

# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020

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 EDCofFloridasSpaceCoast



**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION**  
FLORIDA'S SPACE COAST





# SPIRIT OF THE SPACE COAST: REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

Fiscal year 2019/2020 was a year few expected. In March of 2020, we went from excitement as the Space Coast prospered, to concern for our friends, family, community, and economy. We saw many changes in our lives, both at home and in business. However, one thing did not change – the enduring spirit of our community.

Looking back at our region’s storied history, we understand the meaning of resiliency. From the days of Apollo, the Great Recession, and just a decade ago, the end of the Shuttle program.

With each setback, the “can-do” spirit of the Space Coast fueled another comeback, each time a little stronger than before. **2020 is no exception.**

The years of hard work from our EDC and community have diversified and strengthened our economy to endure another possible setback. And that is exactly what we witnessed this fiscal year. While some of our counterparts in the state faced unemployment at a staggering 29%, Brevard County never went above 13%. And, in the midst of it all, new product lines were announced, hiring continued, new developments prospered and

Brevard County witnessed the return of manned spaceflight from our very beaches.

In April, the EDC joined Governor Ron DeSantis in the exciting announcement that Aerion Supersonic will form a new global headquarters and integrated campus for research, design, build and maintenance of the company’s supersonic aircraft in Melbourne. **The new project represents a multi-year \$300 million investment that is expected to generate at least 675 jobs in Florida by 2026.**

As we enter 2021, we will reflect on 2020 and remember how our spirit carried us through the challenges and celebrate our resiliency as our community continues its path into our next great era.

**The Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) landed #10 on the Milken Institute’s Best Performing Cities 2020: Where America’s Jobs are Created and Sustained.**

  
Joseph T. Mayer  
Chair of the Board

  
Lynda L. Weatherman  
President & CEO

## MISSION

Secure Brevard County’s economic future

## METHOD

Community support, advocacy, collaboration, communication and education

## EDC OFFICERS



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Chair



Julie Song  
Chair-Elect



Bart Gaetjens  
Secretary



Kirk Hall  
Treasurer



Lynda L. Weatherman  
President & CEO

Pictured (left): EDC Annual Meeting, October 2019.

[www.SpaceCoastEDC.org](http://www.SpaceCoastEDC.org)



# BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: CULTIVATE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT AND ADVOCATE FOR PRO-BUSINESS POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.

In March, after the first shutdowns for COVID-19 were ordered, the EDC immediately jumped into action forming its **manufacturing resiliency team** to lead the charge for the Space Coast's manufacturing industry. Outreach efforts engaged more than 700 contacts representing 500-plus Brevard County manufacturers to offer assistance, assess capabilities and critical needs, and troubleshoot breaks in supply chains that could be filled by local businesses. From these efforts, **Airon Corporation**, a Melbourne-based ventilator manufacturer, was successful in partnering with Ford Motor Company and General Electric to produce 50,000 additional ventilators in just 100 days, making national news. 🔗

In addition, the EDC teamed up with Melbourne-based **BCAF Trading, Inc.** to donate disposable masks to vulnerable groups and to **Patrick Air Force Base** for use by military families. Medical masks and KN95 masks were also donated and delivered to the **United Way of Brevard** to be distributed to various local non-profits working on the front line. 🔗

The EDC's regional manufacturing association, **MASC**, expanded offerings and educational opportunities in addition to strengthening the manufacturing resiliency team. Twelve webinars were held throughout the year to promote and educate local manufacturers on important topics in their industry. In addition, MASC launched its "Doing Business With" webinar series, introducing manufacturers or other small businesses with local corporations, including **Lockheed Martin**, **Boeing** and **Blue Origin** to learn general information on doing business with these companies.

*Pictured above: (Second image) Janice Scholz, Tonya Holder, Judy Blanchard and Michael Kepner on the panel for MASC's meeting on regional apprenticeships, February 12, 2020; (third image) United Way of Brevard President Robert Rains (left) receives a donation of PPE masks from EDC President & CEO Lynda L. Weatherman (right, middle) and BCAF Trading, Inc. of Melbourne (right).*



The EDC's initiative for its military advocacy efforts, **Space Coast Salutes; a Celebration of Our Military with the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast**, 🔗 continued to showcase Brevard County as a place where military and their families are welcome, and where they know they are a vital part of our community through a targeted social media campaign.

The EDC led the response to advocate for the permanent basing of the **U.S. Space Command** in Brevard County. Working with many community partners to the USAF request for extensive information about the community's ability to host the joint combatant command, the EDC created a tiger team to respond to, prepare, and execute this competitive process.



