

CONGRATULATIONS!

to the innovation 2 industry winners!

Thomas A Contreras
Paul Marcuzzo
Dr. S.S. Iyengar



In This Issue

[innovation 2 industry Award Presentation](#)

[ESO Session](#)

[Small Business Week](#)

[Dick Loftus Bridge Dedication](#)

[ECEC General Membership Meetings](#)

[Leadership Day](#)

[Blue Chip Award](#)

[Marketing Arm International](#)

[i2i Winner](#)

[ECEC in Harbor Style Magazine](#)

[Gulf Coast Venture Forum Meeting](#)

[Ode to Love Bugs](#)

[Innovation 2 Industry Contest](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Innovation
2
Industry
Contest

2012 Winners

1st Place Winner

Thomas A. Contreras
TAC Device

Welcome to Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter

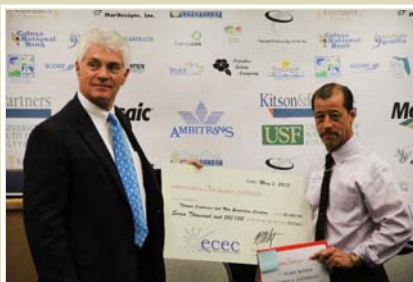
Please enjoy your copy of the Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact our office at 941-764-4941 or at FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com.

innovation 2 industry Award Presentation

The innovation 2 industry Entrepreneurial Contest winners were awarded their prizes at the May 3rd Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council luncheon. With approximately 100 people in attendance, the three winners gave a brief presentation of their winning ideas to the members and press. Several of the runners-up in the i2iFL contest were in attendance and gave a brief overview of the ideas they submitted.

First place went to Thomas A. Contreras, inventor of the TAC

Device, a scuba diving safety and utilitarian tool. The patent pending device would allow divers to safely capture lobsters without causing injury to females carrying eggs and allow for the preservation of coral reefs. Additionally, the device works as a safety aid when surfacing to prevent divers from being injured or killed by boaters. Thomas' business, New Generation Creations, LLC, will be located in Whidden Park in Charlotte Harbor.



Premier Event Sponsor Mike Grant of Ambitrans with 1st Place Winner Thomas Contreras



Premier Event Sponsor Kaley Miller of Mosaic with 2nd Place Winner Paul Marcuzzo

Second place went to Paul Marcuzzo of PG Energy & Designs, Inc. for their pCase, an indestructible, water resistant Pelican case infused with thin, solar film that allows small electronic devices such as mobile phones and iPods to be recharged without the need for electrical outlets. The pCase would allow these devices to never

run out of power, excellent for military and the outdoorsman alike. PG Energy & Design, Inc. is currently located in Punta Gorda and will remain in the same location.



Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council President Lew Albert with 3rd Place Winner Dr. Iyengar

Third place was given to Dr. S. S. Iyengar and his colleagues at Nulogix, Inc. for the invention of a device with an innovative technology that enables a person to see changes in intra ocular pressure by observing their eye in a mirror. This is especially useful to people who are at high risk such as those with high blood pressure or a genetic history of glaucoma. Early detection will help prevent loss of sight. Nulogix, Inc. will be locating into the SandStar facility in Punta Gorda.

We wish all of the winners great success in their endeavors. To learn more about these very creative individuals, please go to the i2iFL.com website.

ESO Session

On May 3rd, following the i2iFL Award Presentation, the runners-up of the contest, and additional budding entrepreneurs from the County, attended an entrepreneurial support session at the SunTrust building. There they had the opportunity to meet with representatives from SCORE, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Gulf Coast Venture



2nd Place Winner

Paul Marcuzzo
pCase

3rd Place Winner

Dr. Sitharama S. Iyengar
Intra Ocular Pressure Device

Premier Event Sponsors



Incubator Sponsor



In-Kind Sponsors



Forum to discuss business plans, marketing and financing.

Small Business Week

National Small Business Week was May 20 - 26 and the Charlotte County Economic Development Office, along with our Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO) partners, celebrated the week with a variety of programs to educate and engage our small businesses. The ESO consists of representation from the Small Business Development Center, SCORE; Goodwill; and Southwest Florida Works.

Small businesses create about two out of every three jobs in the U.S. each year, and roughly half of working Americans either own or work for a small business. The Economic Development Office is dedicated to facilitating the connection between small businesses, both existing and start-ups, with the technical assistance they need to grow.

The week was kicked off with a Lunch & Learn session on early stage funding at JD's Bistro & Grille. Sara Hand, President of the Sarasota Chapter of the Gulf Coast Venture Forum was the guest speaker.

On Tuesday, former President of Advantix, Inc., Ginny Lewis, gave a class on QuickBooks to a packed room of eager students who learned how to setup vendors, pay bills and other important bookkeeping tips on QuickBooks software.

Wednesday it was on to learning how to write the perfect job description and hire the perfect employees at Southwest Florida Works for a breakfast session.

