April 30, 2020

The team at the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance continues to do everything we can to help you through the coming weeks and assist you in making the best decisions for your companies and employees in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are available, remotely and in office practicing social distancing, and are working to assist our local businesses and residents, and are moving our membership meetings to a virtual format in May. Please know we care about your health and the health of your businesses during this unprecedented time.

~Bob Swindell and the Alliance Team

TOP STORIES

• Coming Soon: iLoveLocal2020 Campaign
• Alliance Announces Two Companies Creating 270 New Jobs and Making $45.6 Million Capital Investment
• 85 Alliance Leaders Study Charlotte’s Business Climate
• Broward County adds 2,500 jobs year over year
• Alliance Members: Register for Upcoming Council Meetings
• Register for the Broward Business Leaders COVID-19 Town Hall Update #8 – Thursday, May 7
• BizHelp Broward: COVID-19 Pandemic Business Resources and Information

Coming Soon: iLoveLocal2020 Campaign
You heard it here first - the Broward community will soon launch iLoveLocal2020, a 90-day strategic campaign to provide an economic stimulus to businesses in Broward County. iLoveLocal2020 will help restart Broward County’s economy, which was shut down beginning in mid-March in response to tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. This “Buy Local” campaign is a community collaborative engaging businesses, chambers, nonprofits, educators, cities, the arts community and other organizations to work cooperatively to promote safe work environments, instill consumer confidence to jumpstart local consumer spending and to sustain local businesses while promoting Broward County Certified Small Businesses as new sources for products and services. iLoveLocal2020 is a community-wide collaborative initiative of Six Pillars Broward, the community’s long-range strategic visioning initiative for economic development in Broward County. Stay tuned and get ready to show how you will represent #iLoveLocal2020!

Alliance Announces Two Companies Creating 270 New Jobs and Making $45.6 Million Capital Investment
The Alliance Team is glad to announce that two companies have chosen to expand in Broward County.
• Accelerate, a company that develops software and hardware focused on artificial intelligence and business process automation programs, will be adding 50 jobs, retaining 50 jobs and making a $3.6 million capital investment in Sunrise.
• Bankers Healthcare Group, a company that specializes in financing for the medical industry, including doctors and dentists, will be adding 220 jobs, and making a $42 million capital investment in Miramar.
Congratulations to both companies on their growth and continued success in Broward!

85 Alliance Leaders Study Charlotte’s Business Climate
The Alliance embarked on its third leadership study trip, this time to Charlotte, North Carolina, February 29 – March 4, 2020 to gather best practices as well as compare and contrast Greater Charlotte with Broward County. Past leadership trips have included Austin, Texas in 2016, and Nashville, Tennessee in 2018. Like Greater Fort Lauderdale, Charlotte has a thriving business community with a world class reputation for quality of life. The Alliance wishes to thank leaders from the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County for generously and candidly sharing their perspectives and best practices and wish the community well as they navigate the COVID-19 crisis. A thank-you advertisement is running in the May 1 issue of the Charlotte Business Journal. A summary of the trip will be prepared and presented at a community meeting in the summer. The trip was chaired by Kate Goldman of Baptist Health South Florida, who also serves as chair of the Alliance’s Leadership Council. To read more, please click here.
Broward County Adds 2,500 Jobs Year-Over-Year
Broward County’s job report indicated a 4.2 percent unemployment rate in March 2020. This rate was 1.1 percentage points higher than the region’s year ago rate of 3.1 percent. Nonagricultural employment increased by 2,500 jobs (+0.3 percent) over the year, with an employment of 864,500 in the Ft. Lauderdale-Pompano Beach-Deerfield Beach MSA (Broward County). The region’s jobless rate is 0.1 percentage point lower than the state rate of 4.3 percent. The labor force was 1,036,617, up 5,319 (+0.5 percent) over the year. There were 43,658 unemployed residents in the region. To read more, please [click here].

Alliance Members: Save the Date and Register for Upcoming Virtual Council Meetings
May Alliance Council Meetings (members only) are going virtual! Please see the meetings in the Upcoming Events section below in this newsletter, or visit our website and view our calendar: [www.gflalliance.org](http://www.gflalliance.org)

Register for the Broward Business Leaders COVID-19 Town Hall Update #8 – Thursday, May 7
To help keep the business community informed, the Alliance has hosted a series of events for the Broward Business community with federal, state, local, business and healthcare experts. Advance registration required – please [click here](http://www.gflalliance.org) to register.

