



Photo by Keith Douglas - kd@keithdouglas.com

December 30, 2016

Following is a summary of recent and upcoming economic development news, stories and events.

Top Stories:

- Magic Leap Announces Expansion in Plantation
- Port Everglades Receives Federal Authorization to Deepen and Widen Channels
- Broward County's Year over Year Job Growth Remains Strong
- Gov. Scott Attends Ribbon Cutting of Aviation Inflatables, Inc. in Sunrise
- Private-Jet Booking App Lands \$105 Million in Funding
- Chris Hart Named New Enterprise Florida Leader
- Workforce Skills Gap – Employer Survey
- Companies Sought for Alliance/BCPS Claim Your Future Showcase

Top Stories

Magic Leap Announces Expansion in Plantation

Magic Leap, Inc. recently announced the company will expand its operations in Greater Fort Lauderdale / Broward County, creating 725 positions and making a capital investment of \$150 million. The company selected Broward County for its R&D Center of Excellence over locations in Texas and California. With locations in Plantation and Dania Beach, Magic Leap is developing a digital, mixed reality platform that will enable people to seamlessly combine and experience digital and physical environments. The company's cutting-edge, virtual retinal display technology superimposes 3D computer-generated imagery over real world objects. To read more, please [click here](#).

Port Everglades Receives Federal Authorization to Deepen and Widen Channels

The Port Everglades Navigation Improvements Project has received federal authorization for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to move forward with deepening and widening the Port's navigation channels as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act signed into law December 16, 2016, by President Barack Obama. The project is currently in the preconstruction engineering and design phase, and can now proceed through the permitting and federal funding processes. The project is anticipated to create an estimated 2,200 construction jobs and nearly 1,500 permanent direct jobs locally resulting from additional cargo capacity. To read more, please [click here](#).

Broward County's Year over Year Job Growth Remains Strong

Broward County's job report indicated a 4.6 percent unemployment rate in November 2016. This is a decrease of 0.2 percentage points from the year ago rate of 4.8 percent. Nonagricultural employment increased by 30,700 jobs (+3.8 percent) over the year, with an employment of 845,900 in the Ft. Lauderdale-Pompano Beach-Deerfield Beach MSA (Broward County). The region's jobless rate was 0.2 percentage point lower than the state rate (4.8 percent). Out of a labor force of 1,023,225 there were 46,926 unemployed Broward County residents. "Broward County's employment growth rate of 3.8 percent with 30,700 nonagricultural jobs over the last year is evidence of the strength of our economy," said Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance President and CEO Bob Swindell. "Eight out of eight major industries experienced positive year over year job growth in November which places us among the leaders in the state in job creation." To read more, please [click here](#).

Gov. Scott Attends Ribbon Cutting of Aviation Inflatables, Inc. in Sunrise

Governor Rick Scott attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for Aviation Inflatables new headquarters in Sunrise. Aviation Inflatables currently employ 69 Floridians and they plan on creating 40 new jobs over the next three years. Aviation Inflatables is an FAA licensed repair station and reseller of emergency evacuation equipment and aircraft accessories used on passenger aircrafts. Governor Rick Scott said, "I was proud to attend the ribbon cutting for Aviation Inflatables at their new headquarters in Sunrise today. We will keep working to cut taxes and create a business-friendly environment so businesses like Aviation Inflatables will continue to invest in our state." To read more, please [click here](#).

Alliance-Assisted JetSmarter Lands \$105 Million in Funding

JetSmarter, a Fort Lauderdale startup backed by rap mogul Jay Z and the Saudi royal family said it has landed \$105 million in fresh funds by promising to make it easy to book private jets through an app. JetSmarter Inc. said Monday, December 12, that it raised the money from an assortment of investors including venture capitalists, fund managers, celebrities and technologists. The four-year-old company has raised at least \$157 million over several funding rounds. The airline, based in Fort Lauderdale, buys empty seats from private-jet operators and then makes them available through its app, either on scheduled shuttle flights on major routes or empty-leg trips, in which planes are flown empty from one airport to another for their next passenger flight. To read more, please click on links for the [Wall Street Journal](#), and the [Sun-Sentinel](#).

Chris Hart Named New Enterprise Florida Leader

Governor Rick Scott released the following statement on Chris Hart being named the new President and CEO of Enterprise Florida. Governor Rick Scott said, "I am proud that Chris Hart has been selected as the new President and CEO for EFI. Chris previously co-founded a small business which grew to employing around 75 people in seven states and Canada. Chris has hands on experience building a business, growing a company and making sure families have opportunities to live the American Dream. To read more, please [click here](#).