The week was completed with Tammie Nemecek, Director of Partner Development for Florida Economic Gardening Institute, introducing local businesses to the Florida Economic Gardening Institute (GrowFL) program at the Cultural Center.

Economic gardening is a philosophy that embraces strategies to grow existing businesses in a community, region or state and is the basis for the entrepreneurship programs at the Florida Economic Gardening Institute. Initially created in 2009 as a pilot program, the Florida Economic Gardening Institute at the University of Central Florida is now a permanent part of the economic development programs in Florida. The Institute focuses on efforts that support and strengthen Florida's entrepreneurial ecosystem, entrepreneur support organizations and, through a variety of programs, help second-stage growth entrepreneurs prosper. Second-stage companies are defined by having at least 5 employees that are exporting services or products out of the community. The program introduced area businesses to the type of assistance offered by the Florida Economic Gardening Institute, including market research and



competitive focus. At least two of the companies that attended were interested and proceeded to apply to the program.

The Economic Development Office wishes to express a special thank you to all of our sponsors and partners including the Enterprise Charlotte Foundation, Southwest Florida Works and M&I, A Part of the BMO Financial Group for their support.

Dick Loftus Bridge Dedication

On May 1, 2012 Charlotte County dedicated the new bridge on Melbourne Street at the entrance into Charlotte Harbor to Dick Loftus for his many years of community service.



Dick Loftus and Jim Herston

Dick Loftus was born and raised in Winchester, Massachusetts and moved to Charlotte County in 1978. He was an active volunteer with numerous advisory committees and was a familiar face at Commission and School Board meetings over a twenty year period. Dick was instrumental in Florida's "Save Our Homes" bill. He also developed an energy conservation plan for Charlotte County schools, which saved the Charlotte County taxpayers millions of dollars. He graduated in the first Class of both the Sheriffs Police Academy and the Charlotte County Citizens Academy. Dick Loftus served on the Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee. He was elected to the Board of County Commissioners in November 2006 and served as Chairman of the Board from 2006-2007.

The Melbourne Street Bridge was scheduled for replacement due to structure deterioration and in 2010 the Board approved the project to be funded through gas tax revenues. Wright Construction Group Inc. was the selected design/build contractor. The bridge project included a new 933 foot bridge span, sidewalks, decorative street lighting and pavement.

In partnership with the Charlotte Harbor CRA, the project

scope was expanded to include a pedestrian sidewalk on the south side of the bridge to Chester Roberts Park, bridge lighting, and enhanced decorative features consistent with the CRA's design standards. Partnering with the bridge project reduced the overall costs to the CRA to install the sidewalk to Chester Roberts Park and further advanced the CRA's long-range plan



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



innovation 2 industry

FL

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11 AM, Room 119

June 7 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

June 20 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

June 28 - July ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

July 4 - EDO closed for the Independence Day Holiday

July 9 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11 AM, Room 119

July 9 - Murdock Village CRA Advisory Committee 5 PM at the EDO Conference Room 504

July 18 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

August 2 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

August 15 - IDA Meeting

to improve pedestrian connections between area parks and pedestrian access to the harbor.

ECEC General Membership Meetings

Due to the July 4th holiday, there will be no ECEC meeting in July but instead there will be two meetings in June. The June meeting will be on June 7th and the July meeting will be on June 28th, both at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center.

The August meeting is scheduled for August 2nd.

Leadership Day

On May 15th, 2012 Kay Tracy, Charlotte County Economic Development Business Development Specialist, joined Senator Benacquisto, Punta Gorda's Mayor Bill Albers, Superintendent Doug Whitaker and several other business and community leaders as they participated in Leadership Day at Sallie Jones Elementary School, where the motto is "Preparing tomorrow's leaders today."



The School opened their doors to the community to show off the great things happening at the school since implementing "The Leader in Me" process. They have built a unique environment where the principles, practices, and habits of "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People®" are embedded into their culture. "The Leader in Me" process defines the school operations, permeates instructional practice and curriculum, and is the basis of a vibrant leadership development approach for both students and staff.

During this leadership day, community leaders were immersed in Sallie Jones Elementary School leadership culture with presentations from students and teachers. Guests were invited to "open-house-like" visits to the classrooms, where the "7 Habits of Happy Kids Character Framework" have been integrated into their curriculum, helping students develop strong, positive, leadership qualities. All grades participated in the student led program sharing their campus studies and activities with members of the community. The impressive program demonstrated the self-confidence, skills and attitudes the students have that will help them to be successful leaders in the community.

