Tech was No. 1 in Best Colleges with No Applications Fees, No. 2 in Top Private Universities, No. 3 in Best Small Colleges, No. 4 in Best Colleges that Accept the Common App, and No. 5 in Best College Food.

Additional Florida-only rankings included:
- No. 6 in Most Diverse Colleges
- No. 7 in Best Colleges for Psychology
- No. 9 Best Colleges in Florida
- No. 10: Colleges with the Best Professors

Nationally, Florida Tech was No. 26 in Best Colleges with No Application Fees, No. 42 in Best Colleges for Physics, and No. 54 in Best Small Colleges in America.

“Known as ‘Florida’s STEM University,’ Florida Tech offers undergraduate degree programs in all areas of science and engineering,” Niche noted in its profile of Florida Tech. “These majors are immersive, fueled by research and project oriented. In other words, they’re perfect for hands-on learners who are ready to get into the lab or out in the field and dive into great, exciting work.”

In total, Florida Tech was featured in 49 state and national rankings.

To compile the rankings, Niche uses an algorithm pulling from trustworthy sources including the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation and then combines that data with hundreds of thousands of reviews from current students and alumni.

“Florida Institute of Technology is an excellent private university! I loved my time at Florida Tech, and I hope to return to continue my studies in the future,” a 2022 graduate wrote in a review posted on Niche.com. Florida Tech “is perfect for those who prefer a smaller campus, a more intimate classroom environment, and approachable instructors.”

- About Florida Institute of Technology

The premier private technological university in the Southeast, Florida Tech is a Tier 1 Best National University (U.S. News & World Report) and a Top Technical Institute (Fiske Guide to Colleges), as well as a Best Value University (Forbes) and a top 100 global university for graduate employability (GEURS). Florida Tech is known worldwide for its strengths in aerospace, advanced manufacturing, aviation, autism treatment, biomedical science, cybersecurity and machine-learning, and marine science. It offers more than 150 bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in engineering, science, computing, aeronautics, business, psychology, and the liberal arts. The university is located in the dynamic and innovative city of Melbourne in the heart of the “Space Coast,” where students have been watching rocket launches from campus since the dawn of the Space Race.

Learn more about Florida Tech’s tradition of innovation:
floridatech.edu | Melbourne, FL
NEW YORK (Aug. 3, 2023) — Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB) President and CEO Mary Beth Powers has been named to the third-annual Forbes “50 over 50 Impact List.” This prestigious list celebrates 50 trailblazing female leaders who are building a better world. Notably, Powers is the first woman to lead CMMB, a faith-inspired global health nonprofit, in its more than 110-year history.

“It’s a tremendous honor, and I’m humbled to be listed among such exceptional women, some of whom I’ve long considered heroes of my own,” said Powers. “My hope is that this recognition inspires more women to take on leadership positions, especially in faith-based organizations like CMMB, which primarily focuses on the needs of women and children.

This year’s 50 over 50 spotlight highlights Powers’ 30-year career at the helm of innovative global health programs, throughout which she served as an expert and policy advocate for maternal and child health.

She spent much of her career at Save the Children, serving as chief of the Child Survival Campaign and founding chair of the Frontline Health Workers Coalition — a group that continues to elevate the role of community health workers today.

Before joining CMMB, Powers served as vice president of programs at Dalio Philanthropies, a private foundation that has given $1 billion to a variety of high-impact programs. At CMMB, she leads the organization’s distribution of an annual $400 million worth of medicines and medical supplies around the world.

Using her vast development experience, she also supports CMMB’s community-led programs that strengthen access to health in places around the world where resources are unacceptably scarce. Partnering with other Catholic organizations, she served on the steering committee of the Catholic Cares Coalition which campaigned for vaccine equity.

Powers has supported health programming in over 25 countries, and credits her passion for service and social justice with her parents’ desire to make a difference through civil and community service, and her training at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, a Rotary Fellowship at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica, where she studied development economics, and public health studies at the University of Michigan.

