ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY











## HELPING DELIVER ECONOMIC VITALITY for St. Lucie County

## Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE





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The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County is a private 501(c)6 not-for-profit organization founded in 2000 and dedicated to enriching the economic vitality of our community through the retention, expansion and relocation of businesses to St. Lucie County. The EDC is uniquely positioned to help expanding or relocating businesses take full advantage of our available resources.



### Dear EDC investors and partners,

incredible motion toward our goal of creating a robust and diverse economy for St. Lucie County.

As 2023 comes to a close, here's just some of what we have going on:

- Thriving operations at FedEx Ground, Amazon's Port St. Lucie delivery station, Contender Boats, Chandler Bats, Cleveland Clinic Florida Research & Innovation Center, and the FIU Center for Translational Science.
- Expanded operations at A-1 Industries of Florida, Maverick Boat Group, Pursuit Boats, HCA Florida Lawnwood Hospital, D&D Welding, and Islamorada Brewery & Distillery.
- Cheney Brothers staffing up in anticipation of receiving their certificate of occupancy before year-end and Accel International preparing for January job fairs and a first quarter 2024 start.
- Employers leasing space at Sansone's 168,000-square-foot Class A building and the Interstate Commerce Center.
- Expansions underway at OCULUS Surgical, Twin Vee and Total Truck Parts; renovation work proceeding for LactaLogics; construction completion within sight for Arcosa Meyer and the South Florida Logistics Center 95.

P1 Motor Club, and we are just weeks away from announcing a major new project by a Fortune 50 company.

Our county has moved light years forward from where we were on the EDC's 20th anniversary in 2020.

commute outside the county for work.

But significant focus on workforce development and talent attraction is needed more than ever.

locally now and in the very near future.

20 years of dedicated service to the organization and St. Lucie's economy.

support from our local governments, without which our success would not be possible.



With best regards, Peter J. Tesch President Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County

P.S. We'll be moving our offices during the first week of the year to the second floor of Seacoast Bank on Gatlin Boulevard. Please drop in to see us once we get settled.





**Pete Tesch** 

President

**Candy Marlow** 

Investor Relations









Wes McCurry Senior Vice President

**Maureen Saltzer** 

& Outreach



















Pete Tesch Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County

Bob Zacchec

LMHC, SAE

- Before I sat down to write you this letter, I took a few minutes to review our annual reports from recent years. We dubbed 2021 "A Year Like No Other" and 2022 "Building Our Future." This year's report is titled "Progress in Motion" because 2023 has seen
- The 2021 groundbreakings at Legacy Park at Tradition, the Tradition Center for Commerce and the Interstate Crossroads Logistics Center set the stage for 2022 when we saw even more construction activity for new facilities and the expansion of existing companies.

- That's an impressive list by any measure but there is so much more the Treasure Coast Food Bank will break ground on its new state-of-the-art facility in early 2024 at Orange 95 Commerce Center, three new commerce parks are in the works at the Tradition Center for Commerce, Kings Landing is beginning to come out of the ground in Fort Pierce, plans are moving forward for
- As each development or expansion completes, the demand for labor increases. St. Lucie County has access to a growing workforce and we see significant local career opportunities now and in the future for the still-too-large percentage of our residents who
- Our high school career and technical programs are among the best in the state and are graduating students with a wide range of certifications while Indian River State College and Keiser University are filling talent pipelines in nursing and other occupations.
- In the following pages of this report, you'll read more about the steps the EDC is taking in concert with our education partners, Project L.I.F.T. and the Treasure Coast Builders Association to ensure that we help meet the challenge of preparing our young people for great careers here at home and connecting our local workforce with the dynamic new career opportunities available
- Finally, this has been a year of change for your EDC. Chris Fogal, who has ably led us over these last two phenomenal years with principled and thoughtful guidance, will be our immediate past chair. Azlina Goldstein will take on the organization's leadership with passion and a commitment to getting things done. We saw tragedy in 2023 with the terrible loss of Jenn DuBey, an amazing professional and a very good friend to us all. The EDC also celebrated Candy Marlow's memorable career and retirement after
- With that being said, in 2024 I look forward to working with a talented and enthusiastic staff, a committed board and unwavering





