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FIRST COAST MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION



Dear Members and Friends of FCMA:

The resiliency and determination of our manufacturers has been tested over the last two years – and resulted in an amazing record of accomplishment. As in times past, our industry has stepped up to meet the needs and the demands of public consumption, even as the impact of the COVID-19 shutdown and more recently the Ukraine Russian War ushered in many challenges to our industry.

Energy costs are escalating with future problems for fuel consumption likely to emerge for manufacturers and logistics operators. China threatens our trade partner in Taiwan, likely to result in further supply chain disruptions for needed electronic components and certain manufactured goods made abroad.

Our manufacturers once again demonstrated our ability to be creative in making goods and products under less-than-desirable circumstances. We witnessed reductions in workforce, decreased availability of raw materials, limited transportation capabilities, and working under adverse challenges of a pandemic. The long-term impacts of the pandemic will be experienced for decades, permanently changing how businesses operate.

The supply chain was disrupted initially in the COVID-19 shutdown and now exacerbated by a war in Ukraine. The

expectation was that impacts of this shutdown would be short-lived; however, today, we recognize that the supply chain has been substantially disrupted. This disruption of transportation and logistical movement of goods and products has caused a chain reaction in almost every component of business operations.

Our magazine looks at several components of the supply chain. We hope to answer questions and give insight to alleviate the emerging concerns. More particularly, we hope to give you ideas and engage you to help define future opportunities. Our time-tested manufacturing industry will again be called upon to meet the needs of changing markets. I believe we are up to that challenge!

Thanks to our many contributors and those who support our magazine. We believe this is a timely presentation of information that could not be published without your support. As always, we look forward to continuing to serve you and to hearing from you with further suggestions to help our manufacturers through current and future supply chain challenges.

Sincerely,

Lake Ray III

President, First Coast Manufacturers Association
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FCMA's vision

To be the center of manufacturing excellence and growth in Northeast Florida.

FCMA's mission

To be a member-supported association providing a united voice to government and pathways to member success through education, workforce development and business-to-business relationships.

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Northeast Florida keeps goods moving in face of global logistics disruptions





Jacksonville Port Authority facilities are playing a critical role in maintaining the efficient flow of goods at a time when many other seaports are plagued by bottlenecks.

While the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown and related circumstances have thrown the global supply chain into unprecedented disarray, Jacksonville transportation and logistics providers are creatively maintaining the proficient flow of goods through Northeast Florida.

From Jacksonville's seaport to those furnishing trucking and warehousing, First Coast logistics leaders are collectively stepping up to meet challenges as they collaborate with manufacturers and other shippers to advance inventive solutions.

Not only are Jacksonville Port Authority facilities largely free of congestion that is bogging down a host of other seaports, but truck drivers in particular are rising to the occasion in efficiently getting goods to and from JAXPORT ship berths.

Congestion-free option offered

Robert Peek, JAXPORT's director and general manager of business development, observed that the shift – spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic – of consumers to spend their money on goods rather than experiences has put incredible stress on all modes of transportation

"The entire international supply chain has been disrupted," Peek said. "At JAXPORT, we're not seeing the congestion being experienced at many other ports.

"JAXPORT is offering manufacturers a congestion-free option to import raw materials and export their finished products," Peek continued.

Citing Northeast Florida's large labor force and extensive rail capacity, plus having nearly 100 million people living within a one-day truck drive, combined with JAXPORT's capabilities, Peek noted, "It creates a tremendous opportunity for manufacturers to move their supplies and exports through JAXPORT."

Manufacturers assisted

Furthermore, Peek said, JAXPORT actively assists manufacturers and other shippers in finding the most appropriate ocean carrier services, trucking and warehousing companies and other related supply chain providers.

"We have ocean services around the globe, and we work with manufacturers on a regular basis to find the supply chain solutions that work for them," he added, citing JAXPORT's offering of a worldwide proliferation of direct and one-stop-connection ocean carrier



Robert Peek, director and general manager of business development at the Jacksonville Port Authority, sees JAXPORT offering manufacturers congestion-free opportunities for moving inbound and outbound shipments.

services. “Moreover, we help them put their arms around a network of providers who can help them efficiently fill all their service needs.”

Applying a term from astronomy, Peek said he sees JAXPORT operating in the Goldilocks Zone – which refers to the habitable area around a star where the temperature is neither too hot nor too cold for liquid water to exist on a planet.

“Our port lives in the Goldilocks Zone,” he said. “We are a big enough port to have all the services and facilities to provide schedule reliability and small enough to sit down with users and furnish them personalized customer service.”

