



Southwest Florida Counties Launch New EDC Partnership

Ft. Myers, Fla., November 2009 — Things just got a little brighter in Southwest Florida.

This month marks the official launch of the area's new economic development partnership, comprised of several Southwest Florida counties working in unison to promote this promising region of the Sunshine State.

The newly formed Southwest Florida Economic Development Partnership stretches from Sarasota to Glades to Collier counties, all coming together to put the economic well-being of the Southwest Florida region front and center. With some 70,000 square miles of land and over 300 miles of coastline, this partnership represents one of the state's largest and most diverse economic regions.

According to Tammie Nemecek, chairman of the Southwest Florida EDC Board, "We are committed to the continued expansion of our region's infrastructure, resources, intellectual and financial capital. While we are working together on many fronts, one of our major focuses is the recruitment, retention and creation of high-wage jobs in targeted high technology industries and specialty manufacturing."

Indeed, the partnership has created a powerful resource for businesses seeking to expand or relocate to this up-and-coming region, a budding hotbed for industries such as biotechnology, information technology, and health, life and environmental sciences. Within the past 10 years its infrastructure has also seen significant growth, most notably with the establishment of renowned academic institutions and the new Southwest Florida International Airport, already ranked among the 50 busiest airports in the U.S.

With a prominent marketing campaign and new website (ABrighterPlace.com) also launched this month, the partnership's branding is built around a strong positioning statement: *Southwest Florida - A Brighter Place to Do Business.*

"This is such a fitting way to position our region in terms of both the quality of life in Southwest Florida, and the area's strong intellectual capital," said Nemecek. "That includes an impressive group of former CEOs and successful business owners who call Southwest Florida home, and part of our marketing strategy will be to tap-into this valuable resource to explore further possibilities for encouraging businesses to consider our region."

Along with Nemecek, officers of the board for Southwest Florida Economic Development Partners include Kathy Baylis, vice chairman; Don Root, treasurer; and Jim Moore, board secretary. Key community partners include Florida Gulf Coast University, Fifth Third Bank, Lykes Brothers and A. Duda & Sons.

During the next two years, the partnership has agreed to invest several hundred thousand dollars toward their marketing campaign with the aim of bringing higher recognition and more high-wage jobs to the region. For those interested in sponsorship opportunities, or for further details on the Southwest Florida Economic Development Partners, visit www.ABrighterPlace.com

About Southwest Florida Economic Development Partners:

Southwest Florida is a newly formed Economic Development Partnership made up of Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Lee and Sarasota counties, all of whom have come together to put the economic well-being of the Southwest Florida region front and center. The focus of the partnership is the recruitment, retention and creation of high-wage jobs in targeted high technology industries such as health, life and environmental sciences, information technology and specialty manufacturing.

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