BizHelp Broward: COVID-19 Pandemic Business Resources and Information
The Alliance is continuously updating a COVID-19 business resource page, [www.BizHelpBroward.com](http://www.BizHelpBroward.com). Information includes details on assistance programs, helpful webinars and other news, links and news from Alliance members. Please visit and share. Two additional pages our team is curating are the [Prosperity Broward resource page](http://www.gflalliance.org) and the [GFLEDU.org resource page](http://www.gflalliance.org).

Education and Workforce Development News

- [Broward County Public Schools Joins School Districts Across the U.S. in Petitioning Congress for Funding](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [BCPS to Host Virtual Graduation Ceremonies for Class of 2020](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [BCPS Partners with Rethink Ed to Provide Students, Families and Educators](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [Broward County Public Schools Adds Four New Food Distribution Sites](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [Broward County Public Schools Distributes 82,000 Computer Devices to Students](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [FAU’s Hospitality and Tourism Management program certificate](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [NSU Psychology Experts Providing Free, Online Mental Health Workshops for COVID-19](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [A Florida TaxWatch Study Highlights Value of a Broward College Education](http://www.gflalliance.org)
- [MODS Partners with Broward County Public Schools to Deliver Innovative Virtual Curriculum for Students](http://www.gflalliance.org)

Business Briefs and Alliance Member News

We are glad to share “Good News You Can Use” from Alliance members, including response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your leadership. We are #StrongerTogether.

Alliance Member Companies in Bold

**Broward College** is providing free informational webinars to motivate our community and your employees. We know that your employees are most likely working from home or that you had to make the difficult decision to furlough staff members. We invite them to consider using this time to upskill. The informational webinars will be held **every Tuesday and Thursday** beginning April 21 and through the month of May. During these webinars participants will learn about: In-demand degrees, technical certificates and industry certifications, many are available online or through remote learning, Credit for years of work experience and prior learning and Federal financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

To help ensure the health and wellness of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic, **Broward Health** is extending FREE mobile, drive-through testing for our community at two locations. Central Broward Park and Broward County Stadium, 3700 N.W. 11th Place Lauderhill, Florida 33311; Festival Flea Market, 2900 W. Sample Road Pompano Beach, FL 33073 To get tested, individuals must be: pre-screened and meet CDC and DOH testing guidelines. To register for an appointment, please call 954.320.5730 from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Walk ups will not be allowed.

**Business for the Arts of Broward’s (BFA)** 6th Annual Art & Soul moves to a virtual event for the community to support the arts and artists in our community. Art from local artists can be purchased from now through May 31 at [www.bfabroward.org/programs/art-and-soul](http://www.bfabroward.org/programs/art-and-soul). Juried artwork is for sale at special prices benefiting the artists and BFA. For more information and sponsorship opportunities, visit [www.bfabroward.org/programs/art-and-soul](http://www.bfabroward.org/programs/art-and-soul) or contact Robyn Vegas at 954-940-5344 or [rvegas@bfabroward.org](mailto:rvegas@bfabroward.org).
Home Furnishings retailer Ashley HomeStore (Ashley) of South Florida, part of the City Furniture family, has teamed with Feeding America to help ensure that neighbors in need have required food and resources. As COVID-19 continues to impact the many communities we call home, there is a growing need for the services Feeding America provides. To read more, please click here.

Comcast has opened Xfinity WiFi Network nationally for free and also offered Unlimited Data for free. This program confirms their commitment to connecting low-income families. On the heels of offering new, low-income Internet Essentials customers two months of free internet and raising the speed of that program’s service to 25/3 Mbps, Comcast announced additional steps to help ensure people stay connected to the Internet as more schools suspend classes and companies encourage employees to work from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To read more, please click here.

Florida Blue, the state’s leading health insurer, announced recently that it will double the company’s match to United Way on all employee contributions made during its 2020 employee giving campaign, to provide additional support in communities across the United States in response to urgent needs around the COVID-19 public health crisis. To read more, please click here.

FloridaMakes is sponsoring a statewide registered apprenticeship program, the FloridaMakes Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship. The first program offered will focus on entry-level skills for new and existing employees in the Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) occupation. To read more, please click here.

Back by popular demand, world-renowned marine artist, conservationist, scientist and entrepreneur Dr. Guy Harvey will continue to share his expeditions, insights of the sea and art techniques for families and communities confined to their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic through free online art sessions, discussions and educational videos on Facebook Live. To read more, please click here.

Nicky Tesser, Jason Annunziata and the rest of the JetBlue team have been busy volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic. Crew members have delivered donated snacks to hospitals in Broward and Palm Beach counties including Broward Health. Tesser partnered with Kate Goldman from Baptist Health South Florida to bring much-appreciated items to Baptist Healthcare heroes in South Florida. JetBlue also took their volunteers to the Cleveland Clinic and Memorial Healthcare System. The airline also worked with TERRA to donate 100,000 bags of chips to food banks as they continue to support local JetBlue communities.

The Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship, in the Florida State University College of Business, has extended the application deadline for its Small Business Executive Program (SBEP) and Nonprofit Executive Program (NPEP) to Friday, May 15. Held in Broward and Palm Beach counties and offered at no cost to participants, the programs are funded by The Jim Moran Foundation and Jim and Jan Moran. To read more, please click here.

As a result of our nation’s health crisis, The Jim Moran Foundation has awarded OIC of South Florida’s (OIC-SFL) $30,000 in additional funds to combat the immediate financial hardship many Pathway Out of Poverty participants are facing. These emergency response funds will provide OIC-SFL’s participants (currently in the program working towards economic self-sufficiency) with direct support for medical, food, and/or utility expenses -- due to loss of employment or income. "We are grateful to receive these relief funds and pleased to be able to provide each eligible participant with a gift card to support their most basic needs," says Newton B. Sanon President & CEO of OIC of south Florida.

Port Everglades is the newest stop on Evergreen Line’s CAJ weekly container shipping service to and from Panama, Jamaica and Haiti. Florida International Terminal at Port Everglades is the marine terminal operator for Evergreen, which has ships slated for arrival on weekends beginning May 2. To read more, please click here.

The Research Park at Florida Atlantic University is pleased to announce the launch of its new international soft landings and second stage company development initiative, Global Ventures. This initiative will scale-up second stage companies from around the world and United States into profitable and sustainable companies that will positively impact South Florida’s economy in line with the mission of the Research Park at FAU. To read more, please click here.

Research Park at Florida Atlantic University company, Aventusoft, was awarded $3 million to develop a new application to diagnose and monitor congestive heart failure. To read more, please click here.

Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, Rick Case Automotive Group is working harder than ever to support the South Florida community. On Saturday, March 21, Ryan and Raquel Case met with Paco Velez, president and CEO of Feeding South Florida, to present him with a $50,000 check. To read more, please click here.

Sheltair announced that eight of its FBOs were rated best in the business in the 2020 AIN FBO Survey. To read more, please click here.

Sixt rent-a-car has offered several programs for long-term car rentals for healthcare workers. To read more, please click here.

Ultimate Software, a leading global provider of human capital management (HCM) and employee experience solutions in the cloud, announced today the company has created a number HR and payroll-related product enhancements and resources to help customers navigate business challenges stemming from the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. To read more, please click here.

Ultimate Software also announced the winners of its annual Innovation Awards. To read more, please click here.

Verizon is prepared to serve customers during COVID-19 crisis. Click here for more information on initiatives.
Please note that all in-person events are on hold, postponed, or cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic due to CDC guidelines on gatherings and social distancing.

ALLIANCE EVENTS

Alliance BRAVO Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Friday, May 8, 1:30 p.m.
For more information, contact Helen Kulp, at hkulp@gflalliance.org

Alliance Permitting Action Team Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Wednesday, May 13, 9:00 a.m.
For more information, contact Peggy Doty at pdoty@gflalliance.org

Alliance Leadership Council Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Thursday, May 14, 9:00 a.m.
For more information, contact Tania Vinaixa at tvinaixa@gflalliance.org

Alliance Governor Council Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Tuesday, May 19, 9:00 a.m.
For more information, contact Peggy Doty at pdoty@gflalliance.org

Alliance International Action Team Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Wednesday, May 20, 2:00 p.m.
For more information, contact Liza Bongiovi at lbongiovi@gflalliance.org

Alliance Partner Council Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Thursday, May 28, 10:30 a.m.
For more information, contact Helen Kulp, at hkulp@gflalliance.org

Alliance Corporate Council Zoom Meeting (By Invitation only)
Wednesday, June 17, time TBA
For more information, contact Helen Kulp, at hkulp@gflalliance.org

MEMBER AND PARTNER EVENTS

CareerSource Broward Virtual Job Fair
Friday, May 1
For more information, please click here.
South Florida Business Council/Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Webinar
The State of Our Economy as We Start the Recovery with Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
Click here to register.

Broward Center for the Performing Arts: Classes to Go
Click here for more information.

For a list of continuously updated current webinar and virtual event offerings related to the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit www.BizHelpBroward.org

Connect and follow the Alliance on Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn.
Why are so many companies locating to Greater Fort Lauderdale? Click here to find out!
A one-stop resource for educational assets and news in Greater Fort Lauderdale – www.GFLedu.org