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GrowFL Announces 2015 Florida Companies to Watch Finalists

Area Companies Among Second-Stage Businesses Competing to Earn Prestigious Honor

Brevard County, Fla. (June 25, 2015) – GrowFL has announced the 2015 *Florida Companies to Watch* finalists. The awards event - now in its fifth year - honors 50 select second-stage companies from throughout the state for developing valuable products and services, creating quality jobs, enriching communities, and broadening new industries throughout Florida. More than 500 companies were nominated for this year's award. The 101 finalists collectively represent \$694 million in annual revenue and employ 3,280 full-time equivalent employees.

As an economic development organization partner of GrowFL, the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast is proud to support this event. Six finalists from Brevard County made the list.

Finalists from Melbourne include, Certified General Contractors, Inc., K. Parks Consulting, Inc., Modus Operandi, and Sorensen Moving & Storage. Representing Titusville is RUSH Construction, Inc., and from Cocoa Beach, Novel Engineering, Inc.

"Of the 25 counties represented, I am proud that Brevard County ranked near the top of the list with six finalists. These companies are a wonderful example of the economic growth happening now. They have shown success and are in position to further their impact in this community. As an EDC, we are honored to support efforts that highlight the importance of business retention and growth." Stated Lynda Weatherman president & CEO of the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast.

The *Florida Companies To Watch* program consists of two rounds of selections. Finalists now advance to the second round, where they will be further evaluated based on their performance in the marketplace, innovative products, services or processes, philanthropy, and empowered employees.

"We applaud these first round finalists, all of which exhibit impressive strengths in entrepreneurial leadership, product innovation, social/community responsibility, and competitive business practices," says Dr. Tom O'Neal, GrowFL Executive Director.

Developed by the Edward Lowe Foundation, *Florida Companies To Watch* is a distinguished awards program specifically designed to seek out second-stage businesses from a wide range of industries representing all areas of the state, not just those in major metropolitan areas. 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 winners will be announced in late August. The 2015 honorees will be celebrated at the awards ceremony November 5th at the Hard Rock Live at Universal Resort in Orlando.

For more information visit growfl.com/flctw/about.

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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 was created in 2009 by the Florida legislature as an economic development program focused on assisting second-stage growth companies prosper in the state of Florida. By providing strategies, resources and support to second-stage companies for next level growth through Strategic Research, Peer Learning and Leadership Development, GrowFL helps companies overcome obstacles to growth and leads them towards prosperity. Based on the philosophy of Economic Gardening®—to grow existing businesses in a community, region or state—GrowFL, the Florida Economic Gardening Institute, is a critical component to the state's economic development strategy and Florida's entrepreneurial ecosystem. GrowFL is a statewide economic development organization certified by the National Center for Economic Gardening through the Edward Lowe Foundation. GrowFL has assisted more than 800 companies through the Strategic Research and CEO Roundtable programs and recognized 200 successful entrepreneurs through the annual awards program, Florida Companies to Watch. Learn more at GrowFL.com.