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Rolling Readers to mark 25th year with 'Space Coast River Jam' on May 13

By Ken Datzman

Nonprofits are generally nimble, adaptive, responsive, and innovative. And they have the ability to mobilize people to action, much like Space Coast Rolling Readers Inc. has been doing for more than two decades.

One of the smallest–budget nonprofits in the region making some of the biggest impacts on children's lives is Rolling Readers Space Coast, and its dedicated core of role–model volunteers.

In general, Rolling Readers Space Coast promotes literacy in elementary school children by pairing students in Brevard County Title 1 schools with trained adults who model good reading habits and encourage youngsters to read.

They also help young, struggling readers improve their reading skills. Reading on grade–level by the end of third grade is one of the most critical milestones in education.

Studies show that 74% of third–graders who read poorly still struggle in ninth grade, and third–grade reading scores can predict a student's likelihood of graduating from high school.

Children who do not read proficiently by the end of the third grade are four times less likely to leave school with a diploma than proficient readers.

"Rolling Readers is one of the great nonprofit organizations in this community because reading helps children grow, it helps children discover themselves, and it helps put children on a track to succeed in life," said Kyle Lieneck, a longtime board member of Rolling Readers Space Coast.

She added, "My grandmother (Shirley Baccus) was involved in this organization and that drew me to it. I wholeheartedly support the mission of Rolling Readers Space Coast." Baccus is a former president of Rolling Readers Space Coast.

Brett Hyde, another long–term board member of Rolling Readers Space Coast, said his "mother was a schoolteacher. So, I jumped at the opportunity to get involved with Rolling Readers. They have a great mission. I really embrace it. I have seen this organization make big strides in the community through its programs. There is no more important activity for preparing your child to succeed as a reader than reading aloud together."

Reading may even improve your health and well–being. A study published in the journal "Science & Medicine" claimed that reading books could increase an individual's lifespan.

Led by researchers from Yale University School of Public Health, the study revealed that adults who reported reading books for more than three hours per week were 23% less likely to die over 12 years of follow–up, compared with those who did not read books.

While the researchers were unable to pinpoint mechanisms by which reading may boost longevity, they pointed to previous studies that found reading can increase connectivity between brain cells, possibly lowering the risk of neurodegenerative diseases that can shorten lifespan.

Rolling Readers Space Coast, which has an annual agreement to provide services to Brevard Public Schools, is marking its 25th year in 2022.

Since its founding, Rolling Readers has engaged more than 110,000 students in its programs. The organization has also gifted more than 134,000 books to area children.



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Rolling Readers Space Coast is celebrating its 25th year as a nonprofit literacy organization. Since 1997, Rolling Readers' programs have shared the joy of reading with Brevard County Title 1 elementary school children. On May 13, Rolling Readers will host its second Space Coast River Jam fundraiser at Riverfront Park in Cocoa. VIP packages, sponsorships and individual tickets are available. From left: Michael Payne Sr., executive director, Rolling Readers; attorney Kyle Lieneck, Rolling Readers' board member with Johns Hopkins Healthcare; and attorney Brett Hyde, Rolling Readers' board member with the law firm Widerman Malek.

"We will be celebrating our 25th year and will host the 'Space Coast River Jam' event," said Michael Payne Sr., executive director of Space Coast Rolling Readers.

"We held the inaugural Space Coast River Jam last year and it exceeded our expectations in every way. We were thinking perhaps 200 people might attend. Our best estimate is that more than 600 people were at Space Coast River Jam, a fundraiser for Rolling Readers."

The event supports the literacy of children in Brevard County. The 2022 edition is set for Friday, May 13, at Riverfront Park in Cocoa Village. The outdoor concert is from 4–10:30 p.m. The gates will open at 3 p.m.

Riverfront Park has an amphitheater for outdoor concerts and other events. The park faces the Indian River. There are covered pavilions and a boardwalk.

"We started planning for this soon after the inaugural Space Coast River Jam was completed," said Payne, the event founder. "We are really excited about this year's

Please see Space Coast Rolling Readers, page 23

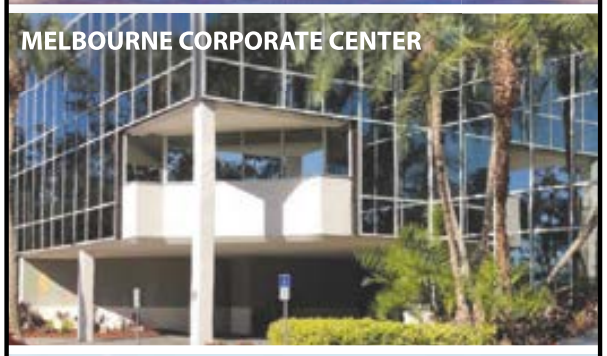
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Jerald Smith, PMC's director of pastoral care, says a hospital is a crossroads of cultures; reacting to intense stress is part of his job

By Ericka Jacobs
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Manager, Communications & People Development
Parrish Medical Center

TITUSVILLE (March 3, 2022) — People in the midst of physical loss and emotional grief may not at that moment be thinking about a healing experience for their spirit, but Jerald Smith understands the importance of helping them find such experiences — whatever their background or culture.

Smith, a minister and Parrish Medical Center director of pastoral care, says a hospital is a crossroads of cultures, and it's his responsibility to be responsive in whatever capacity he's needed. He's also found the COVID–19 pandemic to have created new and unique needs for patients, families, and Parrish employees.

Reacting to moments of intense stress is part of the job.

"A family came out of the intensive care unit (ICU) after losing a loved one, and they were grief stricken," he says. "Their culture is one with emotional and vocal expressions of grief. Their agony was visible, audible, and heart–wrenching. I was called to the area outside of the ICU. At first, I waited. There's a time to give people their space, and there's the right moment to step forward and try to help. I waited for the right moment."

He approached them quietly, introduced himself, and invited them to accompany him into Parrish's All Faiths Chapel.

"The environment itself helped to calm them, and it spoke to their faith," he said. That's not something that would occur in a conference room or someone's office. Such spiritual moments are most enhanced in a spiritual setting."

Smith serves Parrish's patients, their families, and employees, called care partners. He was recently called to the hospital room of a fellow care partner's grandfather, who had entered in–hospital hospice.

"In the room I was asked to pray for the grandfather, who was surrounded by his family," he said. "The man's great–grandson was there. He and I both held his great–grandfather's hands, and the young man led the prayer for the family. Together, we provided a healing experience for the family."

As hospital chaplain and ministry generally, Smith fills a multitude of responsibilities: pre–marriage preparation, prepare–enrich assessment, marriage and family ministry, end of life discussions, grief and bereavement support, children's grief and family systems, public speaking, preaching, teaching, group facilitation.

He is also Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Certified, defined as "a professional who leads improvement projects or serves as a team member as a part of more complex improvement projects."

Smith has spent more than 25 years in hospital chaplaincy work. He earned his bachelor's degree in biblical education and secondary school education from Lee University and his master of divinity degree from the Church of God Theological Seminary, both in Cleveland, Tenn., and doctor of ministry from Palmer Theological Seminary (former Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary) in St. David's, Penn.

His personal faith is Christian, but his role as hospital chaplain is to give spiritual support to everyone requesting it, regardless of denomination and whatever their faith.

"It's a matter of care, and of caring," Smith said. "That's how I can practice my faith of loving my neighbor as myself, to whoever seeks it or needs it, regardless of what their personal beliefs might be."

He is on–site during such emergencies as hurricanes, during which he holds non–denominational services, sees to patient needs, and he's available to Parrish staff members who, while they're concerned with caring for the people in the hospital, are also thinking about their own family members at home in the storm.

"The dedication of the people I work with inspires me," Smith said. "They know that whatever is going on outside the hospital their responsibility is to be focused on our mission, healing experiences for everyone all the time."

COVID–19 has created new challenges for him and for everyone in health care, he said.

"The sense of vulnerability that patients normally experience during a hospital stay was magnified by the isolation required because of the virus. Support systems that are so critical to patient well–being, like family and community of faith support, weren't available. I reached out to local congregations and offered to be their representative and many of them took advantage of that. I would introduce myself as the hospital chaplain and add 'but today, I'm here on behalf of your congregation. They asked me to assure you of their love and prayers.' Through spiritual support, the great work of our Patient Experience team, who coordinated dozens and dozens of video chats between patients and families, and the awe–inspiring work of our medical team, we did all what we could to demonstrate to our patients that they were not alone in this fight."

He added, "The fundamental issue, all the time, is healing experiences."

"Unless it's an extraordinary situation, no one in a clinical setting can assure a patient or family member that a cure is certain," Smith said. "What can be assured is that whatever the situation, whenever it occurs, Parrish care partners are going to live their mission, vision, and values, and will devote themselves to providing a healing experience for everyone, all the time."

● About Parrish Medical Center

Parrish Medical Center, a Parrish Healthcare integrated care partner, is located at 951 N. Washington Ave. The 210–bed, not–for–profit, public medical center has served Brevard County for more than 60 years. PMC was the first in the nation to be Integrated Care–certified by The Joint Commission and is nationally recognized as "One of America's Finest Healing Environments." For more information, visit parrishhealthcare.com

● About Parrish Healthcare

Parrish Healthcare, America's first Joint Commission Integrated Care Certified network, includes: Parrish Medical Center, a Mayo Clinic Care Network member and one of the nation's most recognized hospitals for clinical quality, patient safety, and healing environments; Parrish Medical Group, NCQA certified patient–centered medical homes; and Florida Health Network, a coalition of healthcare providers, insurers and others working together to improve quality and safety and lower healthcare costs on behalf of individuals, families and businesses.

A PRAYER

EASTER



BBN photo — Spencer Strauss

A very special Easter Prayer for the many, many, many
Victims of The 18th Circuit of The State of Florida.

Erna

Marc Christensen is new president of Clarkson University, succeeds Anthony Collins

By Melissa Lindell (mlindell@clarkson.edu)
Director Of Media Relations
and Dr. Kelly Chezum (kchezum@clarkson.edu)
Vice President for External Relations
Clarkson University

POTSDAM, N.Y. (March 24, 2022) — The Clarkson University Board of Trustees has appointed Dr. Marc Christensen to serve as the 17th president of university, effective July 1, 2022. Dr. Christensen is currently the dean of the Lyle School of Engineering at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas, Texas, and a well–regarded leader in photonics research and technology development.