**\$1,067,000**  
**A W A R D E D**

through state of Florida defense grants, directly benefiting the Brevard County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Civil Site Preparation project.





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: CREATE POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT BY ATTRACTING AND RETAINING INVESTMENT WITHIN TARGETED INDUSTRIES.

In April, the EDC announced **Aerion Supersonic** selected Brevard County to construct a new state-of-the-art campus, Aerion Park, in Melbourne, Florida. Aerion Park will form a new global headquarters and integrated campus for research, design, build and maintenance of the company's supersonic aircraft. The new project represents a multi-year, \$300 million investment that is expected to generate a minimum of 675 jobs by 2026.

Many past EDC project announcements continued their positive economic impact within the county. **Embraer** announced the newest jet in their lineup, the Phenom 300MED, would join the lines of production in Melbourne, FL. **L3Harris Technologies** is continuing to expand its Space Coast operations. Local employment has risen to 7,600, up from the pre-merger figure of 7,100. **Lockheed Martin** announced they would be revamping the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame in Titusville into its newest spacecraft facility for the assembly of the Orion spacecraft, the capsule Lockheed is building for NASA's upcoming moon missions. **Blue Origin** proceeded with an additional \$60 million investment in Exploration Park. **Boeing Space and Launch**, which the EDC announced the relocation of its headquarters to Titusville in June 2019, continues to achieve milestones toward delivery of the first two core stages of NASA's Space Launch System, for un-crewed and crewed missions. **SpaceX** continues to see heavy launch activity with its Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy spacecraft, and successfully launched American Astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken from American soil, the first crewed launch in the U.S. since 2011.



Pictured above: Embraer Phenom 300MED jet model to be produced in Melbourne, FL; NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley.



“Brevard County is home to the pioneers of space exploration and now the pioneers of sustainable supersonic transportation. Aerion Park raises the profile of Florida's Space Coast as the premier site for the most innovative aerospace companies in the world and is an example of what can be accomplished, even in the most challenging times, when the EDC and its state and local partners work together.”

- Lynda L. Weatherman

Pictured: The digital rendering of Aerion Supersonic's campus, Aerion Park to be constructed in Melbourne, FL.



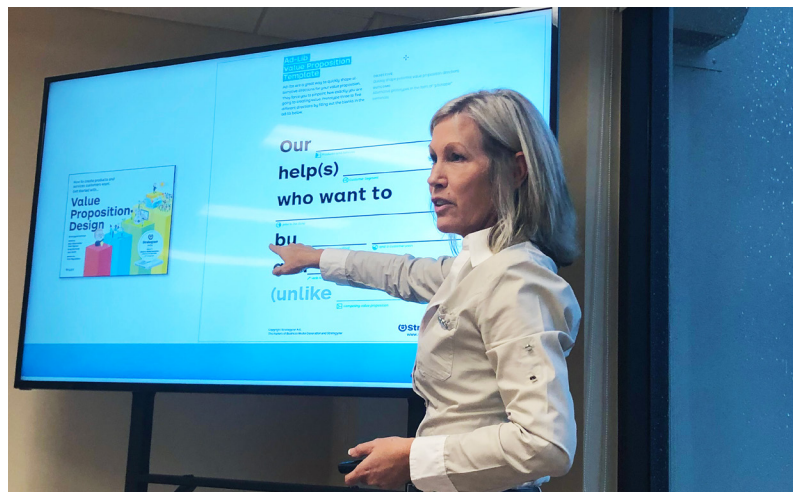
# INNOVATION

INNOVATION: BUILD AN ECO-SYSTEM SUPPORTIVE OF INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONNECTING ACADEMIC, CORPORATE, AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

The EDC partnered with **NASA** to host an information seminar for manufacturing and technology companies. The seminar focused on strategies to successfully communicate technology solutions and how to pursue the NASA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs within NASA.

In January, the EDC hosted an interactive seminar focused on the **U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's (USPTO)** initiatives and priorities. Twenty-five local manufacturing and technology companies attended the informational session, which was led by Elizabeth Dougherty, Eastern Regional Outreach Director of the USPTO.

The EDC continues to work with partners such as NASA and **Groundswell Startups** to identify and further the Space Coast's innovation ecosystem. The EDC continued its partnership with **GrowFL** to identify and support second-stage entrepreneurs in Brevard County.