Employers – please take the Workforce Skills Gap Survey

The Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Broward County's official economic development partnership, with support from JPMorgan Chase & Co., and other partners, is conducting a workforce analysis/skills gap survey to evaluate the area workforce. The purpose of this study is to determine if the needs of employers are being met in regard to workforce availability and skills, and if the workforce has the skills necessary to fill the jobs of companies in Broward County. Click here for employer survey or type: <http://boyette-sa.gflworksemployer.sqizmo.com/s3/>.

Companies Sought for Alliance/Broward County Public Schools' Claim Your Future Showcase

Help Broward county students claim their future at the 2017 Claim Your Future Showcase, February 8, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the BB&T Center. The Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance and Broward County Public Schools need YOUR COMPANY to show our future workforce the great career opportunities we have right here at home. Help us engage with the students of today, who will become the workforce of tomorrow! Our Claim Your Future Showcase will spotlight your company and get 1,500 high school juniors excited about what your company does. Participate with an interactive display booth, join a panel discussion with other executives, and/or conduct mock interviews with students. For more information and to sign up, visit www.GFLAlliance.org/ClaimYourFuture or contact Susan Climan, Manager – Education Programs at scliman@gflalliance.org or 954-627-0126.

Education, Workforce Development and Educational Excellence Builds Business (E²B²) News



[Florida Department of Education Releases New Online Tool to Empower and Inform Florida Families](#)

[December 2016 SMART Futures Update](#)

[Mirror Lakes Elementary School's Glenda "Gigi" McIntire Honored with 2016 Holocaust Educator Award](#)

[Broward College Celebrates Fall 2016 Commencement](#)

[Broward College District Board of Trustees Affirms Negotiating with Stiles Corporation for Willis Holcombe Center Redevelopment](#)

[Mock Interviews Turn into Job Offers for Broward College Teaching Graduates](#)

[Broward College Launches Memorial Healthcare System Lecture Series](#)

[2016 A Record Season for Broward County Sea Turtle Conservation Program – NSU](#)

[Nova Southeastern University's Ph.D. Program in Family Therapy Received Renewed Accreditation](#)

[Nova Southeastern University Earns Military Friendly School Designation](#)

[NSU Student First Recipient of Coral Reef Conservation Endowed Student Support Fund](#)

Business Briefs and Alliance Member News



Alliance Member Companies in **Bold**

Broward County's Port Everglades has hired local environmental science and planning veteran Erik Neugaard as its new Environmental Program Manager within the Seaport Engineering and Construction Division to oversee all environmental functions and procedures associated with operations and development at the South Florida cruise, cargo and petroleum port, announced Port Everglades Chief Executive and Port Director Steve Cernak. "Erik's first-hand knowledge of the South Florida coral reef system, as a scientist and a diver, is a real plus for Port Everglades, especially as we begin the next update to our 20-year Master/Vision Plan," Cernak said. A major component of the Port's 20-Year Master/Vision Plan is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project to deepen and widen the Port's entrance and navigation channels, which is currently in the preconstruction engineering and design phase. To read more, please [click here](#).

The Safe Streets Awards, which will be announced at the **Broward MPO's** Safe Streets Summit on January 27, 2017 are an opportunity to highlight jurisdictions or individuals who have led by example in creating safer streets for all users. Please help us recognize the exemplary work in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties by making a nomination today! Award nominations close on December 31, 2016. To read more, please [click here](#).

Holy Cross Hospital has opened its newly renovated maternity unit as the Doreen Koenig Blessed Beginnings Maternity Unit in loving memory of Doreen Koenig, late wife of **City Furniture** CEO Keith Koenig. Koenig dedicated herself to the charitable campaign that successfully funded Holy Cross Hospital's Dorothy Mangurian Comprehensive Women's Center and also was instrumental in founding the hospital's Women Owning Wellness committee, a group focused on raising funds to improve the health and lives of women and their families. Before her death from breast cancer in July 2015, she had embarked on a campaign to fund a new maternity unit at Holy Cross. To read more, please [click here](#).

Covelli Enterprises, the largest franchisee of **Panera Bread**, announced today the acquisition of an additional 22 bakery-café locations in South Carolina and Georgia. The acquisition gives Covelli nearly 300 Panera Bread restaurants in six states and Canada. The new southern-based acquisition region includes midland and lowland South Carolina and Georgia, with bakery-cafes in the state capitals of Columbia and Augusta, as well as the coastal towns of Myrtle Beach, Charleston, Hilton Head and Savannah. A Myrtle Beach location will open at the end of November for a total of 23 Panera bakery-cafes joining the Covelli Enterprises franchise. To read more, please [click here](#).