Dr. Christensen will succeed Dr. Anthony Collins, who is stepping down as Clarkson's president at the conclusion of the 2021–22 academic year, following 19 years of extraordinary leadership of the institution.

"Clarkson's Board of Trustees is delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Marc P. Christensen as our next president," said Thomas Kassouf, chairman of the board of trustees. "Marc's passion for innovative teaching, collaborative multidisciplinary research, proven entrepreneurship, successful fundraising, and community outreach is an excellent fit for Clarkson. We look forward to welcoming him and his wife, Seema Christensen, to the Clarkson community this summer."

"We are excited about the selection of Dr. Christensen to lead Clarkson," said co–chairs of the Presidential Search Committee, trustees Georgia Keresty and Sanjeev R. Kulkarni. "The collaborative effort by faculty, student, staff, and trustee members of the Search Committee, broadly augmented by inputs from our many constituent communities, has identified a next president well prepared to ensure Clarkson continues to excel beyond its 125th anniversary celebrated this academic year."

"I am humbled to be selected as the next President of Clarkson University. Clarkson has a long–held reputation for producing some of the sharpest analytic minds in our nation's history. This storied legacy, combined with the University's achievements in advancing social mobility and the career trajectories for alumni, affirms Clarkson's position as a bold leader among higher education institutions. Clarkson knows who it is and why it matters," said President–elect Christensen. "Over the coming weeks and months, I look forward to connecting with the incredible students, faculty, and staff to listen to their stories and develop an even deeper understanding of what makes Clarkson the remarkable community it is."

A widely published expert in photonics research that focuses on using light to transmit, process and sense information, Dr. Christensen has coauthored more than 100 journal and conference papers and was identified by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) as a "rising star in microsystems research." He began his professional career as a technical leader in BDM's Sensors and Photonics Group, now part of Northrop Grumman Mission Systems. In 1997, he cofounded Applied Photonics, a free–space optical interconnection module company that provided hardware demonstrations for multiple DARPA programs. He currently holds 10 U.S. patents.

Dr. Christensen received his bachelor's degree in engineering physics from Cornell University in 1993, his master's degree in electrical engineering from George Mason University in 1998 and his Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering from George Mason University in 2001. He also participated in the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education Management Development Program.

After earning his Ph.D., he joined the SMU faculty in 2002, where he was recognized for innovative teaching and outstanding research. He rose through the faculty ranks at SMU and, in 2010, he was selected as the inaugural Bobby B. Lyle Professor of Engineering Innovation. He went on to serve as the Department Chair of Electrical Engineering and has been the Dean of SMU's Lyle School of Engineering for the past nine years.

Clarkson President Tony Collins said, "In addition to his experiences in industry, with federal agencies and as an entrepreneur, Marc Christensen's 20–year commitment to SMU bodes well for the greater Clarkson community. It is very evident that he values relationships and rallying strategic partnerships to build long–term impact on the issues that matter to university stakeholders. Clarkson will have a dynamic future ahead under Dr. Christensen's leadership."

The university community looks forward to fully welcoming the next president and his wife, Seema, to the Clarkson community later this summer, when they will take up residence in Foster House. With industry experience in engineering, Seema is now a ceramics artist looking forward to opening a new studio. They are also the proud parents of Asha Christensen, a senior in college majoring in economics and philosophy at the University of Toronto, and Priya Christensen, a graduate of the University of Toronto, who is now pursuing graduate studies in molecular and cell biology at the University of Texas at Dallas.

For more information about President–elect Christensen and the search for the 17th president, go to http://www.clarkson.edu/presidential–search.

As a private, national research university, Clarkson is a leader in technological education and sustainable economic development through teaching, scholarship, research, and innovation. With its main campus located in Potsdam, New York, and additional graduate program and research facilities in the New York Capital Region, Beacon, and New York City, Clarkson educates 4,600–plus students across more than 90 rigorous programs of study in engineering, business, the arts, education, sciences, and health professions. Its alumni earn salaries that are among the top 2% in the nation and realize accelerated career growth. One in five already leads as a CEO, senior executive, or owner of a company.

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From the Public Record of Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey

From: Bill Erfurth <bill@moderncityentertainment.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2018 10:01 AM
To: Bill Erfurth
Subject: Police Videos

Hey, how's things? Some recent developments have come together about possibly turning the Heroes Behind The Badge documentaries into a TV series. Without getting into too many details, there is interest in setting up the series with a montage of real and dramatic police body camera, dash cam, helicopter, etc captured video. I'm reaching out to you to see if you happen to have any, or are aware of some highly dramatic, heroic, exemplary types of these videos? The more current the videos the better, but amazing footage is always still amazing.

Hope all's well. Any help would be great!

Thanks, Bill

Bill Erfurth | President
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RE: Post-judgment issues

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The above named entity submits this

SIGNATURE: TIMOTHY
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Officer/Director Detail :

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Title	DP
Name	WILLIAMSON,
Address	3425 N ATLAN
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From: Ronald.Tomblin@bcso.us
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 10:08 AM
To: dawn.ekonomou@bcso.us
Subject: Fwd: New schedule
Attachments: 35B36020-8F20-4FAB-8538-11AEFD7FE4EF.png; ATT00001.htm; 9194EBA9-66A3-4232-97DE-071E8D9B967C.png; ATT00002.htm; A0163EB6-DF97-4A0C-9036-E040C0BA4595.png; ATT00003.htm; 19D59855-D951-4DFA-90FE-F2C0FC476094.png; ATT00004.htm; image002.png; ATT00005.htm; image002.png; ATT00006.htm; BAMENGLANDSCHEDULEWORKINGDOC25MAY.docx; ATT00007.htm; 35B36020-8F20-4FAB-8538-11AEFD7FE4EF.png; ATT00008.htm; 9194EBA9-66A3-4232-97DE-071E8D9B967C.png; ATT00009.htm; A0163EB6-DF97-4A0C-9036-E040C0BA4595.png; ATT00010.htm; 19D59855-D951-4DFA-90FE-F2C0FC476094.png; ATT00011.htm

Can you print 5 copies of the schedule and bring them over

Thanks
Ron
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Bill Erfurth <bill@moderncityentertainment.com>
> **Date:** May 29, 2018 at 09:51:38 EDT
> **To:** "Tomblin, Ronald" <Ronald.Tomblin@bcso.us>
> **Subject: FW: New schedule**
>
> Hi Ron, did I send this to you!? Just checking now and not sure for our call shortly.
>
> Bill

Bill Erfurth | President



File photo

Timothy Michaud

'Based upon my investigation as a criminal investigator with the Craven County Sheriff's Department there is probable cause to arrest Timothy Michaud for sexual assault on R(xxxx) Michaud.'

John Whitfield
May 7, 2010



Brevard County Sheriff's Office photo

'I need to report suspected abuse.'

Dana Delaney Loyd
aka Theresa Smith
to Florida Abuse Hotline
at 11:12 a.m., April 29, 2015



Brevard County Sheriff's Office photo

'Loyalty is everything to me!!!'

Sheriff Robert Wayne Ivey
to Dana Delaney Loyd
at 5:19 p.m., April 29, 2015

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.

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To Be Continued ...

Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University receives single–largest gift in its 96–year history, Browns pledge $25 million

By Ginger Pinholster
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Vice President, Communications
Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University

DAYTONA BEACH (March 25, 2022) — Philanthropists Cici and Hyatt Brown have pledged $25 million to Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University — matching $25 million in support approved by Florida legislators and pending approval by Gov. Ron DeSantis — to help the university create a revolutionary new business makerspace focused on high–paying jobs for Floridians.

The remarkably generous $25 million pledge from Cici and Hyatt Brown represents the single largest gift in the history of Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University, which was established in 1926.

"Cici and I are excited to make this investment to help continue the growth and development of institutional excellence at Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University," Hyatt Brown said.

"Our focused mission, now and in the future, is economic enhancement of entities in Volusia County that positively affect the quality of life for all our citizens. Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University and other fine academic institutions are economic growth engines that augment and embellish local median family incomes."

The new Cici and Hyatt Brown Center for Aerospace Technology will build upon the game–changing wins of Embry–Riddle's five–year–old Research Park, by promoting even more innovation, creating high–quality jobs, and bolstering Florida's advanced technology workforce.

"Everyone at Embry–Riddle is deeply grateful for the vision and phenomenal generosity of Cici and Hyatt Brown," said the university's Board of Trustees Chairman Mori Hosseini, who also serves as chairman and CEO of ICI Homes.

"Their selfless investment in our community and the Embry–Riddle mission of education will inspire us for many years to come. The creative ecosystem of Embry–Riddle's Research Park stimulates transformative ideas, which drive economic progress and generate lucrative career opportunities. The new center, made possible by Cici and Hyatt Brown and the State of Florida, will take Embry–Riddle's already successful economic development efforts to a whole new level."

In 2021, Embry–Riddle's Research Park generated $137 million in total economic impact in Florida — up nearly 50% compared with 2019 — an independent economic assessment concluded. Through its mission of education, Embry–Riddle is also building Florida's workforce capacity in critical sectors, including aviation, aerospace, and STEM–related fields. Since the 2017 opening of the Research Park's cornerstone facility, the "MicaPlex" (John Mica Engineering and Aerospace Innovation Complex), Embry–Riddle's Research Park has directly created more than 120 jobs with an average salary of more than $78,000, thanks to some two–dozen affiliated companies. Since those jobs, in turn, support additional business enterprise, Embry–Riddle's Research Park actually supports a total of 700 jobs, both directly and indirectly.

"The new Center for Aerospace Technology will further elevate our highly effective Research Park," said Embry–Riddle President P. Barry Butler, Ph.D. "From the beginning, the Research Park has enhanced educational opportunities for our students by pairing them with entrepreneurs from all over the world. Our uniquely collaborative research environment has supported both emerging and established companies, and we are bolstering the state's workforce across aviation, aerospace, cybersecurity, commercial space, and many other STEM–related fields. Cici and Hyatt Brown and the state of Florida have placed their faith in Embry–Riddle's ability to make good things happen. We are tremendously thankful for, and motivated by, their support."

Encompassing a total of 105,000 square feet, the Center for Aerospace Technology will include a 65,000–square–foot building and 40,000 square feet of research–quality hangar space. The building will include makerspace as well as room for entrepreneurial activity. Plans for the new center are now under development. The university expects to break ground in summer 2022. Additional timeline details will be released as information becomes available.

