

TEXTURE

ORLANDO'S TECHNOLOGY LANDSCAPE

A LIVING LAB

In med research, as Orlando goes, so goes the country

Rx TO WORK

Med & Tech jobs on fast track in Central Florida

STATE OF EMERGENCY

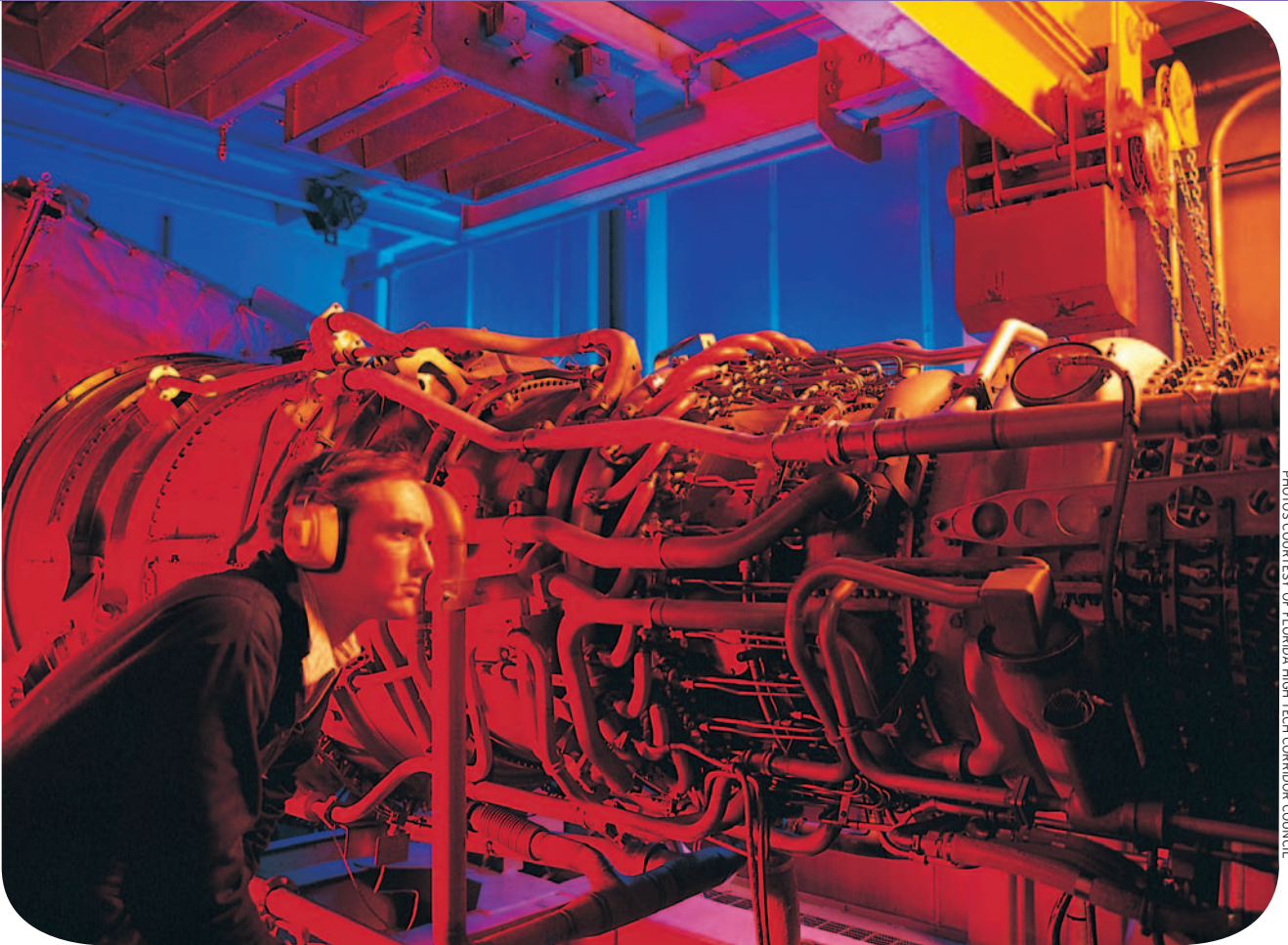
Leading the way in innovative emergency care training



the talent pool

Attracting, Retaining & GROWING

HIGHER ED PARTNERS WITH HIGH TECH



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLORIDA HIGH TECH CORRIDOR COUNCIL

At a recent gathering of more than 1,200 academic, corporate, government and community leaders, Florida, Gov. Jeb Bush referenced what he considered to be the best example of a regional partnership.

