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Weatherman and NASA to Present at the Florida Economic Development Conference

Featured Topics include, Competitive Manufacturing Careers and Technology Docking

Brevard County, Fla. (July 13, 2015) –Lynda Weatherman, president and chief executive officer of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of Florida's Space Coast and NASA's Center Chief Technologist, Karen Thompson will be presenting key Brevard County initiatives to a group of statewide economic development practitioners tomorrow.

Weatherman will be exposing the severe gap in manufacturing jobs due to the retirement of 60% of the workforce within the next 15 years. "I have been following the trends on the topic of manufacturing workforce and demand is outpacing supply. According to the Manufacturing Institute (MI), the educational arm of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) – Skilled workforce is one of the most critical factors affecting not only production, but also innovation, research and development in advanced manufacturing." Weatherman said.

In her points, Weatherman will emphasize the important role of the Certified Production Technician (CPT) and a pilot program implemented by the EDC in August of last year focused on CPT. "I believe this project serves as the continuing re-birth of Brevard County. The CPT is not only the first step toward filling manufacturing jobs, but is an economic solution that meets the needs of the businesses and provides a viable career path for any potential employees."

Thompson will discuss Technology Docking, a strategic alliance between NASA and the EDC. This pilot program supports the Regional Economic Development initiative headed by NASA headquarters. Thompson's presentation is designed to educate and encourage other economic development organizations to foster technology advancement opportunities in their own communities.

"This partnership between NASA and the EDC allows NASA experts to help solve specific industry challenges, just as NASA reaches out for help from Industry to enable our exploration of space. Collaboration can prove very effective in both directions." In addition, Thompson will discuss several methods NASA uses to achieve this level of collaboration.

The Florida Economic Development Conference is taking place July 13 – 15 at the Walt Disney World Swan Hotel.

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About the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC)

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast 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 NASA/Kennedy Space Center

On July 29, 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed Public Law 85-568, creating the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, also known as NASA. In July 1962, the agency established its Launch Operations Center on Florida's east coast and renamed it in late 1963 to honor the president who put America on the path to the moon. NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center has helped set the stage for America's adventure in space for more than four decades. The center has served as the departure gate for every American manned mission and hundreds of advanced scientific spacecraft. From the early days of Project Mercury to the space shuttle and International Space Station, from the Hubble Space Telescope to the Mars Exploration Rovers and most recently the Exploration Flight Test of the Orion spacecraft, the center enjoys a rich heritage in its vital role as NASA's processing and launch center. Kennedy is transitioning to become a world-class multi-user launch complex supporting both government and commercial customers. As the nation embarks on a new chapter in space exploration, Kennedy will continue to make history. For more information on NASA's Kennedy Space Center visit: www.nasa.gov/kennedy