About Catholic Medical Mission Board
CMMB immediate and long-term medical and development aid to communities affected by poverty and unequal access to health care. Inspired by faith, and with a special focus on women and children, we deliver sustainable health services in Haiti, Kenya, Peru, South Sudan, and Zambia. It also has partners delivering health care in some of the world’s most challenging settings. For over a century, the organization has worked to strengthen and support communities through the distribution of medicines and medical supplies, the development of health care programs and initiatives, and the placement of skilled volunteers. Over the last 10 years, thanks to supporters, CMMB, through its Medical Donations Program, has distributed more than $5 billion in medicines and medical supplies to 83 countries across the globe, ensuring the promise of healthier lives worldwide. For more information, visit CMMB.org.
GAINESVILLE (Sept. 5, 2023) — Communities are hungry for urban food production. Engagement continues at an all–time high when there is opportunity to grow food in containers, hydroponic systems, on rooftops, in community gardens and any available green space.

Why? Urban food production, also called urban agriculture, provides an avenue to grow food locally, fight food insecurity and reduce food deserts.

But wait, there is more. The benefits of urban farming go beyond creating community cohesion and providing green space. It could also increase biodiversity by encouraging pollinator habitats and developing educational and entrepreneurial opportunities for youth and adults.

That’s why leading scientists from the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and Extension faculty are offering the popular, award–winning Sustainable Urban Food Production Short Course to South Florida communities for the fourth consecutive year.

Classes start on Oct. 16. Participants can choose from in–person and virtual formats. Use this web address to register, browardurbanag2023.eventbrite.com.

“Urban agriculture has gained increasing public and private interest as nature–based solutions and improving ecosystem services are achieving urban sustainability,” said Jiangxiao Qiu, an associate professor of landscape ecology at UF/IFAS Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center (FLREC) and course co–organizer. “This program covers many aspects of urban agriculture from regulation and marketing to production systems and much more.”

Participants meet on Mondays from 1–4:30 p.m. for six weeks through Nov. 20.

The course features an easy–to–follow curriculum for all audiences including homeowners, educators, community gardeners, urban farmers and entrepreneurs interested in this developing industry.

Scheduled in–person sessions include materials, site visits to urban farms, and classroom instruction at FLREC, located at 3205 College Ave., in Davie.

Participants will receive continuing education units, and a certification after completing this short course.

Class dates and topics covered include:

- Oct. 16 — Introduction to Sustainable Urban Agriculture & Regulations
- Oct. 23 — Business and Marketing Plan, and Financial Resources
- Oct. 30 — Urban Food Production Systems
- Nov. 6 — Best Management Practices
- Nov. 13 — Technology Integration in Urban Agriculture
- Nov. 20 — Post Harvesting & Food Handling

“Our course was recognized with the 2023 Excellence Award in Sustainable Agriculture by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents as a successful program that increased adoption of sustainable agriculture practices among local farmers,” said Lorna Bravo, program co–organizer and director at UF/IFAS Extension Broward. “The knowledge gained from the short course will help participants start, manage, and expand their operations in local food production in urban and peri–urban settings.”

Organizers also hope participants walk away with understanding the diverse opportunities available for involvement in urban agriculture. There are many different types of urban agriculture. Some are commercial and some are nonprofit.
By Alisa Picerno
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Mold may be lurking in countless classrooms, students exposed to health hazard in schools across New England

SUFFIELD, Conn. (Sept. 6, 2023) — The excitement of students returning to the classroom has been replaced with concerns over recently reported mold contamination in schools across the region. Mild to severe reactions to hidden mold include asthma, allergies, breathing problems, coughs, colds, headaches, and sore throats. However, the solution may pose its own health hazards, according to local indoor air quality specialists.

“Often times, people want to use harmful chemicals to clean up the visible mold colonies,” says Laura Champagne, co-founder of Natural Home Solutions LLC, serving Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire. “The issue with this approach is that the chemicals stop at the surface and are used up in the process and evaporate away. The superior way to fight the mold is by using enzymes.”