### **Accel Industrial Park**

The Sina Companies are developing industrial space on 28 acres immediately to the south of Accel International in the Tradition Center for Commerce. Options are available for single or multiple buildings from 40,000 square feet up to 389,000 square feet, build-to-suit or lease with occupancy available in 2024. The Sina Companies led the development of the recently completed Accel International manufacturing facility.

### **DRAG** NFLY

### **Dragonfly Commerce Park**

Dragonfly Investments is developing a Class A industrial park in the Tradition Center for Commerce. The industrial park's plans are designed for clean manufacturing, industrial, flex and service users. Four rear-load facilities total 405,508 square feet with bay sizes from 6,000 square feet to full buildings with square footages from 72,120 to 127,634 square feet.

### LactaLogics **Lacta**Logics



LactaLogics, a mission-driven company dedicated to bringing more human milk to babies, is opening its headquarters and processing facility in Port St. Lucie. The company is currently renovating and upgrading the 60,000-square-foot former Liberty Medical building at 8883 U.S. Highway 1. Once improvements to the building are

complete and manufacturing equipment installed, the company plans to hire an additional 60 full-time workers at 107% of St. Lucie County's average wage.



### Legacy Park Cold Storage Facility

With construction wrapping up on the Sansone Group's 520,000-square-foot Class A industrial building, bringing the completed square footage at Legacy Park at Tradition to more than 1.1 million, the nationally ranked developer is working on a 380,000-square-foot state-of-the-art cold storage facility with a 45,360-squarefoot refrigerated dock area. Delivery is anticipated in the third quarter of 2024.



### Orange 95 Commerce Center

The 61-acre Orange 95 Commerce Center in Fort Pierce has 700,000+ square feet of approved industrial sites ranging from 108,000 to 142,514 square feet. Developed by the Tambone Companies, the commerce center is one of the few locations in South Florida that offers multiple development options, including build-to-suit sales, industrially zoned land for sale or warehouse leases. The center's location offers easy access to both Interstate 95 and Florida's Turnpike.

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS·

**REASURE COAST** 

TWINVEE

FOOD BANK

### Tradition Commerce Park

BTH Development Partners and Thomas Miller Construction are collaborating on Tradition Commerce Park with options for build-to-suit manufacturing, logistics/ distribution, warehousing, aviation/marine or life science facilities for a total of 532,346 square feet on 34 acres in the Tradition Center for Commerce. The site plan approved in April has grade-level flex space available from 3,000 to 28,800 square feet and dock high space from 15,000 to 166,968 square feet across seven buildings.



Treasure Coast Food Bank is developing a state-of-the-art 113,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution facility at Orange 95 Commerce Center in Fort Pierce. Currently, the Food Bank operates its programs out of five separate locations. Consolidating operations in a modern mission-designed facility will enable the nonprofit to increase its direct services, nutrition programs and job training as well as create additional partnership and volunteer opportunities. The \$30 million investment in the new facility and equipment will enable the Food Bank to add 53 new employees over three years. The building will include cold storage, a full kitchen and serve as a FEMA-approved shelter-in-place location.



**Twin Vee Expansion** 



to add another manufacturing line, allowing for the construction of both Twin Vee and LFG Marine boats simultaneously. Construction is slated for completion by the end of 2023. In November, Twin Vee announced that the company was moving its Aquasport boat production from Tennessee to its Fort Pierce location.



