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Annual GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch Finalists Announced

Brevard County Among Community with Finalists Competing to Earn Prestigious Honor

Space Coast, FLA (August 24, 2021) – The Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast (EDC) and GrowFL are pleased to announce that five companies from the Space Coast were selected as 2021 GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch Finalists. The awards program - now in its eleventh year - honors impressive second-stage companies from throughout the state for developing valuable products and services, creating quality jobs, enriching communities, and broadening new industries throughout Florida.

The 11th Annual GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch Awards Celebration is presented by Nperspective CFO & Strategic Services, in association with the Edward Lowe Foundation. Together, the 11th Annual GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch Finalists represent nearly 2,300 jobs and generate over \$499 million in revenue. These companies, all of which are “worth watching,” anticipate a growth of 64 percent in revenue and 39 percent in employment by the end of 2021.

The five finalists from the Space Coast are:

- CustomAerospace
- Kegman, Inc.
- Tank Wizards
- TotalCareIT
- Vaya Space

“The Space Coast continues to see a rise in innovation and entrepreneurship as we cultivate a business environment, and community, that support these growth-oriented companies,” said EDC President & CEO, Lynda L. Weatherman. “Congratulations to all the finalists, particularly EDC investor TotalCareIT.”

“I created TotalCareIT with the vision of creating a place that I look forward to going to work every day; I never realized how the enchanting culture (no fairy dust) would infect the people around us creating a bond they call “partnership,” said Charles R. Berry, CEO, TotalCareIT. “We’re truly honored and excited to

be named to this list. This recognition shows team TotalCareIT's progress, it's a fantastic achievement for all the hard work over the past 20 years! Watching TotalCareIT come to fruition and being part of it is thrilling. I can't wait to go to work tomorrow."

The finalists were selected from close to 300 nominations across the state and are now in the running to be named a GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch Honoree. If selected as an Honoree, these exemplary second-stage companies will join the 500 second-stage companies across the state that have been recognized since 2011.

"We applaud these first-round finalists who have proved themselves to be stand out companies in the state. These business owners demonstrate the resiliency and tenacity that goes hand in hand with being an entrepreneur. There is no doubt these business owners have been challenged over the past year, but their perseverance and ability to innovate has been admirable. We are excited to again recognize the outstanding businesses who continue to make a significant impact on Florida's economy," says Dr. Tom O'Neal, GrowFL Founder.

The Finalists represent a unique group of scalable, high-growth enterprises that are already located within Florida. These high growth enterprises are an important segment of our economy and their numbers have been steadily increasing. According to the Kauffman Foundation, "entrepreneurship is not a monolithic phenomenon, and it includes many moving parts. Creating new businesses is a different economic activity from running small businesses, which in turn is different from growing businesses." GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch recognizes the different approach needed to successfully grow and scale a business and celebrates those that are working to achieve this goal.

Companies to Watch was developed by the Edward Lowe Foundation as a unique way to recognize and honor second-stage companies that demonstrate high performance in the marketplace with innovative strategies and processes. In addition to evaluating past growth and projected success, applicant companies are judged according to their special strengths and impact in their markets, communities and within the state – thus deeming them "worth watching."

The Honorees for this year's award will be announced in October. The 11th Annual GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch awards celebration will take place on February 17, 2021, at Hard Rock Live, Universal City Walk, Orlando, FL.

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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 GrowFL:

GrowFL is dedicated to support and accelerate the growth of second-stage companies throughout Florida, by providing their leaders focused, efficient, and timely access to resources they deem important, such as connections with other second-stage company leaders, and to professional organizations whose expertise, experience, and products lead to the second-stage company's continued growth and prosperity resulting in diversification and growth of Florida's economy. Second-stage growth companies have at least 6 employees and \$750,000 in revenue and possess an intent and desire to grow beyond second-stage. Website: www.Growfl.com.

About the Edward Lowe Foundation:

The Edward Lowe Foundation was established in 1985 by Ed and Darlene Lowe to leverage entrepreneurship as a strategy for economic growth and community development. The foundation's entrepreneurship initiatives focus on second-stage companies, which are growth-oriented firms that have moved beyond startup but have not yet reached maturity. Its peer learning, leadership education, and strategic information programs are geared to help these companies continue growing. For more information, visit www.EdwardLowe.org.