



An economic development initiative of:
  

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FHTCC Goes Virtual With High Tech Business Recruitment

Newly launched “Virtual Visit” allows business relocation and expansion prospects to tour the 23-county Florida High Tech Corridor without leaving their desks

HEATHROW, Fla. (Oct. 8, 2007) – Creativity, ingenuity and resourcefulness have led the Florida High Tech Corridor to become one of the nation’s top emerging high tech hubs. Those same attributes are now being put to work to provide a unique way for key business relocation and expansion targets to “visit” the Corridor without having to get on a plane.

The Florida High Tech Corridor Council (FHTCC) today launched www.VisitTheCorridor.com, an interactive, online tour that is designed to showcase the region’s tech capabilities to a national audience, including high tech executives, entrepreneurs, corporate real estate executives, and site selection consultants.

Through informative videos and engaging graphics, www.VisitTheCorridor.com allows visitors to explore the Corridor’s key technology sectors and institutes of higher education, discover the region’s world-famous leisure activities and unsurpassed quality of life, examine the business climate, and explore the diverse counties that make up the region. The Visit is hosted by a “virtual” tour guide, Orlando’s WESH-TV Channel 2 Anchorwoman Wendy Chioji, who will greet visitors and offer help throughout their visit to the Corridor.

“Visitors to the tour will see exactly why the 23-county Florida High Tech Corridor is considered one of the best places for high tech businesses,” said Randy Berridge, president of FHTCC. “We strongly feel that if decision makers see everything the Florida High Tech Corridor has to offer tech industry, we become strong candidates for their relocation or expansion projects.”

Examples of the Florida High Tech Corridor’s growing tech prominence include the recent Florida expansions of SRI International, a Silicon Valley-based research and commercialization firm with 60 years of experience in technology development, and The Burnham Institute for Medical Research, a highly regarded nonprofit medical research institution. Both organizations chose to locate their East Coast expansions in the Corridor after reaching research partnerships with the Corridor universities, the University of Central Florida, the University of South Florida and the University of Florida.

The region and state has also fared well in numerous national rankings and surveys. *Business 2.0* ranked Orlando No. 1 and Tampa No. 7 in offering America’s best jobs in the hottest markets; *AeA* ranked Florida No. 1 in high tech job growth and No. 2 in the total number of high tech jobs added; *The Metropolitan New Economy Index* ranked Orlando and Tampa Nos. 1 and 7, respectively, in the number of rapidly growing “gazelle” companies driving the new economy; and *Sperling’s “Cities Ranked and Rated”* listed Gainesville as the nation’s No. 1 place to live for opportunities for small business.

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In addition to receiving recognition for the booming high-tech industry in the region, the Florida High Tech Corridor Council itself was selected as one of the nation's top five innovative organizations by the prestigious CoreNet Global Economic Development Leadership Awards.

Playing a large role in the region's recent high tech successes are the Florida High Tech Corridor's three world-renowned research universities – University of Central Florida, University of South Florida and University of Florida. Combined, they receive nearly \$1 billion each year in external research funding and have a total student body of more than 140,000 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students.

About FHTCC

The Florida High Tech Corridor Council (FHTCC) is an economic development initiative of the University of Central Florida (UCF), the University of South Florida (USF) and the University of Florida (UF) whose mission is to attract, retain and grow high tech industry and to help develop the workforce to support those industries in the 23-county Corridor.

A partnership involving more than 20 local and regional economic development organizations (EDOs) and 14 community colleges, the Council is co-chaired by the presidents of UCF, USF and UF. The Council includes the presidents of two of the community colleges, the president of Florida Institute of Technology and representatives of high tech industry.

The unique partnership has resulted in a strategic approach to high tech economic development that involves matching funds research, workforce development and a marketing program leveraging governmental, EDO and corporate budgets on a regional rather than local basis.

For more information, visit www.floridahightech.com.

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