On April 25, Twin Vee Powercats Co. announced that the company was moving forward with the expansion of its manufacturing facilities in Fort Pierce, adding a 23,456-square-foot single-story building and a 4,389-square-foot covered awning to its existing catamaran sport boat production and storage facilities. Once complete, the campus will consist of a connected 95,000-square-foot space. The increased space will enable Twin Vee

# MILESTONES & PROJECT COMPLETIONS

This has been an exciting year for project completions with seven major facilities finishing construction in 2023! The scenery along Interstate 95 has certainly changed over the last two years.

## **Completions**



Accel International's 150,000-square-foot facility in the Tradition Center for Commerce was completed by Itasca Construction Associates in March. The company has been working on installing equipment and plans to start hiring the first of its 125 new employees starting in early 2024.

Amazon's first-mile fulfillment center was completed in early 2023 and is contributing more than \$2.3 million to local and regional taxing authorities this year. A date for staffing the facility has not yet been set.





**Cheney Brothers warehouse and distribution center** in Southern Grove opened in late 2023. The facility includes executive and administrative offices, a beautiful test kitchen, cold storage, dry storage, loading bays and land for expansion. Local businesses and residents will have access to exclusive Cheney Brothers products at the Cheney Express on site.

Interstate Commerce Center, developed and managed by JBL Asset Management, has 1,300 feet of frontage along Interstate 95. The facility was completed in the summer and leasing is active. Two plumbing companies had taken space in the facility as of late 2023.



Kings Logistics Center, developed by Seefried Industrial Properties on Kings Highway, is immediately available for occupancy. Colliers is handling the leasing with availability from 300,000 to 664,176 square feet.



In Legacy Park, the Sansone Group's 168,000-square-foot spec building was completed in early 2023. Leasing has begun with a tenant in place and more space available. Finishing touches on the developer's 520,000-square-foot spec building were taking place in late 2023.



The Arcosa Meyer Utility Structures facility in the unincorporated county is going up quickly. This is a photo of Proctor Construction's progress as of July. Utility poles will be manufactured at this facility when it is complete.



county upon completion.



The walls for OCULUS Surgical's new state-of-theart manufacturing facility in the Tradition Center for Commerce were up in December. When construction is completed, the advanced manufacturing company will expand from its offices in St. Lucie West.



## Under 🔏 Construction





Renovations needed to accommodate LactaLogics headquarters and processing facility at the former Liberty Medical building on U.S. One in Port St. Lucie have begun. The innovative human milk processing facility is slated for a 2024 opening.

The two buildings developed by Stonemont Financial Group that make up the South Florida Logistics Center 95's 1.3 million square feet are nearing completion. The 1.1-million-square-foot building will be the largest in the



VIPs from Total Truck Parts and the City of Port St. Lucie broke ground in March for what will be the South Florida company's largest location. The 47,000-square-foot building will include a 5,000-square-foot showroom, 16 heavy truck and trailer repair bays, a large area for hydraulic and drive line repair, and extensive warehouse space for parts.

# Initiatives & Ventures

## #WorkLocalStLucie

In 2023 local labor demand was high; the region's unemployment remained low, existing companies expanded and construction on multiple new facilities was completed. Operations at **Cheney Brothers** and **Accel International** are beginning in late 2023/early 2024, creating openings for hundreds of new jobs. And, as tenants begin to occupy the new industrial facilities, even more career opportunities will become available.

In anticipation of the quickly approaching workforce needs, in addition to the EDC's ongoing workforce readiness programs such as bootcamps, counselor tours and our award-winning #QuitYourCommute campaign, the EDC formed two key workforce readiness collaborations.

The EDC formalized a close collaboration with the **Treasure Coast Builders Association Charitable Fund** on workforce education and development of local youths and adults in the in the areas of skilled trades/ construction and positions within target industries such as logistics/distribution, manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, marine, and aviation.

In December, Anita Fischer was hired by **Project L.I.F.T.** as a loaned executive to the EDC. Among her responsibilities as Director of Workforce Readiness, Anita will provide a direct connection between local employers and workforce training providers. (See more on Page 13)



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High school counselors and educators learned first-hand about careers at seven local employers during spring and fall tours. This photo was taken at **TAMCO**.