● About Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University

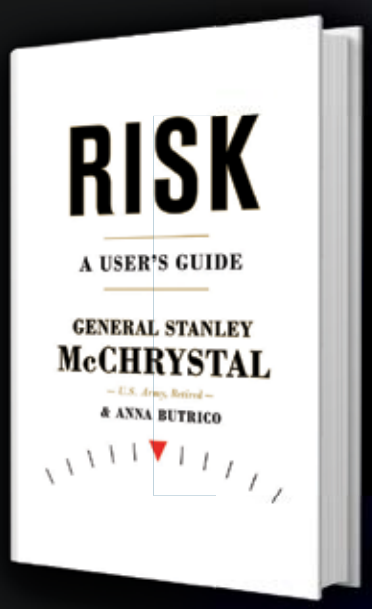
Embry–Riddle educates 32,500–plus students at its residential campuses in Daytona Beach, and Prescott, Arizona, at roughly 110 Worldwide Campus locations and through online degree programs. U.S. News & World Report has named Embry–Riddle Worldwide the nation's No. 1 provider of online bachelor's degree programs.



The F. Alan Smith Distinguished Lecture Series presents

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Understanding Risk & Mastering the Unknown



Friday, April 29
5:30–7 p.m.



Stan McChrystal retired as a four-star general in the U.S. Army, having commanded U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. He is currently a senior fellow at Yale University's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs and is co-founder of McChrystal Group, a leadership consulting firm.

He will speak on his most recent best-selling book, ***Risk: A User's Guide***, published October 2021.

This free event requires preregistration:
floridatech.edu/alansmithlecture

Gleason Performing Arts Center
150 W. University Blvd., Melbourne

This event is co-sponsored by:

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Dreamland Mini–Golf opens in Eau Gallie Arts District; Derek Gores and team put artistic twist on putt–putt

By Derek Gores
derek@derekgores.com
Derek Gores Gallery

MELBOURNE (March 28, 2022) — Now open in the Eau Gallie Arts District for a three–month pop–up experience, Dreamland Mini–Golf features two 18–hole art–infused golf courses inside the former Foosaner Art Museum.

Showcasing the latest in 1950s putt–putt golf technology, each hole was designed and crafted by local dreamers of many stripes: painters, poets, textile aficionados, carpenters, computer coders, dog lovers, film buffs and floral designers.

With lead design and installation by Steve Monroe of Toxic Roots, the course was built from roughly 90% recycled materials donated by the public — and even includes two "mini–mini–golf" holes produced via 3D printing by Roman's Artifacts.

Play follows traditional mini–golf rules, and most, but not all, holes use the expected putter and golf ball. Beyond that, players are limited only by their dreams.

Produced by Derek Gores Gallery, the show is presented by Toyota of Melbourne, Northboro Builders, Intracoastal Brewery, and FM Pizza.

In addition to mini golf, Dreamland includes the Selfie Museum: 15 photo–ready walls fine–tuned for your selfie pleasure. These include The Butterfly Wall, Black and White Drawing Wall, The Lips Couch, The Amazon Trail, That 70s Sound, Be Curious, Overworked, and more.

There's even more: The Projection Experience by Illuminated Paths. And of course, The Dreamland Gift Shop. All the putt–putt gifts you could daydream of, with a nightmare or two for good measure.

All this dreaminess takes place inside the former Foosaner Art Museum building at 1463 Highland Ave. The property will begin construction as a hotel later in the year, but property owner Larry Jarnes of Northboro Builders wanted to keep the artistic energy flowing until that time.

"We're happy to be part of the EGAD community with so many exciting projects coming. I wanted to maintain momentum here and knew that Derek Gores and his many creative friends would come up with something special. Dreamland is super cool!"

Dreamland is open on Thursdays 5–10 p.m.; Fridays 5–10 p.m.; Saturdays 12–10 p.m.; Sundays 12–5 p.m.; and is available for private events.

Contact rachel@derekgores.com for more information about Dreamland. There's also a bar presented by FM Pizza/The Oleander Club.

Music is presented by Harbor City Local and currently scheduled for Friday and Saturday evenings, on a stage right in the middle of mini–golf.

Tickets for rounds of Dreamland Mini Golf, and access to the Selfie Museum and Projection Experience are available at https://derekgores.com/tickets–to–dreamland.

A portion of proceeds go toward scholarships to this Summer's Create Your World Art Camp.

Creatives involved include: Kodi Howard, Sarah Peck, Mr. Science, Petal & Bone, Shawn Creel, Muntaser Syed, Noah Cook, Romans Artifacts, Lear Bunda, Apocalypse Dimension, Brooke Nichols, Carly Sinigoi, Nico Lehman, Sara Russo, Eyan Eyster, Derek Gores, Ryan VW, Connor Bea, 321 Home Staging, Cliffton Chandler, Illuminated Paths, Mason ALX, Gigi Ripps, and more.

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Brevard Symphony Orchestra to host Forks & Corks event on April 24 at home of Djon Pepaj in Indialantic

By Virginia Anzengruber
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Communications Director
Brevard Symphony Orchestra

MELBOURNE (March 30, 2022) — The Brevard Symphony Orchestra (BSO) has announced the return of a fan–favorite fundraiser event, Forks & Corks, scheduled from 4–7 p.m. on Sunday, April 24, at the oceanfront home of event host Djon Pepaj, D'Mare Beach House, in Indialantic.

Pepaj is the owner of many restaurants in Brevard County, including Djon's Steak & Lobster House and Djon's Village Market.

Tickets are $150 per person, and are on sale now. Guests will enjoy tasty creations from Djon's chefs; a wide range of wines from around the world; cigars; bourbon tasting; live and silent auctions; valet parking, and live music from John McDonald & the Mango Men.

Additionally, event sponsorships are available, and include event tickets among other perks. To purchase tickets or become an event sponsor, visit https://brevardsymphony.com/forks_and_corks.

The live auction will be presented by Suzy Fleming Leonard, "Florida Today's" food editor and journalist with more than 30 years' experience, and Scott Earick, critically acclaimed chef–owner of Scott's on Fifth, who has previously participated in charity events for the James Beard Foundation.

All proceeds from the event will go toward funding the BSO and their mission to continue to provide world–class entertainment on the Space Coast.

The BSO is the only fully professional orchestra in Brevard County and is home to many of Central Florida's finest classical musicians. Under the musical direction of Christopher Confessore, the BSO's 69th season will begin in October.

For more information about the Brevard Symphony Orchestra's programs, to purchase season tickets, or become a BSO supporter, call (321) 345–5052 or visit https://brevardsymphony.com.

East Coast Dog Surfing Festival set for April 17 at Lori Wilson Park in Cocoa Beach

COCOA BEACH (March 21, 2022) — Brevard Humane Society's 10th annual East Coast Dog Surfing Festival, presented by Ron Jon Surf Shop, will be hosted from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 17, at Lori Wilson Park.

In addition to a day of fun in the sun on Easter, there will be numerous activities, including dog–surfing lessons, live concerts, a dog Easter costume contest, food and beverage vendors, a pet runway model contest, and of course the dog–surfing championships. This free–to–attend, family friendly event (for a small fee, you can even have your dog with you on the beach) is open to the public.

Celebrating its 70th year, the Brevard Humane Society is Brevard County's oldest established animal–welfare organization. A no–kill–for–space shelter, the Brevard Humane Society is "dedicated to speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves."

The organization works to educate the community on responsible pet ownership and the humane treatment of animals, advocate for spaying/neutering to reduce the homeless pet population, and provide the "best quality care" to Brevard's abandoned animals by placing them with "responsible, caring pet parents in forever homes."

For more information call the Brevard Humane Society at (321) 636–3343, extension 204, or visit www.brevardhumanesociety.org. The email address is events@brevardhumanesociety.org. The shelter is at 1020 Cox Road in Cocoa.

Fifth Avenue Art Gallery to present 'Well Said,' an interpretation of quotes

MELBOURNE (March 28, 2021) — The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery in the Eau Gallie Arts District will be presenting "Well Said," an interpretation of quotes, from May 2–28.

A First Friday opening reception is from 5:30–8:30 p.m. on May 6.

The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery challenged its member artists to visually interpret quotes by famous people, from the likes of Michelangelo to Ben Franklin and Dr. Seuss, to name a few.

As Leonardo de Vinci said, "Art is never finished, only abandoned."

The front area of the Fifth Avenue Art Gallery will be filled with "outstanding, creative, finished work."

The Fifth Avenue Art Gallery's address is 1470 Highland Ave. For more information about this event, visit http://www.fifthavenueartgallery.com.





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A statewide leader in nursing education, Keiser University in Melbourne expands its program with a BSN degree to help address the growing workforce shortage

By Ken Datzman



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Keiser University in Melbourne now offers a bachelor of science degree in nursing. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, around 500,000 nurses will retire in the next few years. Florida and the nation already face a nursing shortage. Keiser University's BSN program starts in May and there are slots open. From left: Don Benson, dean, KU Melbourne; Melissa Kennedy, program director of nursing, KU Melbourne; Carissa Summers, student; Brittany Poling, student; and Jay Ferrazzano, student.

Lessons from the past often provide insight into the future. Twenty–two years ago, almost to the month, then–Gov. Jeb Bush signed a bill into law addressing the state's nursing shortage. The signing took place during a visit to Orlando Regional Medical Center.

The bill marked the fourth one he signed in 2002 to resolve the nursing shortage in Florida.

"In 2002, hospitals and health–care organizations were bringing in nurses from the Philippines and from all over the world to help alleviate the shortage of nurses in Florida," said Dr. Arthur Keiser, the chancellor and chief executive officer of Fort Lauderdale–based Keiser University.

Florida's population in 2002 was 16.7 million people. Today, an estimated 22 million people now live in the Sunshine State.

"Where I'm at, people are coming in droves, moving here from the north. The population growth is really increasing demand for nurses," said Dr. Keiser, in a telephone interview.

Florida is expected to see its population grow by an average of more than 303,000 residents a year and is forecast to have 23.1 million people in April 2025, according to a report by the state's Office of Economic and Demographic Research.

"The demand for nurses is high everywhere, in every type of setting," said Melissa Kennedy, program director of nursing at Keiser University in Melbourne. "Nurses can pick and choose where they want to live and work. I tell our nursing graduates they have a 'world of opportunity' ahead of them. There will always be a need for nurses."

