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ONLINE VERSION AT FLORIDABUSINESS.ORG

2017 FLORIDA VENTURETECH SHOWCASE RESULTS – The Florida Venture Forum/Venture Education Foundation and Space Florida have announced the top two winners of the 2017 Florida VentureTech Showcase and Space Florida's Accelerating Innovation prize, held at the FAU Tech Runway in Boca Raton Nov. 16. A total of 17 Florida-based companies from across the state and a variety of industry sectors were selected to present before an audience of investors, deal professionals and entrepreneurs. Weintraus, Inc. (www.weintraus.com), which is located in Daytona Beach, was one of the two winning companies selected by a panel of judges. Both companies received \$25,000 as showcase winners.

VOLUSIA COUNTY BUSINESS INCUBATOR CLIENT SHOWCASE – Don't miss this exciting entrepreneur showcase introducing 20 innovative, early stage companies to Volusia County and Central Florida investors. The free showcase will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 4, at the Volusia County Business Incubator, at 601 Innovation Way at the Daytona Beach International Airport. The showcase will offer business networking, incubator tours, and the Entrepreneur of the Year and Incubator Graduate of the Year awards. This event is open to the public. For information and to RSVP, call 386-872-3100 or email ruth.griggers@ucf.edu.

COMPENSATION INSURANCE – Florida's Insurance Commissioner has issued a final order granting approval to the National Council on Compensation Insurance for a statewide overall rate decrease of 9.5 percent and a premium decrease of 9.8 percent. The changes apply to new and renewal workers' compensation insurance policies effective in Florida as of Jan. 1. The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation has primary responsibility for regulation, compliance and enforcement of statutes related to the business of insurance and the monitoring of industry markets.

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE – The National Office of Apprenticeship within the U.S. Department of Labor has set a goal of doubling and diversifying the number of apprenticeships by 2019. Florida is among 36 states and Guam that were recently selected to help make that goal a reality through the ApprenticeshipUSA initiative. CareerSource Florida (CSF) is integrating apprenticeships into the organization's statewide sector strategies initiative. According to the CSF President and CEO, research shows sector strategies strengthen the participating businesses, the industries involved and the workforce as a whole by shifting workforce development from a supply-driven to a demand-driven approach. Visit <https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/> to learn more about the apprenticeship initiative.

2018 BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR – Florida Trend is now accepting registrations for its 2018 Best Companies to Work For in Florida. This survey and recognition program is dedicated to identifying and recognizing Florida's best employers in small, medium and large categories. To be eligible for consideration, companies must meet the following criteria: be a publicly or privately held business, be a for-profit or not-for-profit business, have a facility in Florida, have a minimum of 15 full-time or part-time employees in Florida, and must be in business a minimum of one year. To apply or to learn more, visit <http://www.bestcompaniesfl.com/>.

ELEVATE DAYTONA – Save the date for Elevate Daytona Beach, which will host its next event from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 18 at the News-Journal Center in downtown Daytona Beach. Speaker slots, sponsorship opportunities and general admission tickets are available. For more details, visit www.ElevateDaytonaBeach.com.

CHARITABLE GIVING RANKING – According to a study by WalletHub, Florida ranked 44 out of 50 in charitable giving. The study looked at 13 different metrics including the income percentage donated and what percentage of the state's homeless population was sheltered. It also looked at how much time people volunteered. Florida ranked last for its charity volunteer rate. Utah came in number one for volunteering and charitable giving. More information is available at <http://tinyurl.com/zej32g>.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARDS – The 2018 National Small Business Week will take place April 29 to May 5. Are you a small business owner with an amazing success story to tell? If so, submit your nomination for the 2018 National Small Business Week Awards. The assessment process gathers data about each participating company. The collected information will provide a detailed set of data enabling determinations of the strengths and opportunities of the participating companies. Nominations must be mailed or hand delivered to the nearest U.S. Small Business Association office by 3 p.m. Jan. 9. Award guidelines and nomination forms can be found at www.sba.gov/nsbw/awards.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM – At DeLand High School, students can access extensive career and technical education programs providing valuable entry level workforce skills and industry certifications. Career and technical education program areas include agriscience, business, information technology, hospitality and tourism, human services, engineering and technology and marketing. For more information, call 386-822-6909.

NEWS ITEMS WANTED! – Please send your business news items to Joanne Magley, Volusia County Community Information director, at jmagley@volusia.org. If you wish to be removed from this weekly broadcast, please let us know.