The EDC worked with the **Treasure Coast Builders Association** on a Skilled Trades Boot Camp in August; 52 youths ages 17-22 graduated, many received job offers from the 15 companies that participated in a career fair on the final day of the camp.





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The EDC assisted with the 2023 **CareerSource Research Coast** Career Connect Conference in April, partnering with **Maverick Boat Group** and **Pursuit Boats** on manufacturing activities.

## **AWARDS**

Business Facilities recognized the EDC as a 2023 Economic Development Organization of the Year for resiliency, writing that we "characterize tenacity from the grassroots level to securing multimillion-dollar projects."



The International Economic Development Association recognized the EDC's **#QuitYourCommute** Waze campaign with an Excellence in Economic Development award for digital marketing.



Southern Business & Development magazine not only named **Pete Tesch** an Economic Development Rock Star, the editors also designated him a "Florida Legend." EDC staff surprised Pete with commemorative matching rockstar shirts at April's board meeting.

# EDC EXCEL

The EDC EXCEL program provides rising young executives with leadership experiences and training, career path development and meaningful business connections.

EXCEL kick started an eventful 2023 with a sold-out second annual Sporting Clay Tournament at Quail Creek Sporting Ranch. **TD Bank** was the title sponsor and proceeds from the event helped fund the first seminar in the EXCEL Speaks Series. Shown here are Azlina Goldstein, EDC Chair-Elect, and EXCEL member Karla Gabay of UES.



In February, EXCEL members toured Adams Ranch, a fourth-generation cow-calf cattle ranch headquartered in western St. Lucie County where cattle are raised naturally on open Florida pastures.

**Pursuit Boats** hosted EXCEL for a production facility tour in July where attendees learned about marine manufacturing, a major St. Lucie County industry.

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Globally renowned keynote speaker, author and entrepreneur Dr. Rick Goodman packed the house at Indian River State College for EDC EXCEL's inaugural **EXCEL Speaks** seminar. Dr. Goodman led attendees in development of their game plan for success.



The EDC was a finalist for the NAIOP South Florida Economic Impact award for the redevelopment of the vacant Packers of Indian River facility into a manufacturing facility for **Contender Boats**.









# **Business CAttraction**

The EDC took advantage of multiple opportunities to spread the word about all the benefits St. Lucie County has to offer employers and targeted industries. Increasingly we've been able to accomplish this by hosting site selectors and industry groups right here at home, a welcome indication of the increasing interest major corporations and their representatives have in our thriving county.

In partnership with **FPL's Economic Development Office**, the EDC hosted eight top site selection consultants for two days, an outstanding opportunity to showcase



the many benefits of locating in St. Lucie County. The visit was organized through **Consultant Connect** and provided a great mix of data, excitement and fun, with side trips to Derecktor Shipyard, Quail Creek Sporting Ranch, PGA and Sailfish Brewing Company.

In May, Wes McCurry and Jenn DuBey attended the **Florida Supply Chain Summit** in Tampa. The summit provides a platform for collaboration between supply chain executives, government, economic development organizations and education to advance the state as a global trade hub.



NAIOP South Florida, the commercial real estate development association, hosted 150 commercial real estate brokers, agents and developers at St. Lucie Trail Golf Club for what is now the group's annual Treasure Coast event. Featured speakers included Pete Tesch and EDC board members Peter Crane and Richard Tambone; Ken Krasnow moderated the panels.



The East Coast District of CCIM Florida hosted its annual Commercial Real Estate Symposium in Port St. Lucie and featured speakers from the National Association of Realtors®, FloridaRealtors®, Florida Atlantic University, Dean Mead and a regional five-county panel.

