



From the Director's Desk

By Nathan Sparks, CEcD

Collaboration. Innovation. Partnerships. These words and more would best sum up the most recent iteration of the EDC's TeCMEN Industry Day held on August 29 at the Emerald Coast Convention Center. As in years past, the 2019 TeCMEN Industry Day included a speaker symposium, an expo hall / technical showcase, educational workshops and networking galore. When the dust finally settled, nearly 340 attendees (representing more than 120 companies) and 42 exhibitors were treated to a highly informative and enjoyable day.



Jamal Sowell, President of Enterprise Florida and Florida's Secretary of Commerce started the day off on a high note, noting the importance of industry cluster development initiatives like TeCMEN and applauding the collaborative spirit exhibited by our region's aerospace, manufacturing and technology sectors. Sowell also emphasized the vital linkages between these sectors and our educational partners. Next up on deck was a panel of Northwest Florida aerospace leaders representing companies including Boeing, GKN Aerospace, ST Engineering and Vertex Aerospace AIS. All four of these entities have located or expanded in northwest Florida in recent years, and learning more about their decisions - and more importantly the positive outcomes they continue to experience in areas like talent recruitment - was certainly gratifying.

As the day continued on, attendees enjoyed optional workshops where topics included Disaster Readiness & Business Continuity, Capitalizing on Talent in a Competitive Economy, Intro to Process Mapping and Cross Generational Workplace Communication. Following lunch, the speaker's symposium resumed with Steven Dietzius, 96th Test Wing Technical Director at Eglin AFB providing an in-depth look at Eglin's Test Mission and its expected growth / evolution. Noting the increasing concern that we all have with the rapid introduction of cyber risks, the symposium portion of the day wrapped up with a panel of cybersecurity experts and educators discussing how these threats can be successfully averted - and how today's cybersecurity students are being prepared to address them in the future. As is customary, the TeCMEN Industry Day concluded with a high energy networking reception including lots of door prizes (think digital microscopes, etc.)

As in the past, thanks to a sponsorship from the Hsu Educational Foundation, we were able to include students, principals and instructors from Okaloosa County high schools and Rocky Bayou Christian School in a portion of the day. These students were extremely impressive, and several later commented that they used their time in the expo hall to chat with local technical employers about future internship possibilities...tremendous!

In addition to the Hsu Educational Foundation, we were fortunate to have some wonderful sponsors for the 2019 TeCMEN Industry Day including Vertex Aerospace AIS, CHELCO / PowerSouth, Gulf Power, Dynamic Software Solutions, Northwest Florida State College, LandrumHR and Okaloosa Schools CTE. We truly could not have done it without these dedicated partners!

The Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County Announces New Director of Business Expansion



The Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County is pleased to announce the selection of Kevin M. Lovelace to serve as the organization's next Director of Business Expansion.

A veteran of the economic development industry, Lovelace was previously employed by Atlanta-based Georgia Power Company for nearly 20 years, with four years of experience in corporate human resources and more than 15 years of service on the company's award winning Community & Economic Development team. Serving as Business Development Director, Lovelace cultivated a vast network of corporate site selectors, national real estate brokers, industrial and commercial developers, and senior executives in a wide range of industries including advanced manufacturing and distribution. He helped spearhead more than \$4 billion in capital investment and over 5,000 jobs statewide between 2012 and 2017.

"We are very excited about bringing Kevin on board. He is as comfortable assisting start-up businesses as he is working to recruit Fortune 500 companies. Not to mention that he also brings perspective and a professional network that we know will be of immediate value to Okaloosa County, our community's growing businesses and the EDC," said Nathan Sparks, Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County.

"I am excited and honored to be the newest member of the team at the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County. I look forward to building new relationships locally, nationally, and internationally, as well as leveraging existing relationships, that will bring economic development benefits to Okaloosa County for years to come," commented Lovelace.

Lovelace and his wife Carol will be relocating to Okaloosa County from Atlanta. He begins his duties with the EDC on October 7.

Defense Support Initiatives, DSI

By Bob Marinan, Chairman



With the fall season upon us, schools started and football season underway, the end of 2019 is insight with much work ongoing and still to be accomplished. Here is what's going on:

The new Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) Commander has issued an "AFMC We Need" study initiative to his command to ensure that AFMC is prepared in the future with the right structure, resources, and culture to support the National Defense Strategy. They will be looking into Research & Development, Test & Evaluation, Acquisition, Sustainment, and Mission Support areas for required upgrades or new facilities.

The Commander of the 96th Civil Engineering Group provided the DSI with an updated NexGen brochure for areas of improvements to Eglin AFB facilities. This redevelopment plan will help focus their efforts and funding priorities-providing MILCON funding is appropriated. The strategy intent is to guide facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization, and recapitalization requirements required for the future growth.

The DSI was assured that the Military Mission Line (MML) and the Eastern Gulf Test & Training Range protection remains a top priority of Congressman Gaetz. With the House's approval of a permanent ban to oil exploration and drilling in the Eastern Gulf, the DSI will send letters of support on the House bill to Senator Scott, Senator Rubio, and Senator McConnell, Majority Leader. The feeling within the Senate is that even if they approved the bill for continued protection of the military range in the eastern Gulf, it would be vetoed by the President. The challenge remains!