Specifically, Champagne and partner Jim Oliver treat affected areas with EnzyCleanse™, created by scientists at XSPOR Life Sciences as an alternative to toxic chemicals. The proprietary green formula incorporates natural enzymes that act as a catalyst breaking down mold roots and spores and eliminating contamination. EnzyCleanse™ continues working to prevent new growth long after the treatment.

EnzyCleanse™ is applied using a fogger that produces micro-droplets small enough to penetrate contaminated surfaces and areas. The process includes fogging the duct work as well, so that the air that is being circulated around the buildings is safe as well. It is non-toxic, organic, and safe around humans or pets.

“Traditional mold removal may also incorporate a destructive strategy that requires tear-down, removal, and replacement of contaminated surfaces,” said Oliver. “This type of drastic action is often labor-intensive and far more costly than our eco-friendly abatement solutions.”

Oliver explains moisture problems in old school buildings with aging HVAC systems can be exacerbated by scheduled maintenance activities or conditions during school breaks such as:

- Increased moisture because of painting or carpet cleaning
- High humidity during the summer
- No air conditioning or heating system operation (or reduced use) when school is not in session

“Mold thrives on dark, humid, warm environments and can live undetected within porous materials and in places such as wall cavities,” said Oliver. “The key to controlling indoor mold growth in schools is to control moisture.”

After cleaning the affected areas, the best way to prevent new growth is to run dehumidifiers and air scrubbers. The dehumidifiers are in place to remove the humidity and the air scrubbers will work to remove the spores from the air. Air scrubbers are important for two reasons; they will decrease the spores so that they do not continue to grow and they will make the air less harmful.

“Imagine mold as a dandelion that gives off white seeds,” says Champagne. “The seeds fly through the air and once they land back in the grass and make their way back into the soil, they then create new dandelions. Microscopic mold spores travel through the air and when they land on wood, drywall, and other moist, porous surfaces, they continue to grow new mold.”

Musty smells can be the most effective way to detect mold. Black spots can be seen on surfaces. Water stains or warped materials can also be an indicator of possible mold contamination; however, Champagne notes that the best way to detect mold is through an air quality test. The air in a particular area gets tested and sent to a third-party lab. Sometimes it is also appropriate to do a surface strip test that also gets sent to the same third-party lab. Regular moisture testing of the surfaces in question are also helpful to track the humidity levels and determine the source of the water. The presence of mold is always associated with the presence of water.

“Parents and staff who suspect mold should immediately report their concerns to a trusted adult, administration or the board of health,” suggests Oliver. “We take great pride in restoring a healthy environment for children and educators to thrive.”

About Natural Home Solutions LLC

Natural Home Solutions LLC is committed to keeping homes and businesses safe from mold contamination. Serving Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire, the professional team performs high-quality mold testing and nontoxic, non-destructive remediation at an economical price. As one of only a few EnzyCleanse™ licensees in the region, the company is proud to offer this safe, green alternative with a two-year performance guarantee. EnzyCleanse™ is an organic, naturally-derived mold elimination solution created by the scientists at XSPOR Life Sciences. Call 860–436–7021 for an estimate. Learn more at naturalhome.solutions.
Copenhaver made a career switch. He joined Ask an Adjuster in its marketing and business development department and became vice president of that department. And in 2021 was awarded his license as a public adjuster.

“At that time, I made the decision to step out of the employee side of the company and just solely pursue my own business as a public adjuster,” he said. “I’m a 1099 contractor and work exclusively for Ask an Adjuster. My company has a wonderful relationship with Ask an Adjuster.”

A 1099 contractor, also called an independent contractor, is a term used to describe self-employed people who require a company to issue Internal Revenue Service Form 1099-MISC.

How effective are public adjusters? A study by the state of Florida’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability showed that “catastrophe claims handled by a public adjuster resulted in payments that were 747 percent higher in the average claim payout for policyholders,” said Copenhaver.

OPPAGA is a research arm of the Florida Legislature. It was created in 1994 to help improve the performance and accountability of state government.

Anyone can have a “catastrophic” loss at any time, but a “catastrophe” claim refers to a single event, a widespread, natural disaster loss from flooding or a hurricane, for example.