The **FRLA - Broward Chapter** presented an award of \$40,000 to Broward Schools in front of a meeting of the Broward County Superintendent of Schools and Broward county Schools. This will provide Hospitality & Tourism Management Curriculum for 280 students at eight Broward High Schools. The hospitality industry employs some 190,000 people in Broward County and nearly 15% of the working population statewide. With the Marine Industry, Hospitality shares top billing for the number one industry in the Greater Fort Lauderdale area. As the industry continue to grow and prosper, the primary ongoing need is for a well-educated and work ready workforce. . To read more, please [click here](#).

JetBlue has launched a new service for managing business travel. Blue Inc. is JetBlue's free online booking tool for small and mid-sized businesses. With Blue Inc. you can book flights, cars and hotels. Enjoy easy, centralized access to company cards, traveler profiles and even budget and reporting tools, at no additional cost to you! Rewards add up fast and the points you earn are yours to keep. No expiration. Period. Businesses earn 3 TrueBlue points per dollar spent. Travelers continue to earn 6 TrueBlue points per dollar spent. To learn more and enroll, visit www.jetblue.com/blueinc.

Transforming an outdated two-story building into a sleek glass and metal-faced auto dealership, **Miller Construction Company** is creating new facilities for Holman Automotive's Lauderdale MINI at 2125 S. Federal Highway. On a site just south of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, Miller's crews are fully renovating the exterior and interior of a former auto rental building. At completion, scheduled for spring 2017, Lauderdale MINI will move to the 55,507-square-foot dealership from its current, smaller location a few blocks north on Federal Highway. To read more, please [click here](#).

Craftsmanship is front and center at One Door East, the new global tapas restaurant with a contemporary interior recently completed by **Miller Construction Company**, at 620 S. Federal Highway, just south of Downtown Fort Lauderdale. For chef-owner Giovanni Rocchio, the general contractor's Special Projects Group transformed a former auto repair facility into the stylish 4,300-square-foot tapas restaurant, where ample use of reclaimed wood brings the interior's sleek metal and tile finishes a warm, rustic feel. To read more, please [click here](#).

Moss Foundation, along with individual members of its team, donated a total of 137 shoeboxes filled with toiletry items to the Seafarers' House Christmas Campaign, a yearly drive dedicated to giving back to seafarers arriving to Port Everglades. Due to the nature of their job, seafarers spend a significant amount of time away from their families. To read more, please [click here](#).

Serial Entrepreneur Rachel Braun Scherl to Keynote **SUP-X®** Diversity Forum. Growth strategy consultant, marketing expert and public speaker, Rachel Braun Scherl is a trusted authority on business growth and entrepreneurship. In her successful 20+ year career, Rachel has grown leading brands and businesses, focusing on insights, repositioning, market dominance and development of strong customer bases for numerous startups. As Co-Owner and Principal of SPARK Solutions for Growth, a strategic consultancy, Rachel's international client base includes Johnson & Johnson, Allergan, Pfizer, Bayer and Deloitte, among others. To read more, please [click here](#).

Investor and entrepreneur Johnathan Robertson will give the morning keynote address on Tuesday, March 7th, at **SUP-X 2017**. Robertson is President and CEO of TG Capital, a venture capital/private equity firm headquartered in Miami which partners with management teams with a long term horizon to cultivate and grow companies across a broad spectrum of. To read more, please [click here](#).

Tripp Scott today announced that Stephanie Toothaker, a director with the law firm, has been elected by the Board of Directors for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce to serve on its board for 2017. In this role, Toothaker will serve as the organization's Vice Chair, Legal Counsel. To read more, please [click here](#)

Tripp Scott's Chuck Tatelbaum named 2016 Most Effective Lawyer: Bankruptcy. Sometimes recovering the money a client lent to a bankrupt company means going above and beyond... In Fort Lauderdale attorney Charles Tatelbaum's case, it meant spending nine years learning Turkish, meeting with Turkish treasury officials, resolving diplomatic issues between Turkey and the U.S. and doing everything possible to ensure the completion of the largest motorway project in Turkish history. To read more, please [click here](#).