Nurses across the continuum of care are the backbone of America's health–care system.

And with campuses around the state, Keiser University has long been a leader in Florida in nursing education.

In 2020, for example, Keiser University was one of the largest producers of nurses in the state, with 795 students passing the National Council Licensure Examination (2021 figures still pending). Since 2019, Keiser University has graduated more than 3,200 nurses.

Keiser University was named among the top nursing schools in Florida by RegisteredNurses.org.

As part of its strategy to address the nurse shortage in the local market, Keiser University has now expanded with the bachelor of science degree in nursing.

"The industry is dealing with a challenging dynamic, an aging population — people who generally require the most health care — and growing numbers of nurses who are retiring," said Don Benson, the dean at Keiser University in Melbourne.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, around 500,000 nurses will retire over the next few years.

"The industry is going to need more and more nurses," said Benson.

"We have the ASN (associate of science degree in nursing) program at the Melbourne campus. We have just launched the BSN program because there is a big need in the community for these types of nurses."

Currently, the Melbourne campus graduates about 75 nurses per year, he said.

The BSN is a four–year program. Students are exposed to topics ranging from nursing physiology to nursing ethics and are required to complete labs and supervised clinicals in a hospital or other health–care facility. A BSN degree incorporates such aspects as evidence–based practice, management, and public health.

"The BSN program will start in May at the Melbourne campus," said Kennedy. "Our plan is to begin with 12 students per start (January, May and August). We have slots open for the BSN program starting in May."

She said the program has two entry points — the Accelerated BSN and the FastTrack BSN.

The Accelerated BSN is designed for students who have previous college experience and are interested in a professional nursing program, said Kennedy, who has been a nurse since 1995 and spent most of her career working in an emergency department at a hospital in New Jersey.

The FastTrack BSN is available for students beginning their first professional nursing program.

"Before we decide to start a new program, especially a nursing program, we have to develop community partnerships," said Benson. "And in the case of the BSN program, community partners jumped at the opportunity. Everybody has been wanting to help us because the need is great, and Keiser University's College of Nursing has an outstanding reputation."

"We have affiliation agreements and good relationships with local hospitals, long–term care centers, hospice centers, mental health clinics, and other providers," said Kennedy.

Keiser University nursing students and graduates were critical to the state's recovery efforts during the COVID–19 pandemic.

In service to Florida residents, Keiser University nursing and allied health students joined a team of hospital systems and health–care providers to respond to the needs of local communities by providing

Please see Keiser University, page 19

Bank of America East Central Florida team led by Mannino well–connected to communities; Elevate Brevard at Family Promise looks to uplift Cocoa residents

By Ken Datzman



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Peter Mannino is market president for Bank of America's East Central Florida region, which includes Brevard, Volusia, and Flagler counties. His company works closely with nonprofit partners addressing economic mobility in communities and much more. He co–chairs the Leadership Circle for Elevate Brevard, a collaboration of community partners working to elevate the lives of Cocoa residents by increasing access to post–secondary educational opportunities and sustainable employment. His Leadership Circle co–chair is Jarin Eisenberg, chief operating officer at Groundswell Startups.

Bank of America has long embraced the concept of giving back to communities, whether it's mentoring, awarding neighborhood grants to nonprofit organizations, or being part of and financially supporting a coalition of partners working together to uplift the lives of people through a new initiative.

Community partnerships have been at the center of Bank of America's success working with local organizations to create economically and socially vibrant communities.

In East Central Florida, for instance, its community partners include Neighbor Up Brevard, Habitat for Humanity of Brevard, Crosswinds Youth Services, Club Esteem, Boys & Girls Club, United Way of Brevard, Junior Achievement, and Food Brings Hope, among others.

"Bank of America remains focused on advancing social justice and economic mobility though education and employment, affordable housing, and health care, for example," said Peter Mannino, Bank of America's market president for East Central Florida, which includes Brevard, Volusia, and Flagler counties.

"I live in Brevard. The work we do is close to my heart. This is my local community. We care about all the partnerships we have with the nonprofits we serve in the region."

His company's newest outreach effort is Elevate Brevard, a collaboration of community partners working closely to improve the lives of Cocoa residents by increasing access to post–secondary educational opportunities and sustainable employment.

Mannino and Jarin Eisenberg, chief operating officer at Groundswell Startups in Melbourne, chair the Leadership Circle for Elevate Brevard. The Leadership Circle is comprised of many local community leaders from the business sector, education, and the nonprofit community.

Elevate Brevard is currently under the wing of Family Promise of Brevard, a leading organization focused on ending family homelessness through community–driven collaborations.

Dr. Synthia Michelle Doaks, a longtime educator, is the director of Elevate Brevard. She earned her doctorate degree in education from UCF and previously was the community partnership school director at Endeavour Elementary in Cocoa. Dr. Doaks has an MBA degree from Webster University. Tara Pagliarini is the executive director of Family Promise of Brevard.

"Dr. Doaks and Tara have done an amazing job basically shepherding Elevate Brevard into its own organization. But it's currently under the Family Promise umbrella," said Mannino.

He added, "Through a 'collective impact model,' Elevate Brevard is designed to bring together the business community, the nonprofit community, and the education sector to figure out how they can increase the number of kids and adults pursuing post–secondary education or certificates, so they can essentially obtain a living wage and break the cycle of generational poverty. This involves getting these kids to believe that they can not only go on to college or a certification program, but also get a good job."

Launched in 2020, the partnership is part of the Florida College Access Network and utilizes a collective impact model to identify and assist households living below the Federal Poverty Level, as well as those in the ALICE population, or "working poor," as defined by United Way, said Mannino. The acronym stands for "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed." ALICE is a new way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford a bare–bones household budget. For far too many families, the cost of living outpaces what they earn.

Brevard is the 17th Florida College Access Network in the state. "Florida has these networks in place around the state where organizations come together to try to achieve the same goals of increasing post–secondary education or certifications. They were looking for a partner to form their next network in Brevard. And Tara (Pagliarini), being the outstanding leader she is at Family Promise, stepped up last year to really get this project up and running," said Mannino.

The Florida College Access Network "sparks fresh thinking, showcases actionable ideas, and partners with communities" working to improve educational achievement for all Floridians, especially first–generation college students, low–income students, adult learners, and other students outside of the mold of the "traditional" college student.

Elevate Brevard is addressing the barriers residents face while trying to achieve education or training beyond high school, he said. The objective of this cross–sector group is to identify ways to better partner in order to increase the number of Brevard residents with a college degree or an industry–recognized credential. "We're working to close employer skill gaps and elevate families out of poverty," said Mannino.

The plan is to start in the Cocoa community and eventually roll out strategies for all of Brevard County. Family Promise stepped forward to serve as the "backbone organization" for this collaborative effort.

"Cocoa High School is the model to start this project," he said. "A lot of organizations are seeing great success at Cocoa High. Initially, we are focused on increasing the rate of FAFSA applications that are completed. Every single year, millions of dollars are left on the table because students who are graduating from high school do not fill out the federal form for free student aid." The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is available to all students.

"FAFSA is only the first step. We are focusing on how to integrate more families into the process and increase graduation rates. If the model proves to be successful at

Please see Bank of America, page 21

Remote talent platform Instant Teams raises millions in Series A funding, led by Tiger Global Management

By Erica McMannes
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Chief People & Community Officer
Instant Teams

NEW YORK (March 9, 2022) — Instant Teams, the remote talent marketplace platform that builds and manages remote teams from a 26,000–plus database of military–connected, remote–certified workers, has today announced it raised $13 million in a Series A funding round led by Tiger Global Management.

Silicon Valley's Plug and Play Tech Center and The Veteran Fund participated in the round along with several returning investors including Squadra Ventures, Brick Capital Ventures, Blue Tree Fund and Frontier Capital.

Founded in 2016 by military spouses, Instant Teams currently employs more than 500 remote team members across the globe and has seen 346% growth in the last 12 months. Enterprise organizations like Assurance IQ, Amazon, and Walmart, high–growth tech companies like Expensify and Seesaw, and the Department of Defense, partner with Instant Teams for "instant" access to pipelines of remote, skill ready talent in customer support, sales, data analytics and operational support roles.

"We are flipping the talent sourcing model from posting jobs and getting applicants to building streamlined processes with community–based pipelines enabling organizations to scale," said Liza Rodewald, CEO and cofounder of Instant Teams.

"Our partnership with Tiger fuels our innovation and leadership in the labor marketplace industry and moves us to become the largest employer and provider of military spouse talent globally."

Instant Teams' impact to date:

- Over $17.5 million in revenue generated for remote employment of military families
- Over $1 million in state and federal funding for remote workforce development
- 92% of employed workforce consists of those who identify as female
- 52% of employed workforce consists of those who identify as part of a minority group
- Over 1 million hours of remote work generated for the military spouse community since 2017

"Instant Teams' ability to scale and generate revenue in the labor market with their innovative technology, while creating daily social impact, is a win–win situation," said Sam Harland, partner, Tiger Global. "Liza and Erica are building a unique platform and we're thrilled to partner with them on the next stage of the journey."

Fueled by utilization of untapped talent from the military connected community, the growing normalization of remote work on integrated teams, paired with the timely release of their remote team marketplace pipelines, Instant Teams will be driving into 2022 with customer growth, strategic key hires, and community–based initiatives at the helm. The funding will be used to accelerate their marketplace technology, corporate structure, military market share and expansion towards enterprise customers.

- About Instant Teams

Instant Teams is a remote team marketplace that combines proprietary technology and the largest database of military–connected remote workers in the industry. The company's unique approach provides access to custom–built pipelines of untapped talent and provides companies with a steady flow of ready–to–work, globally located candidates to build or scale customer support, operational support, or sales support teams. Interested in joining the corporate team? Check out careers.instantteams.com.

- About Tiger Global Management

Tiger Global Management is an investment firm focused on private and public companies in the internet, software, and financial technology sectors. Since 2001, Tiger Global has invested in hundreds of companies, including investments ranging from Series A to pre–IPO. The firm aims to partner with dynamic entrepreneurs operating market–leading companies in its core focus areas. Tiger Global's investments have included Patreon, AirBnB, Stripe, SVT Robotics, Meta (formerly Facebook), ClickUp, Brex, Peloton, LinkedIn, Flipkart, and Toast.