For the survey, OPPAGA examined 76,231 insurance claims, including 61,234 non-catastrophe claims and 14,997 catastrophe claims. Public adjusters represented policyholders in 26 percent of non-catastrophe claims and 39 percent of catastrophe claims.

For the non-catastrophic claims filed, policyholders received 574 percent more in claim settlements. Property insurance covers damage from windstorms, such as hurricanes and tornadoes, to the “residence premises.” These premises can be a single-family home, a duplex where the policyholder lives in one of the units, or any other building where the policyholder resides, as shown on the insurance policy declarations page.

A standard homeowners’ policy also applies to attached structures, such as a garage or deck, and “other structures” that are unattached, such as a separate garage building or shed, and swimming pools.

“We are passionate about helping policyholders,” said Copenhaver. “As public adjusters, we can come in at any point to help clients. Generally, we get involved at the beginning of the claim, but sometimes we get involved at mid-claim in the process or even post-claim denial. We stand ready to help policyholders.”
National Civics Bee expands in response to growing demand for civics education, should be taught in school

By Yagmur Cosar
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Senior Director, Communications
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

WASHINGTON (Sept. 6, 2023) — As the new school year begins, the National Civics Bee — an initiative created by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to promote greater civic knowledge among young people, their families, and communities — is gearing up for a significant expansion. This comes in response to a clear demand from America’s parents, especially mothers, who have expressed a strong desire for enhanced civics education for their children.

A recent survey commissioned by the U.S. Chamber Foundation revealed that an overwhelming 90 percent of mothers believe civics should be taught in school. Seventy-three percent of mothers believe civics should be taught in school. Currently, the National Civics Bee is accepting applications from state and local chambers across America to host the competition in their communities. The deadline to apply is Sept. 30, 2023. Chambers and businesses interested in participating should email civictrust@uschamber.com for more information. Parents and teachers who wish to see the Civics Bee expand to their local communities can visit https://www.momselect.com/national-civics-bee for easy access to sharable tools or contact their local chamber.

“The more my children know about our government, the better prepared they will be when it comes time to vote or support their ideas in our community,” said Amy Mascott, mother of three, educator, and longtime author of teachmama.com. “Teachers today have so much on their plate, it’s great to see the business community taking on this role in promoting educational opportunities like civic learning to help them become informed and engaged citizens.”

The National Civics Bee promotes and tests civics knowledge, as well as community engagement in cooperation with state and local chambers. Students in grades six, seven, and eight take part in the competition by submitting an essay. After a distinguished panel reviews the 500-word essays, the top 20 students in each community participate in a live competition at the local level. Winners from local competitions then compete at the state level for prizes and recognition.

Now in its third year, the competition has grown from five communities in 2022 to more than 50 in 2023. To date, the National Civics Bee has engaged more than 2,000 students across nine states, and brought together parents, educators, business owners, public officials, and community leaders to make civics education a priority for America’s children.

Due to overwhelming interest, next year the competition will expand to include children in 30 states, including Indiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. Also, for the first time in 2024, students will have the chance to compete in a national round of the National Civics Bee to showcase their civics knowledge on a national stage. By 2026, the National Civics Bee will be running in all 50 states.

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“We’ve received a groundswell of support and excitement for increased civic engagement, both inside and outside the classroom,” said Hilary Crow, vice president of civics at the U.S. Chamber Foundation. “This is a national movement in the making. We invite you to join us in shaping a brighter future for America’s next generation.”

For more information about the National Civics Bee, visit https://civics.uschamberfoundation.org/national-civics-bee.

About the Survey

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation commissioned BSM Media, a leading mom marketing agency, to conduct a survey of America’s mothers. The online survey explored topics related to civics, local community involvement and the respondents’ aspirations for their children. A copy of the survey results can be found at https://www.momselect.com/national-civics-bee/media.

About National Civics Bee

The National Civics Bee, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Civic Trust, is an annual competition aimed at improving civics education and literacy among middle school students, their families, and communities. The National Civics Bee helps elevate civics as a national priority through a network of state and local chambers across the country. The National Civics Bee is made possible through the generous support of its founding partner, the Daniels Fund, and other funders.

