KELLY SMALLRIDGE PROVIDES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Kelly Smallridge, president and CEO of the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County, photos by courtesy

Kelly Smallridge, president and CEO of the Business Development Board (BDB) of Palm Beach County, provided us with an update on the different companies that have relocated to Palm Beach County during the past 12 months.

During the presentation sponsored by The Palm Beach Post, Smallridge announced that General Dynamics’ Gallows Hill will be building a new 160,000-square-foot facility and adding 70 new jobs. Meanwhile, a company bought by another military contractor, Northrop Grumman, is moving into a 125,000-square-foot space in Palm Beach Gardens.

With nearly 70 companies having relocated to Palm Beach County, the cost of living here in Palm Beach County, “she said, “Now we can brag about that.” Smallridge projects that the aviation and aerospace industry will continue to grow in Palm Beach County.

She closed the discussion by citing a few statistics:

■ The county’s population stands at 1.4 million.
■ 22,000 people move here every year.
■ The average salary of $53,000 is the highest of all Florida counties.
■ Palm Beach County employers generate about 10,000 new jobs per year.
■ Out of the top 50 public corporate headquarters in Florida, eight are in Palm Beach County: Nestlé, Office Depot, Platform Specialty Products, TripAdvisor, Geo Group, SBA Communications, KLA, Owens Financial.

If you’re interested in learning more about the BDB, please visit www.bdb.org.

FPL adds new, cutting-edge smart grid device to its suite of outage prevention tools

Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) unveiled a new, cutting-edge piece of smart grid technology on Feb. 26, called the Automated Transformer Switch (ATS), to prevent and reduce power outages. The announcement regarding the ATS, also known as a VacuFuse™ Self-Resetting Interrupter, comes as FPL reaches a major smart grid technology milestone.

The news release was titled, “FPL unveils new, cutting-edge smart grid device to prevent power outages.”

TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

Elaine Smith

Elaine Smith is the president and designer of Elaine Smith, Inc., a luxury brand of indoor/ outdoor pillows that are as practical as they are beautiful. Founded in 1997 and based in West Palm Beach, the company manufactures all the products on-site using materials acquired in the United States. Smith’s pillows are now available nationwide at more than 2,500 interior design and outdoor home decor locations, in luxury hotels, restaurants and clubshouses across the country as well as online through fine retailers such as Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom. Smith currently serves as a Trustee of the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches.

Skyler Hunt

Skyler Hunt is the community outreach specialist for Trulieve. Trulieve was founded in 2011, and is Florida’s first and largest Medical Marijuana Treatment Center, with 24 dispensaries spanning across Florida, from Pensacola to Miami. Hunt establishes and maintains key relationships with community groups to drive outreach for collaboration, education, and support with medical cannabis. A graduate of Marshall University with a bachelor’s degree in Public Relations, she serves on several boards of commerce trustee boards and young professional groups as well as the Working Women of Tampa Bay. She currently serves as a Trustee of the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches.

Vicki Chouris

Vicki Chouris is vice president and chief operating officer of the South Florida Fair. She attended Palm Beach State College and received her master’s degree in Business Administration from Palm Beach Atlantic University. Chouris served as chair of the Palm Beach State College Foundation Board and chair of the Suncoast Credit Union. She is also past chair of the Florida Federation of Fairs and Palm Beach County: Nextera, Office Depot, Platform Specialty Products, Ocwen Financial, SBA Communications, KLA, Owens Financial.

If you’re interested in learning more about the BDB, please visit www.bdb.org.
The Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches’ political action committee, LEADvocacy, has endorsed the 2023 West Palm Beach Municipal Election candidates for the office of alderman. The PAC endorses Keith James and Paula Ryan. Both James and Ryan currently serve on the City Commission and have been strong supporters of creating a vibrant local economy. The PAC feels both would provide the leadership needed to keep West Palm Beach remains a great place to work and live.

In the West Palm Beach Commission races
District 3 – the PAC endorses Christy Fox.

Christy Fox has worked to honor the legacy and service of our veterans and give a voice to those who have none. She is committed to improving public safety, curtailing homelessness, supporting local jobs and minimizing the impacts of traffic congestion.

The Chamber of Commerce endorses
James, Ryan, and Fox

March Breakfast: Kravis 2020 update

The Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts has embarked on a $200 million campaign called Kravis 2020. The campaign is to support a campus redesign and facility expansion in what it’s well on its way. With the community also plays at the Center’s forefront, the goal of the project is to elevate and enhance the customer experience before, during and after performances by creating a more accessible, safe and pedestrian-friendly venue for the entire community. Mike Bracci, Bill Leave and John Rosell will discuss this exciting project and the positive impact it will have on residents in Palm Beach County and South Florida at the March 20 breakfast at the Palm Beach County Convention Center. Tickets are on sale at palmbeaches.org. Please contact Marissa Kosiec at mkosiec@palmbeaches.org for more information.

Leadership West Palm Beach focuses on Health & Human Services

The 2019 Class of Leadership West Palm Beach enjoyed Health & Human Services Day on Feb. 8 with a variety of guest speakers and tours. The day began with presentations on the work of Philip D. Lewis Center, followed by Vita Nova, the afternoon’s itinerary included visits to Park-Line Palm Beaches, Broadstone City Center.

The board of directors includes: Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches: Evelyn Hopkins, Florida Crystals Corporation, Rick Reikenis, Reikenis & Associates; Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce: Heiko Dobrikow, Riverside Hotel, Juliet Roulhac, Florida Power & Light Company, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce: Humphrey Aronin, Akers, Dr. Mark Rosenberg, Florida International University.

The SFC will consider expanding its ranks to allow participation by other business groups after its inaugural year.

March 2019

The Young Professionals of the Palm Beaches (YPoP) will present Taco Tuesday at Coyo Taco in The Royal Park-Line Palm Beaches, if you are under the age of 40 and interested in learning more about YPoP, please email Marissa Kosiec at mkosiec@palmbeaches.org

Broadstone City Center hosts Business After Hours

The chamber was treated to an hour-long mixer at one of West Palm Beach’s newest luxury apartments, Broadstone City Center. Guests had the opportunity to tour the one- and two-bedroom rentals along with various amenities like a gym, swimming pool and rooftop lounge. Our next Business After Hours will be March 7 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Venture X West Palm Beach. For more information, please contact Sandy Pullem at spullem@palmbeaches.org. For information on this event and more, please visit palmbeaches.org.