In June, the EDC participated in **BISNOW**'s South Florida Industrial & Logistics Update. What's more exciting, however, is that BISNOW hosted a Treasure Coast State of the Market program, for the first time ever. The sold-out event was held at Keiser University in September and included an address from Mayor Shannon Martin, a panel with Jill Marasa, Richard Tambone, Peter Crane and others, and an opening address by Wes McCurry. The feedback on the event was so positive, BISNOW has already calendared a 2024 program here.



These are just the highlights of our 2023 business development outreach. The EDC also attended **FPL's Powering Florida Illumination** event, a cold storage event, **Port St Lucie's Citizen's Summit**, and EDC representatives presented at service clubs, to homeowners' groups, and were interviewed by TV, radio and print journalists throughout the year.



The EDC makes strategic advertising choices among multiple site selection media options, in print and online, along with a strong social media outreach program. We negotiate addedvalue packages and typically choose our timing to coincide with content relating directly to our targeted industries.

Our website, **www.youredc.com**, was refreshed with updated pages, an enhanced listing of available properties, and exciting new tools from **LocalIntel** at the end of 2023. The tools provide data visualizations for St. Lucie County's many assets, check them out at https://youredc.com/site\_selection/toolbox.



Our three-month digital extension advertising campaign in **Trade & Industry Development** significantly outperformed national averages with 62,713 impressions and an enviable click-through rate. The ads touted our 6 million square feet of industrial space and followed www.TradeandIndustryDev.com website visitors around on Facebook and Google.

The EDC sponsored a 10-page special section in the **South Florida Business Journal** in May. The Corridors of Opportunity content included in-depth reporting on St. Lucie's industrial facilities, manufacturers, the airport and port, our workforce, educational opportunities and research institutions. The section was distributed to 34,000 print edition readers and available to 620,000+ website visitors.



Port St. Lucie became the 6th largest city in Florida this year and the EDC incorporated that messaging into our print ads in the **South Florida Business Journal** and **Florida Trend**.

When **Business Facilities** ranked the EDC as an Economic Development Organization of the Year for populations of 100,00-500,000, our ad in the magazine's supply chain feature publicized our #1 economic development team as well as our county's attributes.



We use **LinkedIn** and **Facebook** extensively in our marketing efforts. The EDC's social media posts get noticed! Our best-performing posts are seen by tens of thousands of people. Our post about Total Truck Parts' groundbreaking was seen by 15,764 Facebook users, shared 19 times, and had 228 interactions.

**Area Development** magazine ranked the Port St. Lucie MSA as #10 Leading Location in the U.S. for midsized regions. Our advertisement shared other impressive numbers



ADVANTAGES Find out what makes our community special by locating the amenities and attractions that matter.

**CORRIDORS OF** 

**OPPORTUNITY:** 

St. Lucie

St. Lucie County, FL

St. Lucie 💑 EDC

() find out more

QUALITY OF LIFE

# ED@THENEWS

Newspapers, TV, radio, newsletters, magazines, blogs, podcasts, online ... Your EDC-related stories appeared in more than 140 headlines during 2023. From industrial properties and groundbreakings to workforce programs, networking events and more, stories about economic development in St. Lucie County ran nationally and locally.



# TRANSITIONS

# Saying GOODBYE to Jenn DuBey

EDC Director of Business Development Jenn DuBey passed away on September 4 after an auto accident. She was well loved throughout both St. Lucie and Martin counties and an integral part of the EDC team. Approximately 175 people said their goodbyes at a beautiful Celebration of Life on September 26. A scholarship fund for students pursuing career and technical education was established in Jenn's name through The Community Foundation Martin-St. Lucie.

Candy Marlow has been organizing spectacular events, providing stellar investor services and offering wise counsel at the EDC for twenty years. While the EDC has had three CEOs and more than a dozen staff members over the years, Candy has been the heart of our organization almost since its inception. Candy's retirement at the end of 2023 is truly the end of an era. We hope to still see her regularly, however, as a volunteer for the events committee she founded.