Eastern Florida State College to host event for its respiratory care program

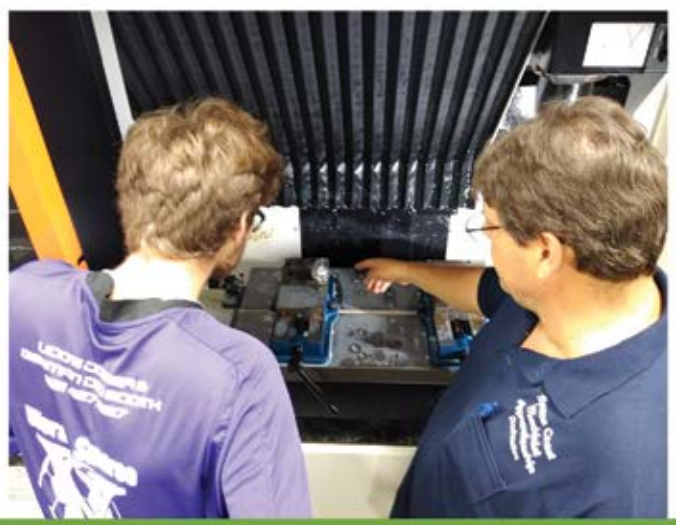
COCOA (March 29, 2022) — Eastern Florida State College will host an open house for its respiratory care program from 5–7 p.m. on Thursday, April 14, at its Melbourne campus, 3865 N. Wickham Road. The event will be in Building 15, room 122. Attendees will gain valuable information about the benefits of a career in respiratory care and how the nationally accredited program at EFSC prepares graduates to be successful. This in–person event will provide interactive, hands–on demonstrations in the lab and the chance to network with faculty, current students and working therapists. Because of social–distancing requirements on campus, those interested must register. For additional information on this program, contact Lisa Leib at (321) 433–7598 or at leibl@easternflorida.edu.

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Foundation donates $5,000 to veterans organization to help veterans from Brevard transition to civilian life

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

VIERA (March 25, 2022) — Indian River Colony Club in Viera is a 55–plus golf community on a mission. Largely comprised of military veterans, IRCC members are known for their volunteerism and philanthropy. The ongoing practice of donating to an assortment of veterans causes and charities embodies the community motto of "service to those who served."

On March 21, the Indian River Colony Club Foundation presented a $5,000 check to Veterans Connections to a New Life, a Central Florida–based not–for–profit organization that provides free services to veterans. The funds donated to the organization follow a similar $5,000 donation from the IRCC Foundation in 2021 and will help ensure returning military veterans successfully transition back to civilian life after the completion of their service.

Veterans Connections to a New Life uses certified life coaches and nationally certified, peer support specialists in their veteran outreach, specializing in post–traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Founder of Veterans Connections to a New Life, Don Pearsall said he was pleased to accept the monetary assistance from IRCC to benefit transitioning Brevard veterans.

"It's people like the patriots at IRCC that make it possible for us to provide the help that veterans need," said Pearsall. "Many of our warriors are leaving the service with no direction. Our main mission is to provide unique and personalized service support to our homeless, less fortunate and at–risk veterans who are struggling to transition back into civilian life."

Pearsall, a twice–wounded Vietnam veteran, founded Veterans Connections to a New Life in 2014, with a mission to help veterans transition to civilian life. Veterans with immediate needs are given financial assistance for gas, repairs, utilities, clothing, and housing, along with professional counseling and guidance to aid toward transition.

Pearsall's book, "Back from the Front," addresses PTSD as the primary cause of difficulty for veterans transitioning to civilian life. The book is available for sale on ConnectionstoaNewLife.com, with all proceeds going to support the nonprofit.

The IRCC community of nearly 800 homes is a dedicated supporter of veterans causes. In 2019, they were presented with the Outstanding Military Service Award by Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey, for their ongoing efforts on behalf of veterans.

Viera's very first neighborhood, IRCC is known as "The Place Patriots Call Home." A haven for military veterans, the par–72 private golf course community has a patriotic culture and country club amenities for active adults aged 55 and over.

In addition to significant contributions made by the community's charitable foundation, the 2019 Outstanding Military Service Award cited ongoing service and generosity toward veterans and military–related causes, including participation in or donations to veteran related organizations, including the Veterans Transitional Facility, Down the Road Thrift Shop, the Veterans Administration, the Cape Canaveral Ladies, the Cape Canaveral Cemetery, United Service Organizations, Honor Flight, Patrick Air Force Base, Veterans Treatment Court, Veterans Memorial Center, Wreaths Across America, and more.

The Indian River Colony Club Foundation represents the donors of IRCC, under the leadership of Foundation Board Chairman and retired U.S. Army Col. Jerry Gill and Military Services Organization Committee Chairman and retired Air Force Lt. Col. Brian Whalen. For more information about IRCC or the Foundation, call (321) 255–6000, visit ColonyClub.com or check their Facebook page.

● About Indian River Colony Club

Viera's first neighborhood, IRCC was originally conceived as a retirement destination for military retirees. IRCC began to take shape in 1986 with its vision to create a private country club–like environment for members. Still predominantly a haven for military veterans, IRCC maintains a culture centered on service to others. For more information about IRCC, visit ColonyClub.com.

Florida Tech is named a 'Military Friendly School,' fewer than 750 institutions earned the designation based on 2021–2022 survey

By Adam Lowenstein
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Florida Tech News Bureau
Florida Institute of Technology

MELBOURNE (March 7, 2022) — Florida Tech has earned the 2021–2022 "Military Friendly School" designation. Institutions earning the designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. Over 1,200 schools participated in the 2021–2022 survey, and 747 earned the designation.

"Florida Tech has been proud to partner with our military service members for many years so that they may continue learning and growing," said T. Dwayne McCay, president of Florida Tech. "From generals to the enlisted ranks, we've brought high–quality educational opportunities to the men and women of our armed forces, enabling them to learn anywhere, at any time. We are pleased to continue this important commitment."

Measured metrics for the designation included the institution's ability to meet thresholds for student retention, graduation, job placement, loan repayment, persistence (degree advancement or transfer) and loan default rates for all students and, specifically, for student veterans.

"Schools who achieve designation show true commitment and dedication in their efforts," said Kayla Lopez, national director of military partnerships for VIQTORY, the firm that oversees the Military Friendly Schools program. "Our standards assist schools by providing a benchmark that promotes positive educational outcomes, resources, and support services that better the educational landscape and provide opportunity for the military community."

The 2021–2022 Military Friendly Schools list will be published in the May issue of "G.I. Jobs" magazine and can be found at www.militaryfriendly.com.

● About VIQTORY

Founded in 2001, VIQTORY is a service–disabled, veteran–owned small business (SDVOSB) that connects the military community to civilian employment, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities through its G.I. Jobs and Military Friendly brands. VIQTORY and its brands are not a part of or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Defense or any federal government entity. Learn more about VIQTORY at www.viqtory.com.



Zon Management breaks ground on 45–unit independent living community in Indian Harbour Beach

By Ken Datzman

INDIAN HARBOUR BEACH — The Zon Beachside Assisted Living and Memory Care community on South Patrick Drive has been a big success since it opened in 2016.

Just three years later, in 2019, it expanded and added 31 apartment–style units on the former site of Doubles Beachside, a restaurant.

Now, Zon Management Inc. is expanding again at the site to meet the growing demand in the independent living market.

Zon Management recently broke ground on The Residences at Zon Beachside, a 45–unit apartment complex that will contain roughly 53,000 square feet.

This expansion will create a continuum of care at the property, allowing residents to age in place.

When the project is completed and the apartments leased, Zon Management will be caring for more than 175 seniors at the location.

"The Residences at Zon Beachside will be a three–story complex featuring one– and two–bedroom apartments with full kitchens and high–end appliances, walk–out balconies, a pool, and much more," said Greg Kennedy, vice president and a principal at Zon Management.

The amenities will include an exercise room, a yoga room, and a woodworking project center.

"We've developed the amenity space based on the needs of the residents," said Kennedy. "For instance, there will be a really nice restaurant that will be open every evening. We will have music every evening, with a happy hour in Mathers Tap Room. We're excited about this project."

The general contractor for The Residences at Zon Beachside is MH Williams Construction Group Inc. The Melbourne firm has been the GC for all the construction that has been completed on that campus.

"We're looking to have The Residences at Zon Beachside completed in early spring of next year," said Marcus Ingeldsen, director of construction at MH Williams Construction Group.

"With the supply–chain challenges the industry is facing, we procured as many materials as possible for this project and stored them."

He added, "The Residences is going to have an amazing dining facility on the third floor."

"This is our fourth phase of renovation or new construction at Zon Beachside," said Mike Williams Jr., president of MH Williams Construction Group. "The need and the demand are there. The Residences will be a great addition to the Zon Beachside campus."

Zon Beachside was designed around what is called within the organization the "Zon360" program. The concept was created not only to keep the residents engaged in things that interest them and provide them the opportunity for new memories and personal growth, but also to address the important areas of daily life, from health to relaxation and everything in between.

The six components of the cutting–edge program are "Zon Health," "Zon Fresh," "Zon Culture," "Zon Life," "Zon Connect," and "Zon Relax."

"These six foundations are important for someone who is considering moving into an assisted–living facility or independent living community," said Kennedy.



Port officials break ground on key project, North Cargo Berth 3 renovation will expand capacity for growth

Steve Linden
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Director of Communications & Public Affairs
Canaveral Port Authority

PORT CANAVERAL (March 25, 2022) — With shovels in hand, officials from the Canaveral Port Authority joined with leaders from federal, state, and municipal government, along with business and space–industry representatives, to ceremonially break ground on a massive $48 million project to rebuild Port Canaveral's North Cargo Berth 3 (NCB3).

The Port Canaveral Cargo Berth Rehabilitation and Modernization project is a significant component of the Port's capital investment plan to ensure the Port's competitive position in a global marketplace and support the economic prosperity of the Central Florida region.

"This groundbreaking is the start of a new chapter for Port Canaveral," said John Murray, Port director and CEO. "This berth project is critical to expand our abilities to accommodate a growing and very diverse cargo business portfolio. After a couple of difficult years, it's great to be back and, once again, building our future on a solid foundation of current business and a wide horizon of new opportunities."

