

FACT SHEET



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Florida High Tech Corridor Council

The [Florida High Tech Corridor Council](#) is an economic development initiative of the University of Central Florida (UCF), the University of South Florida (USF) and the University of Florida (UF) established in 1996 to attract, retain and grow high tech industry and the workforce to support it in a 23-county region. Recognized by numerous scientific and economic development organizations for its achievements, The Corridor Council facilitates public-private partnerships to support research, entrepreneurship, workforce and marketing efforts.

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

Matching Grants Research Program (MGRP)

Since 1996, the [MGRP](#) has generated downstream economic impacts of an estimated \$1 billion by fostering applied research between high tech companies and researchers from UCF, USF and UF. Matching funds enable companies to maximize their budgets and tap into the expertise of faculty and student researchers. Students often become employees of the companies they work with in the program and industry partners routinely form lasting research relationships with the universities.

stemCONNECT

[stemCONNECT](#) inspires K-12 students to pursue high tech careers by engaging professionals to deliver presentations about their career fields and how STEM education applies. With online video conferencing tools, hundreds of students from across the region can participate in these interactive presentations, which often include exciting tours of research laboratories or modern workspaces. Since the first virtual session, stemCONNECT has exposed over 80,000 students and teachers to STEM career opportunities in modeling, simulation and training, life sciences and more.

Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center (FLVEC)

[FLVEC](#) is Florida's leading online community of entrepreneurs. FLVEC connects more than 1,000 business owners from varied industries across the state, building relationships that have facilitated new business deals and expansion, and influenced the creation of new products and services. It also offers a directory of agencies that help entrepreneurs navigate hiring, funding, government contracts and more. FLVEC's business-focused webinars and "Ask FLVEC Anything" feature offer personalized, concierge assistance to support business growth.

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LEADERSHIP

Corridor Council

- Dr. Alexander N. Cartwright, UCF President, Corridor Council Co-Chair
- Dr. Steve Currall, USF President, Corridor Council Co-Chair
- Dr. Kent Fuchs, UF President, Corridor Council Co-Chair
- The Corridor Council also includes representatives from the region's 14 state and community colleges, and nearly two dozen representatives of high tech industry.

Operations

- Paul Sohl, Rear Adm. USN (ret), Florida High Tech Corridor Council CEO
- Vicki Morelli, stemCONNECT Program Director
- Michael Zaharios, FLVEC Program Director
- Vernet Lasrado, UCF MGRP Program Director
- Elizabeth Nelson, USF MGRP Program Director
- Dr. Sobha Jaishankar, UF MGRP Program Director

CORRIDOR COUNTIES

- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Alachua | 6. Hardee | 11. Levy | 16. Pasco | 21. Seminole |
| 2. Brevard | 7. Hernando | 12. Manatee | 17. Pinellas | 22. Sumter |
| 3. Citrus | 8. Highlands | 13. Marion | 18. Polk | 23. Volusia |
| 4. DeSoto | 9. Hillsborough | 14. Orange | 19. Putnam | |
| 5. Flagler | 10. Lake | 15. Osceola | 20. Sarasota | |

ACCOLADES

The Corridor Council has been recognized and emulated as a model initiative by several organizations:

- City of Chiang Mai, Thailand
- CONNECT: A Southeastern Massachusetts Public Higher Education Partnership
- Georgia's Innovation Corridor Joint Development Authority
- State of Colorado Joint Economic Development Committee
- U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration
- The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable

These accolades illustrate The Corridor region and state business climate:

- Best States for Business (#2) – *Chief Executive*, 2020
- Best U.S. Cities for Starting a Business (#19 Orlando, #20 Tampa) – *Inc.*, 2020
- Best States for Entrepreneurs (#2) – *Forbes*, 2019
- 20 High Tech Cities You'll Want to Call Home (#6 Tampa, #17 Orlando) – *PC Magazine*, 2019
- 15 Cities Hiring the Most High Tech Workers (#12 Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville) – *USA Today*, 2019

Learn more at www.floridahightech.com and follow The Corridor Council on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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