More than 700 dedicated volunteers who gave their time on Tuesday during **United Way of Broward County's** 25th annual Day of Caring at the BB&T Center. Thanks to their hard work more than 300,000 meals were packaged and delivered to 25 local food banks and feeding pantries through United Way's Project Lifeline program. These well balanced meals will feed the more than 260,000 Broward residents who do not know where to get their next meal. Also being distributed through Project Lifeline are 200 painted ceramic pots which were filled with herb packets so families can grow their own spices. To read more, please [click here](#).

Featured Property of the Month



Westpoint Distribution Center – Suite 500

5607 Hiatus Road, Tamarac 33321

Type of space: Business Park/Light Manufacturing/ Whse/Dist.

Listed by Suzana DePaola at Butters Realty

Additional details at www.GreaterFortLauderdaleProperties.com

Upcoming Events

Alliance Events

Alliance Partner Council Meeting (Invitation only)

Thursday, Jan 12, 2017, 8:30 a.m.

Location: South Florida Regional Planning Council, Hollywood

For more information, please contact Helen Kulp at 954-627-0131, hkulp@gfalliance.org

Alliance Leadership Council Meeting (Invitation Only)

Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2017 8:30 a.m.

Location: TBD

For more information, please contact Tania Vinaixa at 954-627-0133, tvinaixa@gfalliance.org

Alliance Corporate Council Meeting (Invitation only)

Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2017, 8:30 a.m.

Location: Gallery of Amazing Things, Dania Beach

For more information, please contact Helen Kulp at 954-627-0131, hkulp@gfalliance.org

Alliance Governor Council Meeting (Invitation only)

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 7-8am (Coffee, Networking & Full Breakfast Buffet); 8 – 11 a.m. (Program)

Location: Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Fort Lauderdale

For more information, please contact Tania Vinaixa at 954-627-0133, tvinaixa@gfalliance.org

Alliance Council Connect

Thursday, Jan. 26, 8:30 a.m.

Location: Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort – *Sponsored by the Conrad Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach*

For more information, please contact Tania Vinaixa at 954-627-0133, tvinaixa@gfalliance.org

Enterprise Florida Events

Arab Health 2017

Mon, Jan 30, 2017 - Thu, Feb 2, 2017

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Enterprise Florida Trade Mission to South Africa

Fri, Feb 24, 2017 - Sat, Mar 4, 2017

Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town

Enterprise Florida (EFI) conducts or participates in an extensive schedule of export marketing missions and exhibitions worldwide. These trade events are open to all businesses registered in Florida. For more information and to see more event listings, please [click here](#).

Member/Partner Events

LeMieux Center Speaker Series featuring Steve Forbes

Wednesday, Jan. 11, 5:30 p.m.

Location: Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach

For more information, please [click here](#).

Port Everglades Association: Rising with the Tide

Wednesday, Jan. 18, 9:00 a.m.

Location: Lauderdale Yacht Club, Fort Lauderdale

For more information, please [click here](#).

JA World Uncorked

Saturday, Jan. 21, 6:30 p.m.

Location: JA World Huizenga Center at Broward College, Coconut Creek

For more information, please [click here](#).

Broward College 2017 Speaker Series - Ana Navarro

Monday, Jan. 23, 7:30 p.m.

Location: Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Fort Lauderdale

For more information, please [click here](#).

2017 Safe Streets Summit

Thursday, Jan. 26

Location: Sunrise Civic Center, Sunrise

For more information, please [click here](#).

FAU 2016 Business Leader of the Year honoring Heiko Dobrikow

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 7:00 a.m.

Location: Boca Raton Resort & Club, Boca Raton

For more information, please [click here](#).

Business for the Arts Cultural Tour 2.0 – Presented by Hoffman’s Chocolates

Friday, Jan. 27,

Location: Fort Lauderdale

For more information, please [click here](#).

Help Broward County Students Claim Their Future! (Companies Needed)

2017 Claim Your Future Showcase

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 8:00 a.m.

Location: BB&T Center, Sunrise.

For more information, please [click here](#).

Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce 107th Annual Meeting Luncheon

Friday, Feb 10, 11:30 a.m.

Location: Marriott’s Harbor Beach Resort & Spa, Fort Lauderdale

For more information, please [click here](#).

Calendar items are subject to change without notice. Please visit www.gflalliance.org for the most current calendar of events and meetings and for more information regarding the Alliance.

Connect and follow the Alliance on Social Media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Also join our [LinkedIn group](#) (for members only).

Looking for commercial properties and demographic information? Visit www.greaterfortlauderdaleproperties.com.

Why have so many companies relocated to Greater Fort Lauderdale? [Click here](#) to find out (90 second video).