Built in 1976, North Cargo Berth 3 has been out of service since 2014. The original over water pier design in combination with the increasing size of today's commercial vessels and the Port's growing cargo diversity had made the berth functionally obsolete. Demolition of the existing pier began in December 2021; it will be replaced with an 880–foot–long multi–purpose wharf that ensures the necessary channel width to accommodate larger vessels simultaneously at berth.

In welcoming the nearly 100 invited guests, Canaveral Port Authority Chairman Jerry Allender thanked the elected officials, federal and state funding partners, and port terminal operators and tenants for their commitment to supporting the economic prosperity of the Port community. "Building a strong economy also takes leadership at all levels of government to ensure that public and private companies can strategically invest in growth opportunities and successfully operate to their full potential," said Chairman Allender.

At its September 2021 meeting, the Canaveral Port Authority commissioners awarded a $48 million contract to Titusville–based RUSH Marine LLC for the NCB3 project. Brevard County–area subcontractors working with RUSH on the project include Chrome Electric, Franklin Services of Brevard and WLS Utilities.

Congressman Bill Posey thanked the Canaveral Port Authority and the Port community for their roles making NCB3 a reality. "Who could have imagined that in 1939, when the legislature made the Canaveral Port Authority, that is would grow to be what it is today. It has become the absolute most unwavering, unstoppable, and ever–growing economic driver in the region. I want to thank the Canaveral Port Authority for helping maintain and build our critical infrastructure."

Total development cost of the Port Canaveral Cargo Berth Rehabilitation and Modernization project is $48 million. The Canaveral Port Authority was awarded a $14 million 2019 Port Infrastructure Development Program grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration. The Florida Department of Transportation is supporting the project with $33 million in state grant funding.

The berth rehabilitation and modernization project is a critical component of Port Canaveral's expansion of its cargo facilities.

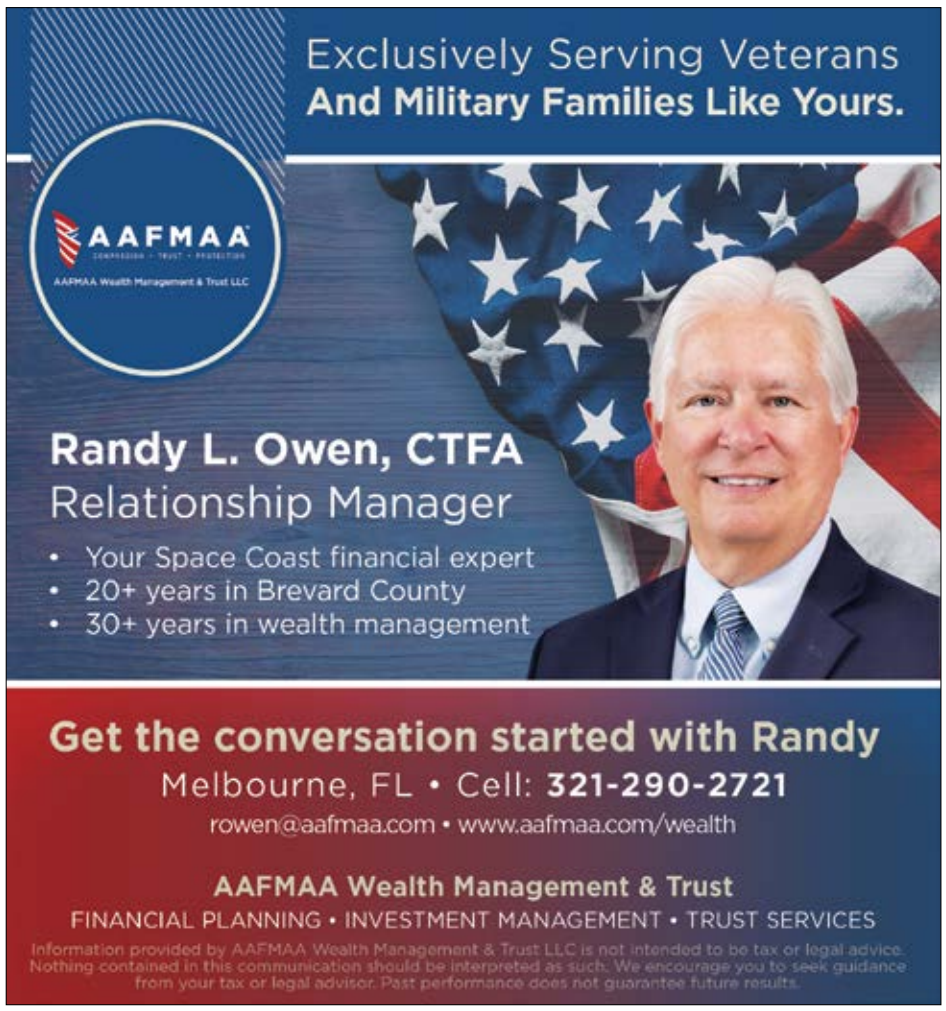
Port Canaveral has been continuously engaged in advancing its capabilities to expand cargo operations at the Port by deepening the harbor to accommodate larger ships, upgrading seawalls and berthing facilities, making landside improvements, investing in new mobile harbor cranes, and expanding cargo terminals access through roadway improvements.

● About Port Canaveral

Led by the elected five–member Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners and Port Director Murray, Port Canaveral is one of the world's most dynamic and exciting ports. A world–class gateway for cruises, cargo, recreation, and logistics, as well as a gateway to new frontiers in space, Port Canaveral hosts nearly 5 million revenue cruise passengers through its state–of–the–art terminals and 6 million tons of cargo annually, including bulk, break–bulk, project, and containerized.

For more information on the Canaveral Port Authority, visit www.PortCanaveral.com.





Florida Tech Board of Trustees Chairman Travis Proctor issues statement about President McCay's decision to retire

By Travis Proctor
Board Chair
Florida Institute of Technology

MELBOURNE (March 25, 2022) — We are writing to share important news regarding a change in leadership at Florida Tech.

Earlier today President Dwayne McCay informed the Board of Trustees of his decision to retire as president for personal reasons at the conclusion of the 2022 fiscal year. The Board has accepted his resignation and has granted his request for immediate personal leave for the remainder of the fiscal year to spend time with his family.

We thank President McCay and his wife, Mary Helen, for their many years of service to the university, and we wish them the best in their future endeavors. We are especially grateful for President McCay's leadership during the pandemic, and, in particular, his ability to keep our community informed, focused, and united during uncertain times.

The Board of Trustees has authorized the creation of the "Office of the President" effective immediately lead by Executive Vice President and Provost Dr. Marco Carvalho, and Sr. Vice President & Chief Financial Officer Mike Jones. Under the authority of this office, Dr. Carvalho will serve as acting president. This group will work in partnership to ensure continuity of university management and governance during this transitional time.

The Board commits its utmost confidence in this experienced leadership team as they work together to oversee university operations. Additionally, current Board of Trustees academic chair, Dr. Svafa Gronfeldt, will serve as Board liaison in the Office of the President further ensuring this leadership team will have the full support of the Board of Trustees as they lead the university.

The Board of Trustees will soon begin a formal and thorough search process for the next president. More information will be forthcoming, but we expect that search to be led by a special board–appointed search committee.

While we understand that transitions like these can be difficult, these changes do not impact our university's unwavering commitment to our diverse community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni and their relentless pursuit of greatness. We remain dedicated to advancing our mission and ensuring that Florida Tech continues to be a university of distinction, quality, and value — one that is internationally recognized for excellence in science and technology, both now and in the future.



Wharton–Smith Construction group announces the hiring of Novo as the senior project manager for Central Florida

By Kelly Mraz
kmraz@whartonsmith.com
Wharton–Smith Construction Group

ORLANDO (March 16, 2022) — Wharton–Smith Construction Group has welcomed George Novo to its team as senior project manager for the Central Florida Commercial Division. He reports to Darin Crafton, executive vice president of commercial operations.

Novo has more than 24 years' experience in commercial construction in the Central Florida market, with a heavy focus on K–12 and higher education projects.

By working in roles ranging from project engineer to senior project manager, Novo has become well–rounded in the industry and provides valuable insight to upcoming projects at Wharton–Smith.

As a senior project manager for Wharton–Smith, Novo will be responsible for the coordination of project management personnel and operations for the construction of secondary education, K–12, and higher education projects.

Novo will begin his new role by providing oversight to the upcoming Lake Howell High School additions and renovations project for Seminole County Public Schools.

In addition to his professional experience in the industry, Novo holds bachelor's degrees in both civil engineering and architectural engineering from the University of Miami, a master's degree in construction engineering and management from Texas A&M University, and is a LEED Accredited Professional.

"We are thrilled to welcome George to the Wharton–Smith team," said Crafton. "His extensive expertise within the education sector of commercial construction makes him a great addition to our team as we begin several K–12 and higher education projects this year, and continue to grow our commercial operations throughout Central Florida."

Novo resides in Seminole County with his wife and two children. He is an avid triathlete and plans to complete his 14th Ironman race later this year in Hawaii.

● About Wharton–Smith Inc.

For more than 35 years, the Wharton–Smith team has had a continued focus on building communities, both with its quality projects and its dedication to the communities it serves. The company's mission is to exceed its clients' expectations by performing with the highest quality, professionalism, and fairness and by communicating with honesty and integrity, at all times.

For further information, contact Kellyn Manders, at (407) 321–8410.

Keiser University

Continued from page 12

testing, vaccinations, counseling, and other services.

Now, the Florida Hospital Association says the state faces a "nursing crisis." That is the major finding of a report released late last year by the Florida Hospital Association and the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida in Tallahassee. The later organization advocates on behalf of Florida's 14 safety net hospital systems located in the most densely populated areas.

The report said, "Florida needs nurses now and well into the future." A recent Florida Hospital Association study, before the current spike in COVID–19 cases, showed an 11% vacancy rate for nurses in spring 2021 and that one–in–four–nurses left their position in 2020. "As Florida's population continues to grow, the health–care system must be ready to meet the ever–increasing demand for services. A strong health–care workforce and capacity in the education system to graduate needed nurses over the coming years are critical."

The report's projections show Florida will face a shortfall of 59,100 nurses by 2025. This includes a 12% shortfall (37,400) of registered nurses and a 30% shortfall (21,700) of licensed practical nurses.

The Nurse Workforce Project Report, however, found the need for nurses is not evenly distributed across the state. Florida's major metropolitan areas are projected to largely have an adequate supply of registered nurses, but a shortfall of licensed practical nurses.