About U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation harnesses the power of business to create solutions for the good of America and the world. It anticipates, develops, and deploys solutions to challenges facing communities.

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During the COVID–19 pandemic, 8–koi expanded its health–care division to fill purchase orders for scarce and critical medical supplies to organizations in need. The company provided pharmaceuticals and personal protective equipment including custom masks, Tyvex suits, Nitrile gloves, shoe covers and surface disinfectants to support COVID–19 alternative care sites across the United States.

8–koi’s construction division has been awarded about $10 million in contracts by the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command in Jacksonville.

“We have been doing work at that naval base and we will continue to do so with these new contracts,” said Young, who is president of the Women in Defense Space Coast Chapter, which is aligned with the National Defense Industry Association based in Arlington, Virginia.

The NDIA is comprised of affiliates, chapters, and divisions. It is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association that was funded to educate constituents on all aspects of national security. The Space Coast Chapter was founded 10 years ago.

The chapter provides networking and professional development opportunities to promote the role of women and men in national defense and security, supports military service members, and encourages partnerships within the local contractor community, defense industry, and among military personnel.

“We just hosted our retreat and got together with the Women in Defense Central Florida Chapter and the Women in Defense Greater Tampa Bay Chapter,” Young said. “We did some planning and some socializing. It was a great experience for all involved.”

The retreat was held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Cocoa Beach.

She said the Space Coast Chapter recently awarded $16,000 in STEM scholarships to 21 Brevard County students. “The last two years we have seen record funding for our chapter’s scholarships,” said Young. “As a non-profit, we are proud of the work that we do to raise money for scholarships for area students. We host various fundraisers throughout the year, including the annual Sandbagger Invitational Golf Tournament, which was held May 19 at Baytree National Golf Links in Melbourne.”

The scholarship awards are based on academic achievement, field of study, work experience, statements of interests, and recommendations.

“We had an overwhelming response for scholarships this year,” said Leslie Tibbetts of Community Credit Union, the Women in Defense Space Coast Chapter STEM chair. “It’s an honor to lend support to students in the community and help to build a more diverse and stable workforce on the Space Coast.”

Area companies are invited to make a tax–free donation in any amount to the Women in Defense Space Coast Chapter STEM Scholarship Fund. To learn more about the scholarship program, visit http://scwid.org/homepage/space–coast–wid–stem–scholarship.

“Today’s students are the future of the defense industry in this nation,” said Young. “And the Women in Defense Space Coast Chapter is thrilled to fund STEM scholarships for students in our region. This is one of our chapter’s missions.”

The chapter established the scholarships to encourage women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Since its inception in 2013, the chapter has awarded more than $90,000 in scholarships and has contributed to various STEM–related events in partnership with area businesses, nonprofits, and federal agencies.

Young said she will be attending the 2023 Women in Defense National Conference Sept. 26 at the Renaissance Capital View Hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

This year’s theme is “Tools and Ideas for Asymmetric Advantage.” The nation’s leading women and men in defense will gather to share ideas on “how to maximize professional opportunities and collaborate to give U.S. warfighters a decisive competitive advantage across the spectrum of conflict in all domains.”

Senior leaders and young professionals from industry and government will participate in panels offering suggestions, advice and sharing experiences. And attendees will network and hone their knowledge, skills, and abilities during small breakout sessions.

“I am looking forward to the national conference,” said Young. “It’s always an outstanding event filled with timely information and it is a great networking opportunity as well.”
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The national investment in university research helps fuel U.S. economic growth and prosperity.

Research conducted at colleges has a dual benefit. It builds the foundation for advances in various fields, from medicine to national security, and it helps train students to be scientific leaders and innovators.

“Florida Tech does cutting-edge work in science research and development, with opportunities for students to be involved,” said Dr. Nicklow. “Some of our undergraduate students are doing research that many graduate students don’t do. They are getting hands-on experiences. I think most people would be amazed at the research they are doing.”