*Pictured: MASC seminar on NASA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, December 12, 2019*



# WORKFORCE

WORKFORCE: SUPPORT AND PROMOTE A QUALIFIED WORKFORCE MEETING CURRENT AND FUTURE INDUSTRY NEEDS THROUGH TARGETED PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES.

**The Certified Production Technician Program**, most commonly known as the CPT program, continues to grow, as the EDC builds the next generation of Brevard’s manufacturing workforce. This course continues to not only provide training, it also provides workforce-ready skills with 88% of CPT certified students securing employment. The program has grown to include career exposure tours, HR and interview skills sessions, and private job fairs.

The EDC continues to tell the story of modern manufacturing through its **See Manufacturing Through New Eyes** campaign. During the fiscal year, ads were placed throughout Brevard County in print publications and modern media such as online radio and social media to drive interest in the CPT program and a career in manufacturing.



415

STUDENTS HAVE BEEN TRAINED  
SINCE SEPTEMBER 2016

68

MANUFACTURERS ACROSS  
BREVARD NOW EMPLOY  
CPT GRADUATES

88%

OF CPT CERTIFIED STUDENTS  
SECURE EMPLOYMENT

87%

COMPLETION RATE

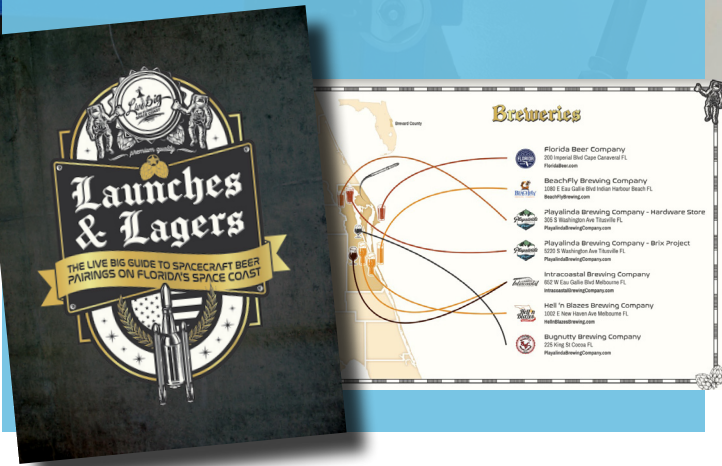
  
see manufacturing  
through new eyes



The EDC’s Talent Attraction program, a critical component of the EDC’s business recruitment and retention program of work, continues to gain momentum through its Live Big Space Coast campaign. Behind the scenes, the EDC continues to promote Brevard as the location to launch a rewarding career with an unparalleled quality of life.

During the fiscal year, the EDC published “Launches and Lagers: The Live Big Guide to Spacecraft Beer Pairings on Florida’s Space Coast” which is hosted on the brand new Live Big website, [www.LiveBigSpaceCoast.com](http://www.LiveBigSpaceCoast.com).

In addition, the EDC continued to organically grow its social media presence through Instagram and Facebook with plans for future collaboration within the community.





# COMMUNITY OF CHOICE

COMMUNITY OF CHOICE: DISTINGUISH FLORIDA'S SPACE COAST AS THE PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK PARTNERING WITH ORGANIZATIONS TO DEFINE AND MARKET COMMUNITY ASSETS.

Despite the hardships of COVID-19, the EDC's newest strategic focus area, Community of Choice, built momentum during the fiscal year. Staff, volunteers, and partners met to discuss the next steps of this vision to distinguish Florida's Space Coast as the place to live and work.

Throughout the year, the EDC's marketing team released imperative information related to COVID-19 business continuity resources. The EDC released two new websites, [www.SpaceCoastEDC.org](http://www.SpaceCoastEDC.org) and [www.LiveBigSpaceCoast.com](http://www.LiveBigSpaceCoast.com), setting the EDC up for future success to tell the Space Coast story.

## THE SPACE COAST:

**#1** Highest share of high-tech/STEM jobs in Florida, and **#12** in the U.S.

*24/7 Wall Street, 2019*

**Best destinations** for new manufacturing jobs in Florida.

*Florida TaxWatch, 2019*

Melbourne named **best place to live near the beach** in the U.S.

*U.S. News and World Report, 2019*

**#1** Most concentrated high-tech economy in Florida, and **#10** in the U.S.

*Milken Institute, 2019*

**#10** Best-Performing Large City in the U.S.

*Milken Institute, 2020*

**#2** Highest industry diversity index in Florida.

*Florida Gulf Coast University, 2020*

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