Florida's rural areas and Panhandle will face a shortage of registered nurses, but have a largely adequate supply of licensed practical nurses.

In the report, the Florida Hospital Association and the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida suggest addressing the nurse shortage in the coming years by expanding nursing schools and clinical training capacity, increase the number of nurse faculty opportunities, and improving pass rates of the nurse licensing examinations.

In December 2021, the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, or ICUF, hosted a Nursing Summit led by Dr. Keiser and Dr. Edwin Hernandez, president of AdventHealth University. They identified a number of solutions to Florida's nursing shortage.

"Working closely with hospitals and providing support for the hospitals to encourage them to open up their floors for clinical students — that is one of the big challenges we face," said Dr. Keiser.

"And we need to open up more opportunities for online education, especially in the didactic portions of nursing education. The pandemic allowed for that, and it allowed us to use simulation instead of clinical sites."

He added, "Keiser University invested a lot of money and effort in building its simulation laboratories and simulation equipment to closely mimic patient care. The nursing boards were cooperative. We want them to continue to support the different modalities in education."

The potential solutions addressed at the ICUF Summit included increasing Florida's Effective Access to Student Education Grant to $6,000 for nursing students.

"We recommended the EASE Grant but, unfortunately, it did not get the support we had hoped for," said Dr. Keiser. "It did not happen in this Legislative session."

He continued, "We need to look at this nursing–shortage challenge not only in the immediate term, but also in the long term. Look at the entire talent pipeline related to the development of nurses. Because in that pipeline, certified nursing assistants, registered nurses, those with master's degrees, and faculty are all essential and interrelated."

Dr. Keiser said developing nursing talent takes time. "For an ADN (associate degree of nursing), it's an 18–month experience. For the BSN, which many of the hospitals now require, it's a four–year adventure for students."

According to the National Institutes of Health, the number of people aged 65 years and older in the U.S. is projected to nearly double from 48 million to 98 million by 2050. This rising geriatric population is anticipated to increase the burden on the current medical workforce, creating a gap between demand and supply of health–care professionals.

Just over a decade ago, the Institute of Medicine issued a call–to–action for 80% of working nurses to hold a BSN degree. Their logic was based on a growing body of evidence that nurses who hold a BSN degree are better prepared to analyze data, understand evidence–based practice, promote patient safety, and achieve better patient outcomes.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer the BSN degree in the local market," said Kennedy. "The BSN degree encourages nurses to embrace the big picture of nursing and how it integrates with the overall goal of health care."



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New digital advances will be key to growth in 2022

By Valia Rich
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East Centreal Florida SVP
Bank of America

ROCKLEDGE (March 11, 2022) — As the effects of the coronavirus continue to reshape our world, 2022 will see several factors accelerating the shift to a more digital, hybrid future. In the year ahead, there will be a continued focus on digital transformation as the driving force creating value for businessowners. Below are some considerations of what will come next — and how organizations can position themselves for success.

● New digital advances key to growth

In 2022, it will be critical for companies to further digitize their offerings and operations using new and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and data analytics. In a Deloitte Insights global study of 441 executives across industries, 73% reported piloting or adopting AI in one or more of their business units. Organizations are learning that they don't need large IT departments to do so, as more off–the–shelf AI and ML solutions become available. Companies of all sizes are using these solutions to increase automation and streamline tasks. In addition, digitalization will become a greater priority in unexpected areas of the business, such as M&A and succession planning.

● Mergers and acquisitions.

Digital transformation can help to accelerate M&A deals and make companies more attractive acquisition targets. Those engaged in the M&A process are finding digital technologies helpful in reducing transaction time and costs and delivering greater value to buyers and sellers. And, according to Accenture, 52% of companies logging M&A activity described themselves as primarily acquiring digital companies or assets.

● Succession planning.

Digital transformation should also be considered as business leaders think about the company's long–term trajectory. This includes having talent with the skills to be agile in a quickly changing digital environment. A comprehensive succession plan should also include a roadmap for current and future leaders to assess where they stand on digital readiness, evaluate opportunities and risks, earmark digital investments, plan for disruption, and position the company for sustainable growth.

● Embrace emerging trends in talent and leadership

Digital capabilities can also help companies become more effective at recruitment and retention. While many companies hope to continue returning workforces to the office in 2022, many are offering remote or hybrid work options, which rely heavily on digital solutions. According to an August 2021 study by Accenture, 53% of people who never worked from home previously now plan to work from home more often in the future, even post–pandemic.

As more companies try to balance a mix of in–person and remote work, they will find that these digitally driven workforces present new opportunities to unlock productivity and collaboration. And by removing geographical constraints on hiring, companies have more flexibility to hire from a wider and more diverse talent pool of candidates — something that can help companies stay competitive in a challenging labor market.

One–third of American companies have reported difficulty finding the talent they need, and the situation is expected to worsen. Companies can also focus on benefits to attract and retain employees. Financial benefit plans and wellness resources, employee education or affinity groups — often part of a focus on DE&I — will be more important than ever.

● Focus on ESG efforts to realize sustainable growth

The White House recently stated that climate change poses "significant risks" to the U.S. financial system and put forth a roadmap for creating a more climate–resilient economy. Companies are responding: according to a recent RSM survey conducted in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, nearly half of those surveyed said their organization was either acting to reduce its net carbon emissions to zero or had already reduced their emissions to zero. In response to these trends, companies should consider implementing a meaningful ESG framework for every stage of the business life cycle, considering both their goods and services as well as activities across key business functions — from finance to sales to customer acquisition and more.

Employees have also become more aware of and interested in corporate ESG goals and postures. For companies in 2022, clarifying ESG targets and frequently communicating progress will be paramount. This will benefit not only talent attraction and retention but also customer acquisition as the spending power of Gen Z — a generation strongly engaged in environmental and social issues — continues to grow.

In 2022, it won't be enough for a company to develop and sell a good product. How the company develops, markets and delivers the product will need to be increasingly digital, and take ESG factors into greater consideration. Companies that recognize the possibilities of digital transformation, while keeping the values of their employees and customers in mind, will be better positioned to address the business challenges in the year ahead — and beyond — while creating greater value for the stakeholders and communities they serve.

Bank of America

Continued from page 13

Cocoa High School, we could see it expanding into other parts of the county that need the same kind of assistance," said Mannino.

This is just one example of Bank of America's hands–on involvement and commitment working with partners to better communities. Mannino's company is also supporting the Melbourne Regional Chamber's new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. Bank of America Merrill Lynch is a "Champion Sponsor" of the Task Force along with Shelter Mortgage Florida and Natasha Cartagena Spencer of Shelter Mortgage Co. in Melbourne.

Jamara Wilson is the chairwoman of the DEI Task Force. She runs Progressive Cleaning. The DEI Task Force was born out of an "identifiable need to create professional equity for all businesses across the Space Coast." The DEI Task Force exists to be a "facilitator and connector" of the best resources for businesses to utilize when seeking to understand diversity, equity, and inclusion. Their value proposition is to become a focal point for community conversations around DEI and provide business leaders with access to information and expertise that will help them build more economically and socially inclusive partnerships and practices.

"We have formed an incredibly diverse Task Force at the Melbourne Regional Chamber," said Mannino, who is one of the 11 members of the DEI Task Force. "We have developed a Professional Equity Sponsorship Program. The goal of the program is to provide potential Melbourne Regional Chamber partners in underserved communities or demographics the opportunity to join the Chamber and build their personal and professional brand equity through resources, financial assistance, and engaging programming exposure, thus diversifying and strengthening our partner base. We are going deep. We are reaching out trying to have a lasting impact on Brevard County. Bank of America is a proud sponsor of this initiative along with other great partners in the area."

Recently, Bank of America selected two students from the East Central Florida region for its summer internship program. Dozens of high school students apply for the paid summer internship experience with a nonprofit, topped off by a one–week trip to Washington, D.C., where they "collaborate, gain leadership training, and really see what it means to be a community–minded young person, and more importantly, how to take that experience into the future," said Mannino.

He said a local panel selects the applicants for Bank of America's "Student Leaders" program. "We will be announcing the two Student Leaders within the next couple of months," he said.

Since 2014, the Student Leaders program has been a part of Bank of America's ongoing commitment to youth employment and economic mobility. Bank of America annually connects more than 300 community–minded high school juniors and seniors from nearly 100 communities to employment, skill development, and service.

"The students come from many diverse backgrounds, but all are united by their drive of community," said Mannino.

Without access to career skill–building opportunities like the Student Leaders program, many young people may be left behind in a fast–changing job market.

Additionally, in 2021 Bank of America awarded a $50,000 grant to the Neighborhood Center of West Volusia. It was named Bank of America's East Central Florida region "Neighborhood Champion" for its work to prevent homelessness and provide shelter to needy people in Volusia County. The bank gave the organization the grant to increase "rapid rehousing" throughout the community.

"The Neighborhood Center of West Volusia provides services to people who are really having a tough time in life, dealing with homelessness and hunger and trying to get back on their feet. We have a lot of great organizations in Brevard that do similar work. We will be looking to award that grant again in 2022," said Mannino.

As a Bank of America Neighborhood Champion, the Neighborhood Center of West Volusia will also participate in leadership training delivered by experts in the nonprofit sector on topics like human capital management and increasing financial sustainability.

The Neighborhood Center of West Volusia has been providing services to the community for more than 50 years. The agency's services include several programs that lead to economic and social mobility, including food pantries, direct financial assistance for rent and utility payments, and life–skills training.

Since 2016, Bank of America, in the East Central Florida region, has funded $1.7 million in grants and matching gifts, advancing racial equality and economic opportunity and addressing needs brought on by the pandemic. Bank of America Charitable Foundation provided grants and matching gifts on behalf of employees.

Total contributions donated to local nonprofits and community needs by East Central Florida employees totaled $358,000, during the same time period. A portion of this amount was matched by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

Twenty–three thousand employee volunteer hours were contributed locally as part of Bank of America's annual goal of giving 2 million volunteer hours across the company.

"We are also growing our banking presence here," said Mannino. "One of my jobs as market president is to make sure we are delivering all of our lines of business to customers that need our services. The greatest pleasure from this job is delivering the capabilities of a global organization from a team that has deep roots here."

He added, "We have a tremendous amount of respect for local competitors, but I always like to point out that the roughly 400 colleagues throughout our three–county region all live in local communities and many have generational roots. Many of the colleagues grew up in their respective communities. They are involved as volunteers in their communities. I am very proud of that."



