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Brevard to be Showcased to Top Global Leaders During ACE 8 Tour

The EDC, Florida Tech, KSC, and Port Canaveral will host decision-makers from 24 countries as they discover why the Space Coast is a key location for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Space Coast, FL (November 29, 2017) – On December 5, The Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE) will bring a delegation of over 50 representatives from around the world to Brevard County during its ACE 8 Tour, further promoting the Space Coast as an internationally-known hub for innovation and entrepreneurship.

The high-level tour will showcase the Central Florida region, illustrating successful economic models to senior decision makers, including high-ranking officials and dignitaries from 24 nations. A regional initiative of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC), the ACE Tour aids in building networks between the local and visiting stakeholders, and establishing long-term collaborative partnerships.

Three of Brevard's premier locations for innovation and entrepreneurship will participate in the ACE 8 Tour. These locations include the Florida Tech's Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Innovative Design (CAMID) facility, NASA's Kennedy Space Center (KSC), and Port Canaveral.

"ACE has been consistently successful in its goal to encourage and promote development and collaboration throughout the Western Hemisphere," said John Andersen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere. "The delegation will have the unique opportunity to share and promote best practices first hand with their hosts in Florida's STEM and agriculture clusters, learning cutting-edge economic development initiatives that strengthen innovation and promote potential FDI partnerships among the hosts and participants."

“ACE is a proven vehicle for showcasing the incredible innovation capacity of U.S. regions and for establishing global commercial relationships that can boost business development and job growth in the United States,” said Dennis Alvord, EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs. “We look forward to spotlighting the innovation economy in the central and northern region of Florida and the work that the Department of Commerce is doing in the region to support their efforts.”

“As our county and region continue to lead economic development and innovation, developing partnerships to fuel opportunities for continued investments and lasting relationships is critical to remaining competitive in the global market,” said Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO of the Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast (EDC). “The EDC has been working with ACE reps and community partners to ensure the Space Coast’s innovative spirit is a key highlight of this prestigious tour.”

“With students from 120 countries who are working with our renowned faculty on some of the world’s biggest challenges, such as curing cancer and battling cybersecurity threats, Florida Tech truly embodies the innovation and entrepreneurship that are at the center of the ACE Tour,” said President Dwayne McCay. “We are honored to host the delegates and look forward to deepening the global connections we have been building since our founding nearly 60 years ago.”

“Port Canaveral is proud to play a role in this year’s ACE 8 tour, showcasing our innovation and entrepreneurship”, said Captain John Murray, CEO of the Canaveral Port Authority. “It is our goal at the Port to develop and establish long-term relationships with business leaders, both locally and globally. Port Canaveral is a world-class gateway for cruises, cargo, recreation and logistics, as well as a gateway to new frontiers, including space. We are fully committed to strengthening the economic development and collaborative partnerships with our community.”

Since 2014, the ACE tour has been held in the United States, Argentina, Mexico, and Canada, becoming a catalyst to strengthen hemispheric ties, building on ideas and models that work to promote economic and social development. Other Florida host communities for this year’s tour include Tallahassee/Leon County, Gainesville/Alachua County, Orlando/Orange County, and St. Augustine/St. Johns County.

To learn more about the ACE 8 tour, visit: www.RiacEvents.org/ACE/Florida/

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About the Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast

The Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast (EDC) is dedicated to attracting new business and investment and expanding existing industry throughout the Space Coast, influencing change on government laws and regulations affecting economic development, promoting the Space Coast to encourage new investment, supporting efforts of Space Coast military installations, and relaying new programs and procedures to assist manufacturing and high-tech companies. The EDC is a private, not-for-profit coalition whose stakeholders are business leaders committed to the economic growth and stability of Florida’s Space Coast. Visit www.SpaceCoastEDC.org.

About Florida Institute of Technology

Founded at the dawn of the Space Race in 1958, Florida Tech is the only independent, technological university in the Southeast. PayScale.com ranks graduates’ mid-career median salaries among the nation’s best. The university is a Tier 1 Best National University in U.S. News & World Report and is one of just nine schools in Florida lauded by the Fiske Guide to Colleges. Times Higher Education has ranked Florida Tech one of the top 20 small universities in the world and named it one of the top universities in the United States. Florida Tech offers undergraduate, master’s and doctoral programs. Fields of study include engineering, science, aeronautics, business, mathematics, cybersecurity, psychology, humanities, communication and education. Find additional information at www.fit.edu.

About Port Canaveral

Led by the elected five-member Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners and Port Director and CEO, Captain John Murray, Port Canaveral is one of the world's most dynamic and exciting ports. Port Canaveral hosts more than 4 million revenue cruise passengers through its state-of-the-art terminals and 5.5 million of tons of cargo annually, including bulk, break-bulk, project, and containerized. The Port is strategically located to service all Florida markets, as well as the Southeastern United States. In addition to world class cruise facilities and diverse cargo operations, Port Canaveral offers more recreational opportunities than all other Florida deep-water seaports combined, including public parks, free public boat ramps, marinas, an entertainment district, and the seven-story interactive exhibit and event venue Exploration Tower. For more information, visit www.PortCanaveral.com

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration (www.eda.gov)

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.