The school is looking to grow its $100 million endowment as it makes strides to fund scholarships for high-achieving students, as well as fund professorships designed to attract leading experts to campus for teaching and research.

“We are a young institution and I see an opportunity to grow in terms of philanthropy and our endowment. It’s not like our alumni have been giving for 100 years,” said Dr. Nicklow, who began his career as an environmental engineering officer with the U.S. Public Health Service.

Next fall, Florida Tech supporters will have one more reason to invest in the school.

Florida Tech will be opening the four-year Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine. This will be the first satellite expansion for BCOM, which has its flagship facility on the New Mexico State University campus in Las Cruces.

“We will have an incredible medical school on our campus, that’s huge,” said Dr. Nicklow. “There will be a clear pathway for students in our pre-med program all the way through medical school.”

“That’s a great recruiting tool and the program will present a good opportunity for students. Hopefully, it will support our medical community. As we attract more business and industry, the demand grows for health care,” he said.

The responsibilities of college presidents include budget and financial management, fundraising, managing a senior-level team, governing board relations, and enrollment management.

Dr. Nicklow will be involved in those key areas, and as Florida Tech president he is putting a renewed focus on setting strategic priorities, including attracting more students locally and from around the state. “We offer some outstanding opportunities for students to gain real-world experiences while offering businesses new perspectives on how to view challenges within their company or their industry.”

Throughout his career in education, Dr. Nicklow has worked closely with kindergarten through grade-12 schools, community colleges, civic groups, philanthropic entities, and other organizations. “We are all in this together. That is the message and philosophy I believe in. We are together as a community asset.”

He recently visited the Eddie Lee Taylor Sr. Community Center and Neighbor Up Brevard, both in Melbourne.

“Engaging kids in STEM at an early age at community centers is something we see as an opportunity as we reach out. Some students may not understand what STEM means beyond it being a buzzword. With an education in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, for example, these kids can have a career in aerospace engineering with Blue Origin, or name the company.”

He added that there are a “lot of different types of programs and majors that are included in STEM education.”

The broad-based definition includes occupations in accounting and finance, environmental sciences, and health-related fields.

Growing enrollment at Florida Tech is one of Dr. Nicklow’s top priorities, including attracting more students locally and from around the state. “We offer some outstanding Merit Scholarship packages, as well as a combination of merit and need-based programs to Brevard County students. That was one of the questions I was asked early on. If we are going to be a community asset, how are we partnering with local families and local schools? We are doing a much better job providing the resources necessary for a Florida Tech education than I had thought.”

Dr. Nicklow said about one-third of Florida Tech’s incoming class is from Florida.

About 12 percent of students are international. “That used to be much higher. I think the international student market really hasn’t recovered post-COVID for a lot of institutions.”

In addition to traditional students, he said Florida Tech will focus on underserved populations. “I would love to see more women and underrepresented populations from Arizona State University,” he told them to make sure a student was included in the group.

“I saw some surprises looks in the room. That is when I realized perhaps this is new. Students are our partners. They are going to be our alumni. They are going to be our primary supporters in the future. We must make sure they have the best experience possible at Florida Tech.”

Research studies in higher education say institutions must develop a “student-centric model of customer service.”

A study conducted by “Inside Higher Ed” and “College Pulse,” with support from Kaplan Inc., provides telling information about how higher education leaders should prepare their staffs and their departments to best support students in an evolving environment.

The business community also has a partner in Dr. Nicklow and Florida Tech. He was a community-builder at UNO and is taking the same approach at the private Melbourne school. He said he plans to work closely with businesses.

“Mentorships are something I have focused on quite a bit. I want the business community to know we are here to help them in a variety of ways. I want to be at the table when new businesses are being recruited because businesses need talent, and one of the incentives for recruiting companies is education. Florida Tech can provide certain qualified leads in terms of talent. We can provide graduate and professional development to employees. We can teach on-site at their business. We can be connected at the hip with businesses.”

Benefits for businesses include internships and mentorships. These programs can provide students real-world experiences while offering businesses new perspectives on how to view challenges within their company or their industry.

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