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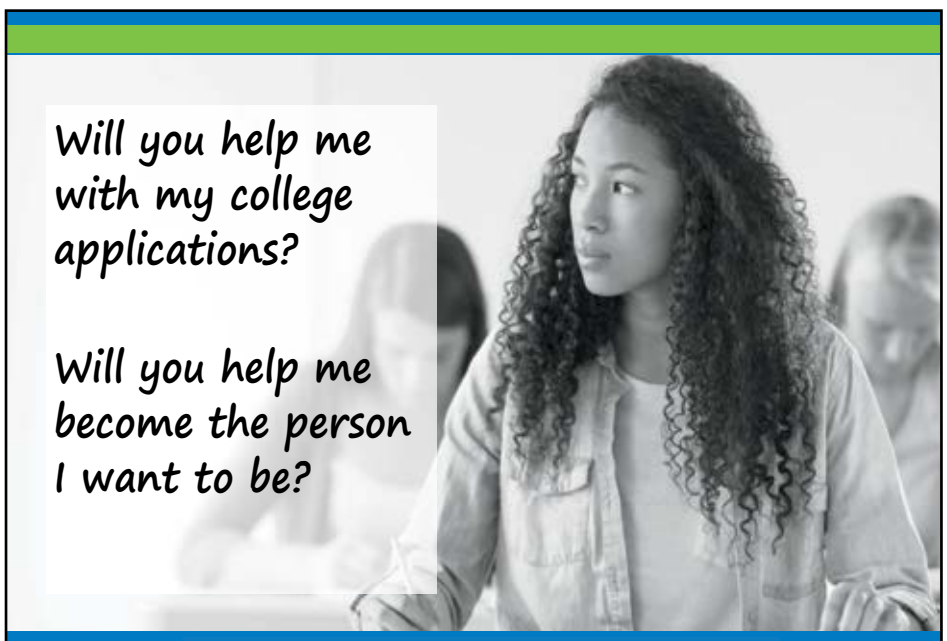
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Space Coast Rolling Readers

Continued from page 1

fundraiser. We have established a dedicated website (SpaceCoastRiverJam.com) for the event."

In a short time, more than 8,000 people have visited the website. Space Coast River Jam is offering VIP packages at $75. The price includes preferred seating, a private catered dinner, and drinks. General admission is $10. At Space Coast River Jam, there will be food trucks, live entertainment, a cash bar, and a 50–50 raffle.

A range of event sponsorships, from $500 to $15,000, are available. Each level of support includes various amenities, such as meal and drink tickets, and promotional material displayed throughout the venue. It all raises money for Rolling Readers Space Coast.

For more information on being a sponsor, call Payne or Amber Ferguson, program coordinator, at (321) 254–9976, or email Read@RollingReadersSpaceCoast.com.

With Space Coast River Jam, Payne said Rolling Readers was looking to create an event that it could "build upon, and in the process, raise the visibility of our organization. It will help us provide long–term growth for Rolling Readers so that we can continue our important mission of providing literary services to children in area schools."

The community quickly rallied around the inaugural concert, with businesses and corporations showing their support. "Last year's Space Coast River Jam was fantastic," said Hyde, an attorney with the Melbourne–based law firm Widerman Malek, PL.

"In the years ahead, we think that people will come to recognize Space Coast River Jam as a pre–eminent fundraising event in the community, and will want to be involved. Our law firm has been involved with Rolling Readers for years."

Space Coast River Jam has expanded its entertainment for the 2022 program, with seven bands scheduled to perform at Riverfront Park, up from four last year, said Payne.

The headliner is The Katz Downstairz. In the seven years that Katz Downstairz has been together, they've become a household name in their native city of Jacksonville. The group provides a unique sound that is a reimagination of hip–hop, jazz, and neo soul with an urban undertone.

Also set to perform are: Soultime, a popular Central Florida party band that plays Motown, disco, and dance favorites; Cherry Down returns after playing at last year's event and specializes in party rock and roll; John Q and The Master Blasters play music of the Beach Boys, Peter Frampton, and Three Dog Night; Midnight Grove performs the soulful sounds of Earth, Wind & Fire, Teena Marie, and Luther Vandross; String Daddy is an acoustic duo that produces a "wall of sound" from two instruments — guitar and violin; and new this year is the Emerging Artist category.

The first Emerging Artist performer for Space Coast River Jam goes simply by "Drew." He's a recent graduate of Bethune–Cookman University, where he was a leader of the school's well–known marching band, "The Marching Wildcats."

Space Coast River Jam will include recognition of the 2022 "Rolling Readers Writes" winners, said Payne. The Writes program is "designed to encourage our readers to create, dream, reach, grow, and imagine a world of possibilities. The kids write their own stories and we publish them in a book. At the event, we will present the awards in front of the audience. The next day, May 14, there will be a book–signing event at Hello Again Books in Cocoa Village. The authors will sign their books and interact with the attendees."

The relationship between reading and writing is a bit like that of the chicken and egg, in that without one the other cannot exist. A child's literacy development is dependent on this interconnection between reading and writing.

Research has found that when children read a lot, they become better writers. Reading a variety of genres helps children learn text structures and language they can then transfer to their own writing.

Annually, before the pandemic, Rolling Readers served nearly 6,000 children in more than 20 Title 1 schools in Brevard.

"We focus on the Title 1 schools in Brevard where many students don't always have the opportunities to read at home or have books at their disposal," said Lieneck.

"Our Read Aloud program in the classrooms and our other initiatives provide young people with the support they need to grow through reading, and grow their imagination."

Working with prekindergarten through sixth–grade students, Read Aloud volunteers visit classrooms once a week. Under the watchful eyes of the teacher, who remains in the room during the session, the volunteers read books from different literary genres, help students with vocabulary, and reinforce the importance of sequence, details, and main ideas.

"I was a Read Aloud volunteer for three years in a kindergarten class at Roy Allen Elementary School in Melbourne," said Lieneck. "It was a lot of fun. The Read Aloud volunteers are key to the success of the program. They do their best to help children learn to read at a young age."

Space Coast Rolling Readers is recruiting Read Aloud volunteers. To learn more about the program, call (321) 254–9976 or email read@RollingReadersSpaceCoast.org.

Lieneck, an attorney, is the regulatory affairs manager for Johns Hopkins Healthcare. Jointly owned by Johns Hopkins Health System and the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Johns Hopkins Healthcare develops and manages medical–care contracts with organizations, government programs, and health–care providers. It has more than 400,000 plan members.

Lieneck said she was fortunate as a child because her parents bought her books and also read to her. "One time, my parents were at a garage sale. One of the items for sale was a Nancy Drew collection. My parents purchased the entire collection. I would stay up reading at night with the light on in the living room. The Nancy Drew books were fascinating to me as a child. But not every parent can afford to buy their children a box of books. This is where Rolling Readers helps out."

Nancy Drew is a fictional teenage amateur detective in an extended series of mystery books written by a number of ghost authors. Nancy Drew's "intelligence, courage, and independence made her a popular role model for many generations of young readers."

To inspire young people to read, every March Rolling Readers has a "Book Giveaway." A new hardcover book, selected specifically for each grade level, is given to the students as a gift from the classroom volunteer. The children are encouraged to take the book home and share it with their family.

Rolling Readers' programs also include "Reading Skills" and "Grade–Level Reading Intervention."

Reading Skills is a 60–minute program. The volunteers work individually with second–grade children once a week to strengthen the reading skills of youngsters, using a "leveled series of books." The program involves listening to students practice reading aloud. This helps students enrich their vocabulary and improve their fluency and comprehension.

The Grade–Level Reading Intervention program meets weekly with small groups of 8– and 9–year–olds to conduct "fun, hands–on activities that reinforce reading skills." Volunteers help these students build a stronger literacy base.

A couple of years ago, Payne said he was doing some research for a grant he was writing for Rolling Readers.

"I couldn't believe the statistics I was seeing — the relationship between incarceration and low literacy. It almost brought me to tears," he said, adding, "The work we do at Rolling Readers is making a big difference in the lives of young people. We have seen this up close."

Payne, a military veteran, was named executive director of Rolling Readers Space Coast in 2019. He came to the position with a long–term commitment to literacy and a 20–year track record of business success. And he's been building relationships with businesses since coming aboard Rolling Readers.

"I believe people who become involved in our organization will find it very rewarding," he said. "We are always reaching out to further develop relationships that are going to take us into the next 10 years."

It is widely accepted that reading aloud is the single most important researched activity leading to language development, and promotes early literacy skills in children. Researchers say what happens during the first few years sets the path for the rest of the child's life.

Only about one–third of U.S. fourth–grade public school students are proficient in reading. That means most young students cannot understand grade–level written text, develop and interpret meaning, or use meaning that's appropriate to the type of text.

The reading and mathematics scores of 13–year–old students fell between 2012 and 2020 — the first time in the almost 50–year history of the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The results were released in late 2021 by the National Center for Education Statistics. This assessment is also known as "The Nation's Report Card."

Highlights of the report include:

- The average reading score for 9–year–old students was 12 points higher in 2020 than in 1971, but not significantly different from the average score in 2012.
- The average reading score for 13–year–old students was five points higher in 2020 than in 1971, but three points lower than in 2012.
- Scores in reading for the lowest–performing 9– and 13–year–old students (at the 10th percentile) decreased from 2012.
- The percentage of 9–year–olds and 13–year–olds who report that they "never or hardly ever" read for fun have increased significantly since the question was first included in the questionnaire in 1984. Sixteen percent of 9–year–olds answered the question that way in 2020, compared to 9% in 1984. For the 13–year–olds, it was 29% in 2020 and 8% in 1984.

Rolling Readers Space Coast conducts surveys and measures progress of the students in the Read Aloud and other programs. The information is included in the organization's annual report.

In recent site–coordinator surveys, the results have shown that the Read Aloud program is either "very effective" or "effective" in contributing to students' exposure to literature and improving reading skills.

"The success of our fundraisers, like Space Coast River Jam, translates into helping the kids in Rolling Readers' programs," said Hyde. "We are looking forward to the evening of May 13. As an organization, we are excited about the future of Rolling Readers."

Added Lieneck, "It's going to be a great night for the community to come out and support an outstanding nonprofit that is having a big impact on the lives of young people."

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