Noon at the EDO
Conference Room 504

September 6 - ECEC
Meeting (Call for
information)

September 10 - Charlotte
Harbor CRA Advisory
Committee Meeting 10:30
AM, Room 119

September 19 - IDA Meeting
Noon at the EDO
Conference Room 504

October 1 - Charlotte
Harbor CRA Advisory
Committee Meeting 11 AM,
Room 119

October 4 - ECEC Meeting
(Call for information)

October 8 - Murdock Village
CRA Advisory Committee 5
PM at the EDO Conference
Room 504

October 17 - IDA Meeting
Noon at the EDO
Conference Room 504

November 1 - ECEC
Meeting (Call for
information)

November 5 - Charlotte
Harbor CRA Advisory
Committee Meeting 11 AM,
Room 119

November 12 - EDO closed
for Veterans Day

November 12-18 - Global
Entrepreneur Week

November 21 - IDA Meeting
Noon at the EDO
Conference Room 504

November 22 & 23 - EDO
closed for Thanksgiving

Blue Chip Award

The 18th Annual Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award Application process is now open. If you are a small-business owner or entrepreneur who has overcome challenges while maintaining and growing your business, please consider applying to win the 18th Annual Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award.

The award program is open to any for-profit company operating in Lee, Collier, or Charlotte County who has been in continuous operation under the same ownership for at least three years; who employs five to 400 people; and has overcome adversity to achieve success. Applications are judged on challenges your company faced and the strategies and resources you used to overcome your business challenges and significantly improved your company's performance.

Applications are due by September 10, 2012. There is no application fee. The event is sponsored by BB&T-Oswald Trippe and Company. The finalists are invited to the November 1, 2012 Award Luncheon where the winner will be announced. Charlotte County Economic Development Office is an endorser of the program and is available to assist you in the application form. For more information and an application please contact Stacey Mercado at BB&T-Oswald- Trippe at 239.433.7189. [Blue Chip Application](#)

Marketing Arm International

Marketing Arm International is headquartered in the Charlotte Harbor CRA. The company continues to be recognized for its contribution to the business community. Jose A. Lopez, founded Marketing Arm International, Inc. (MAI) in 1993 when he recognized the demand for a product that was environmentally safe and would produce high quality agricultural products. Through Mr. Lopez's entrepreneurial leadership, the company has grown from its humble beginnings in Jose's living room to a 12,000 square foot facility, a work force of 11 employees and export sales of more than \$8 million in 2010.



Jose Lopez

The company is both socially and environmentally responsible and is committed to expanding the business while reducing its resource footprint. MAI is dedicated to providing innovative approaches to the global agricultural community that will result in higher quality and higher yields of crops while preserving the environment. For over 19 years, MAI has been improving its product line to develop the best quality environmentally friendly

products to farmers, agronomists, and home owners that protect plant health through pest management. Many of the products available are approved for organic cropping. Now recognized as a leader in sustainable practices and excellent customer service, MAI is expected to grow exponentially in the international market as the demand for high-quality and affordable food increases throughout the globe.

Mr. Lopez was recognized by the White House as one of 14 Small Business Leaders as a "Champion of Change" for his commitment to doing extraordinary things to make a difference in the small business sector. In May of this year, Marketing Arm International completed their application to be considered as one of the top **Florida Companies To Watch** in 2012. If selected, the company will be invited to attend the October 19th gala in Orlando and join the growing list of Florida's top second stage companies.

We wish MAI the best of luck in making the list of finalists. For more information on the program or for tickets to the event, please visit <http://florida.companiestowatch.org/>

i2i Winner Receives Letter From Governor

Thomas Contreras, the first place winner in the i2iFL Contest, recently received a personal letter of congratulations from Governor Scott.



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

May 21, 2012

Mr. Thomas Contreras
115 Martin Drive
Port Charlotte, Florida 33952

Dear Thomas:

Congratulations on being awarded first place at the Innovation 2 Industry Competition and for your pending patent.

Your ingenuity in the science and technology industry is creating new possibilities for job and research opportunities. I encourage you to continue striving toward creating solutions that would generate both economic growth and efficiency. The "TAC" is an innovative way of protecting fisherman in Florida's waters and hopefully around the world one day.

Thank you for realizing the possibilities in scientific research and best wishes to you in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Rick Scott
Governor

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ECEC in Harbor Style Magazine

Don't forget to pick up a copy of the June issue of Harbor Style Magazine. There is a five page article on the Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council starting on page 77.

You can view the magazine [online](#) or pick up a copy.

Annual Gulf Coast Venture Forum Meeting

Debrah Forester attended the Annual Meeting of The Gulf Coast Venture Forum (GCVF) on May 9, 2012. The mission of GCVF is to encourage investors to participate in enhancing the economic vitality of the region by supporting entrepreneurial development and early stage companies. Membership of the forum is open only to Angel Investors. An investor is an accredited investor as defined by the rules of U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Affiliation with the organization will

provide an opportunity for Charlotte County small businesses seeking investors an opportunity to participate.

Love Bug



Tropical Bob: Ode to Love Bugs

Look at the windshield, the chrome and the grille,
All splattered with bugs that are not on the Pill.

Coupled pairs fly along in conjugal bliss,
And try as I might, these bugs I can't miss.

Smearred glass makes it hard to see far ahead;
I have to look through the remains of the dead.

They're here in the Spring and again in the Fall;
We've got them right now (I haven't hit all).

How long will they stay and when will they leave?
Forever and never is what I believe.

Tom Patton, Director
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