Some positive news, the Gulf Range Enhancement \$37.5M award continues to move forward with anticipated success.

With the above issues still ongoing, the DSI leadership has decided to send a small focus group of DSI leaders for targeted scheduled meetings with select Congressman, Senators and influencers to help support our advocacy efforts.

Dr. Thomas Piazza, Medical Director of the Invisible Wounds Center is scheduled to attend and present at our November meeting.

Eglin's 96th Food Service Team was presented the John L. Hennessy Award for being the best food service operation in the USAF. Congrats to them!



By Paul Jernigan, Chairman

So, here we are again, another year has passed, my tenure has ended and again we will be installing a new Chairman for TeCMEN. With a new Chairman comes a new vision again and new ideas again. Again we will work to grow and improve our TeCMEN group. Again Linda will search and find great speakers like Mel Ponder at our September TeCMEN meeting.

I was told by HR about 38 years ago when I came to work for Boeing that if you came to work on time, filled out your time card correctly and did your job to the best of your ability that you would be here a long time. I have applied this same Boeing logic to my children. It's sad that you can be successful by coming to work on time and doing your job and that can be a discriminating factor for success, but it is true. The simple things matter! Until you or I learn to do the simple things it is not likely you will grow to greater areas of responsibility.

The word again in the Greek language is pronounced "Palin". It is just like Sarah Palin's last name the Republican Vice Presidential candidate a few years ago and the word again means "in the mundane". The Greek language has lots of meanings for the same word we might translate it to in English, in fact the word again has 10 different ways it is used...another one is "magnificence in monotony".....so I was asked to write upbeat articles and I am talking about words like mundane and monotony.....how upbeat is that?

So, let's apply this to TeCMEN. You are all leaders and role models in some form or fashion and if you want to be a better leader or role model first of all learn to;

1. Serve others because if you serve others rather than ask them to serve you they will look out for you as a leader.
2. Be Available to others you are leading and be a better listener than talker...that is why you have 2 ears and one mouth.
3. Be a humble leader...it is not about you it is about the work we are doing together. I don't like to be called boss or hear people say they work for me. Even if you own your company you have a boss, your customer.
4. Be a healer. When people come to you in your roll do you build them up or tear them downdo they leave better or worse?

Research says anything done for 21 days becomes a habit.....both good and bad habits! So again I would ask in a good way....is your life boring enough? Is your life monotonous or mundane enough? Do you have some habits that you need to change? Are you a steady performer? Do you serve others? Are you available? Are you humble? Do people leave your office better than when they came in? Are you a healer? Maybe it is time to try again and you only have to practice these good habits again and again for 21 days and you have gotten rid of those bad habits and created good habits! Do you want to be a better leader? Better role model? You are all leaders & role models. Do you want to aspire to a higher level? Do the basics, be boring and you will do well!

Members in the News

Congratulations to the **UWF Haas Center** on their 25th Anniversary!

Congratulations to the **Emerald Coast Science Center** on their 30th Anniversary!

Congratulations to **Saltmarsh Cleaveland & Gund** on their 75th Anniversary!

Happy 72nd Birthday to the **US Air Force!**

American Elite Molding, America's leading manufacturer of cable ties, is proud to announce that Florida Trend magazine has named AEM Founder and CEO Robert Sires one of Florida's 500 Most Influential Business Leaders for 2019. Florida Trend's Florida 500™ lists the most influential executives in different economic sectors throughout Florida.

Precision Measurement, Inc., recipient of the Florida Department of Education Commissioner's Business Recognition Award in Okaloosa County, was recognized by Superintendent Chambers. The Commissioner's Business Recognition Award was presented to Precision Measurement, Inc. for providing innovative learning opportunities in the local community and enhancing Florida's

education system. The Commissioner's Business Recognition Awards are given annually to highlight successful partnerships between members of the business community and local school districts for the benefit of Florida's students.

Progress Bank's Woody Woodfin, Mortgage Division Manager, has announced that Barry Stanley has joined their team as SVP, Northwest Florida Area Manager. Stanley is the first mortgage team member to be located in the Bank's Destin, Florida office.

Randy Wise of **Randy Wise Homes, Inc.**, supported the Crestview High School Future Builders of America (FBA) Chapter by presenting a \$500 sponsorship. FBA is an organization established by the Florida Home Builders Association to help students understand and pursue careers in the building industry. Students learn trade skills and leadership needed in the building industry to support the continued quality growth of our communities.

The Okaloosa Public Schools Foundation (OPSF) was awarded a \$50,000 grant from **The Boeing Company** to expand a program that will further science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) studies in middle schools by providing 3-D printing capabilities - helping to foster the next generation of innovators. Students will learn 3D Modeling and utilize 3D printers and spools of plastic provided through this grant.

[EDC Blog](#)

If you would like more insight, visit the EDC's blog written by Kelly Murphy-Redd, CEcD. You'll find topics such as Incubators and Accelerators, Retiring Military, Talent Attraction, Hypersonic Weapons, and more!

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