More than 1,000 miles away, a Harvard University student was assigned the mission of helping establish a high tech region around Syracuse, N.Y. She chose this same regional partnership as

a model to emulate.

The president of the largest university in Puerto Rico, along with a number of the territory's governmental leaders, used this regional partnership

as a template for their high tech region.

Inspiration often comes from what starts as a simple idea.

The Florida High Tech Corridor Council (FHTCC) was formed in 1996 by the University of Central Florida (UCF) and the University of South Florida (USF). Their original idea was simple: work together. Since then, these universities have created a model that is truly an example of the strength of partnership in action. In conjunction with a number of economic development

organizations, community colleges and high tech industry representatives throughout a 21-county region, the group works to attract, retain and grow high tech industry and the workforce to support it.

“WE HAVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY ACCEPTED THIS INVITATION TO JOIN OUR SISTER UNIVERSITIES IN A PARTNERSHIP THAT HAS ENORMOUS POTENTIAL TO DIVERSIFY FLORIDA’S ECONOMIC FUTURE. THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE... IS GROUNDBREAKING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. WE SEE A BRIGHT FUTURE WORKING TOGETHER.”

**— DR. J. BERNARD MACHEN,
PRESIDENT,
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**

Most recently, this partnership took a leap forward when the FHTCC welcomed another world-class university to their unprecedented relationship base. Venturing north into “Gator territory”, the Council welcomed the University of Florida (UF) along with two more counties and the economic development organizations that serve them.

“We have enthusiastically accepted this invitation to join our sister universities in a partnership that has enormous potential to diversify Florida’s economic future,” says Dr. J. Bernard Machen, the president of UF. “The work that has been done by UCF and USF is groundbreaking economic development strategy. We see a bright future working together.”

The “groundbreaking economic development strategy” to which Dr.



Machen refers winds its way through much of the Corridor Council's ideals; one in particular is a Matching Grants Research Program. From the onset, this research program has represented one of the primary goals of the FHTCC, fostering applied research between the partner universities and high tech industry. As UF came on board, it pledged an annual investment of \$2 million additional to the Council's matching grants program.

In fact, the majority of the Council's funding is allocated to the Matching Grants Research Program. Since its inception, the FHTCC has provided more than \$40 million, which has

benefited 215 companies and supported more than 550 research projects. Added to research dollars provided by those companies, the FHTCC has generated more than \$128 million in applied research for the area. Industries that have been impacted include: aviation and aerospace; information technology; medical technologies & life sciences; microelectronics & nanotechnology; modeling, simulation and training; and, optics and photonics. Nearly \$90 million of these funds have been used to engage 1,000 graduate and doctoral students, research assistants and 300 faculty members in side-by-side

research with scientists and engineers from the participating companies. The additional \$2 million from UF will only increase these employment numbers and offer even more opportunities for companies throughout the Corridor.


When the regional approach to economic development was initially established, there were a total of 21 counties; with the addition of UF, the number of counties has increased to 23. The two additional counties, Alachua and Putnam, house a number of advanced technological and workforce initiatives, such as the Gainesville Area Innovation Network (GAIN). GAIN's mission is to encourage the start-up and development of technology enterprises in the Gainesville area by providing support through networking and educational opportunities.

Additionally, the Alachua/Bradford Career Centers provide services to job seekers and professionals in the area. Such organizations help to buttress the Corridor Council's general mission of attracting, retaining and growing high tech industry and the workforce to support it.

The relationship formed between these three universities is a truly dynamic partnership and has helped establish Florida as an economic model of excellence for others to mirror.

"The previous success chartered by the Florida High Tech Corridor Council only foreshadows the capability of an expanded Corridor, which includes the University of Florida," remarks Erik Sanders, director of industry programs at UF. "Our success is measured not only by the quality teams we build, but by the achievements of the projects we will complete."

With three powerhouse universities combined as a single strategic force, and participation from more than 20 progressive economic development organizations, 14 community colleges, and the multitude of high tech representatives, the Florida High Tech Corridor Council will continue to help make Florida not only a national technology leader, but a global leader as well.

For more information regarding the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, visit www.floridahightech.com. 

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**— ERIK SANDERS, DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY PROGRAMS
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