The City of West Palm Beach is a great place in which to do business, based on the results of an Economic Development Study survey presented to our members on Wednesday, September 12. The study was conducted by Avalanche Consulting over a 6-month period, showed strong growth exceeding the national average – more evidence of the City’s need for Class-A office space, and economic strength in both the City’s traditional economic sectors of Real Estate/Development and Tourism as well as in other diversification sectors such as Finance, Medicine, and Cottage Industries on Antique Row and in the Warehouse District. The Economic Development Study, conducted in partnership with Avalanche Consulting, the City of West Palm Beach, West Palm Beach Economic Development Agency, and the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches. The creation of this Economic Development Study included a comprehensive assessment examining quantitative data, including interviews and focus groups with more than 70 stakeholders in West Palm Beach and, also, sector analysis. The study’s real-time data will be used to help instruct, guide and update the City’s economic strategy for the next three to five years, and key data points will be used to demonstrate the success of policies.

To view the study in its entirety, please visit http://wpb.org/Departments/Economic-Development/Economic-Development-Study. This year, the Chamber received more than 40 nominations comprised of outstanding individuals and organizations throughout Palm Beach County. Please join us for the 27th Annual ATHENA Awards Luncheon as we celebrate each finalist’s achievements and honor recipients of our ATHENA Leadership Award. The luncheon, presented by Related, will take place on September 21 at the Palm Beach County Convention Center from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. To purchase an individual ticket or table, please visit www.palmbeaches.org. For sponsorship information, please contact Marissa Kosiec at mkosiec@palmbeaches.org.

2018 ATHENA AWARDS FINALISTS ANNOUNCED
We work as hard for your business as you do.

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Longtime Chamber Member Broad and Cessel combine with Nelson Mullins

**Effective as of August 1, Broad and Cessel** combined with Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, bringing together 700 legal and business professionals operating in 25 offices across five states and the District of Columbia. In Florida, the firm is known as Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, PC. It’s a notable addition to the already impressive lineup of firms and businesses that call the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches home.

**Ruth’s Chris Steak House Hosts August Business After Hours**

Ruth’s Chris Steak House offered an unforgettable networking experience at the August Business After Hours. Thank you to Sales and Catering Manager Devon Rodgers for providing excellent food and service.

For just a limited time, enjoy an exclusive pairing featuring two delicious wines. Below are the details:

- **Pairings:**
  - Chateau Leynaux Bordeaux Blend & Quill Cabernet Sauvignon Each has been hand-selected to pair perfectly with Ruth’s signature USDA Prime steak as well as our founders’ favorite 18-oz. New York Strip steak.
  - Starting at just $25, visit their website to make a reservation.

**The Florida 2030 Project**

The August Trustee Luncheon featured Tony Carvajal, Executive Director of the Corazon Foundation, who delivered a presentation on the Florida 2030 Project — a collaborative effort bringing together 16 organizations across Florida to discuss challenges and opportunities facing the state in the long-term future.

Carvajal spoke of the need to pre-position our state in the long-term future. “By 2030, our state will be different. We need a new way of thinking,” Carvajal said.

The August Trustee Luncheon is a Chamber program that brings together Chamber members as well as community leaders. The next Luncheon will be on September 10 at the Marriott in West Palm Beach. More information on the Trustee Program can be found at www.palmbeaches.org or call 561-253-2600.

**YNP and Emerging Leaders Society have Lunch With A Leader**

The Young Professionals of the Palm Beaches (YNP) teamed up with United Way of Palm Beach County’s Emerging Leaders Society for “Lunch With A Leader.” Our presenter, West Palm Beach City Commissioner Christina Lambert, shared her personal story and advice for young professionals.

Our next YNP event is scheduled for September 10 from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Symphony Workplace Palm Beach. YKL Studio will be taking headshots for just $20. Visit www.palmbeaches.org for more information.

**Back to School Breakfast**

Dr. Donald Fenney II, superintendent for the School District of Palm Beach County, delivered the Annual Back to School Breakfast address on August 22. The event was presented by Keiser University and Teclen Environmental Services.

In a wide-ranging address, Dr. Fenney reported that the School District of Palm Beach County School System serves 97,740 students in 179 schools with an annual budget of $1.3 billion. He shared that students from the district had achieved an “A” rating and had a graduation rate of 90 percent for the 2016-2017 school year.

On the matter of school safety, Dr. Fenney mentioned that 44 offices in nine municipalities, 14 dependents from Palm Beach Sheriff’s Office and US School Resource Officers have been hired. In addition, students, parents and staff can now benefit from the Student Protect app, a joint effort between The School District of Palm Beach County, District Police Department, and the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office. The app was designed to make it easy to report threats and suspicious activity by allowing schools to send alerts to students, parents and staff.

Special thanks to everyone who donated school supplies to the Real Apple Sheep Drive (coordinated by our Partner in Education, the Education Foundation of Palm Beach County), and to our attendees who donated more than $5,000 to槿子 Elementary School.