# Rachel promoted, Kadian welcomed



EDC Business Manager Rachel Savela was promoted to **Director of Investor Engagement** in December. Her new responsibilities include event management as well as investor relations and retention. Rachel joined the EDC in April 2022.

Investor Engagement

WORKFORCE READINESS professional

The EDC has added a Director of Workforce Readiness. Anita Fischer began work at the EDC as a loaned executive from Project L.I.F.T. in December. Anita is well known in the community through her work with Manpower and as a longtime volunteer with the EDC's events committee. Anita will manage boot camps, job fairs, and serve as a direct connection between local employers and workforce training providers.



Oh no! Candy's retiring





**Kadian Knight** Business Manaa

Kadian Knight was hired in November to take over the EDC business management responsibilities. Kadian, a Port St. Lucie resident, had previously worked for a property management firm in Palm Beach Gardens and is very happy to now be working locally.



**Anita Fischer** Director Workforce Readiness

# Finances & Leadership plus robust public and private sector investment ensure that the financial position of the EDC continues on solid footing.



# **Pete Hegener Leadership Award**

The recipient of the Pete Hegener Leadership Award exemplifies the qualities of the Tradition developer who passed away in 2012: a visionary, a trusted role model and leader whose inspiration and achievements impact the quality of job creation, economic vitality and business growth.

The 9th annual award was presented to **Russ Blackburn**, retired Port St. Lucie city manager. Blackburn's leadership was a major factor in the city's post-recession recovery and subsequent progress. From his appointment in 2016 until his retirement in early 2023, Russ was instrumental in helping bring the jobs corridor to life, the creation of millions of dollars in property values in the city, the revitalization of the city's research institutes, completion of the Crosstown Parkway, freeing City Center from receivership and much more!

THANK YOU to title sponsor Bank of Am and platinum sponsors Ashley Capital, Dean, Mead, Minton & Moore, and PGA Golf Club.



PORT ST. LUCIE

🙏 HCA Florida

SANSONE

The EDC's premier networking event, the 9th annual Leaders on the Links reception and golf tournament, was held on October 19 & 20 at the PGA Golf Club. On Thursday, quests enjoyed great company in a cocktail party atmosphere and friendly competitive bidding on silent auction items and travel packages. On Friday golfers played the PGA championship Ryder Course featuring five hole-in-one shootout contests with prizes ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000 and tee gifts valued over \$150.

THANK YOU to all our sponsors and volunteers for making this event the highlight of our year!

TITLE SPONSORS - Southern Eagle Distributing and Corona Premier **RECEPTION SPONSOR – A&G Concrete Pools** PRESENTING SPONSORS - Ashley Capital and The Sansone Group



Tournament Winners: Datum RMS, with 17 under par. From left Kip Burne, Andrew Lynskey, John Biggs & Justin Beard

Ryan Stickland, left, and Brian Bauer qualified for the putting contest with hole-in-one shots



**April 18** 

JOIN the EDC for our monthly partner luncheons at the MIDFLORIDA Event Center. SPONSOR a lunch and get your message to the right people, contact Rachel Savela at rsavela@youredc.com to reserve.

Rob Lord, Azlina Goldstein, Russ Blackburn, Tammy Matthew, Denise Hegener and Pete Tesch





Marney McKee, Susan Rabinowitz & Tammy Matthew



Jordan & Danielle VanDuzer, Jolaine & Bobby Austin, Dave & Kasie Curland

### January 26

EDC EXCEL Clay Shoot | 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Quail Creek Sporting Ranch

Leadership Dinner | 6 - 9:30 p.m. Harbour Ridge Yacht and Country Club



# CONTACT

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The front cover photos, courtesy of the City of Port St. Lucie and St. Lucie County, are aerial images of Southern Grove and industrial development along Interstate 95.

> The back cover photo, courtesy of photographer Doel Figueroa, is an image of the Fort Pierce Jetty.



() INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

EXCELLENCE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