Saving time and money

Michael Rubin, president and chief executive officer of the statewide Florida Ports Council, said Sunshine State ports got a boost from expansion of the Panama Canal, completed in 2016, with an increasing number of ocean services from Asia coming to Florida through the passage, thus avoiding bottlenecks at U.S. West Coast seaports.



Michael Rubin, president and chief executive officer of the statewide Florida Ports Council, believes activity through Jacksonville’s seaport will continue to grow, saving shippers both time and money.

Meanwhile, investments totaling more than \$3 billion over the past decade have been made in Florida ports, with additional projects to augment road and rail connectivity. That, Rubin said, means



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Florida offers the ideal gateway to markets not just within the nation's third-most-populous state but also inland as far as the Midwest.

"We'll continue to beat the drum about why businesses should move their products through Florida," he said. "We'll not only save you money, but, these days, we'll save you time.

"JAXPORT is just booming," Rubin said. "JAXPORT is the No. 1 containerport in Florida, and that's going to continue. You've got to feel good if you're involved in economic development in Northeast Florida. The growth is exponential and shows no sign of slowing down."

Creativity essential

Robert Fox, senior vice president of operations at Jacksonville-based sister RoadOne companies JZI IntermodaLogistics and JZI LogisticSolutions, said inventive



Robert Fox, senior vice president of operations at JZI IntermodaLogistics and JZI LogisticSolutions, says creative approaches are vital to meeting current supply chain challenges.

approaches have been particularly instrumental in meeting present supply chain challenges.

"You just have to get creative," Fox said.

"It's all outside-the-box stuff, and we're doing more of that now than ever before."

For example, to meet needs of shippers now bringing cargo into JAXPORT on chartered vessels rather than through services via Gulf, West Coast or other Southeast ports, trucking and warehousing specialist JZI IntermodaLogistics is offering – at a lower cost than demurrage charges on port property – the opportunity to store their goods at JZI's 20-acre yard and warehouse installation that is fewer than 5 miles from JAXPORT docks.

Such solutions, Fox said, are proving beneficial for a broad range of shippers, from those importing canned fruits and coffee to those exporting solar panels.

FTZ adds to benefits

The fact that the JZI facility is located within Foreign-Trade Zone No. 64, Florida's most expansive FTZ, furnishes additional benefits. (An FTZ is a secured

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Keeping the supply chain moving, a SANY reachstacker lifts a cargo container at JZI IntermodalLogistics' 20-acre inland marine terminal, less than 5 miles from JAXPORT docks.

site within the United States, but technically considered outside of U.S. Customs jurisdiction, that allows shippers to clear cargo as it leaves the FTZ while facilitating substantial savings, including deferral,

reduction and even potential elimination of duties.)

Also, JZI's acquisition of 75 high-cube 40-foot-long containers just as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to hit

in early 2020 has proven to be propitiously timed. And the company's SANY reachstacker is as busy as ever moving containers at JZI's inland marine terminal.

Perhaps most importantly, according to



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Fox, has been the ability of JZI to attract and retain qualified truck drivers, with 51 of the firm's 55 drivers being owner-operators. Drivers are offered sign-up bonuses, are given a share of peak-season surcharges, are provided safety gear and are periodically treated to free taco truck lunches.

"We are nobody without a driver," Fox said.

Truck drivers hold the key

Like Fox, Dr. Robert Hooper Jr., chief executive officer of Atlantic Logistics, a Jacksonville-based third-party logistics firm, or 3PL, believes truck drivers hold the key in an environment that demands creative thinking.

"As a 3PL, we are working with truckload carriers to help in sourcing capacity," said Hooper, whose doctoral degree is in economics. "We're also having to get

creative as we see the transition from a service economy to a goods economy."

One example of creativity involves transloading cargo containers on over-the-road trucks, typically used for longer hauls, instead of deploying drayage trucks – a move that helps get much-in-demand containers back into use.

In such times, Hooper said, it is particularly important for manufacturers and warehouse workers to treat drivers well and be increasingly flexible, including extending operating hours as appropriate.

"Like teachers and healthcare workers, the drivers have stepped up in a tremendous way that is often unsung," Hooper said. "The supply chain has been stretched very tightly during this time, but everybody is stepping up." ❄️



Dr. Robert Hooper Jr., chief executive officer of Atlantic Logistics, sees truck drivers as unsung heroes in successful efforts to keep shipments moving in challenging times.



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Jacksonville Port Authority enhancing logistics solutions for manufacturers



JAXPORT's Blount Island Marine terminal, already moving record containerized cargo volumes, looks to benefit from \$100 million in berth enhancements.



In an example of innovative solutions being deployed at JAXPORT facilities, frozen poultry – a typically containerized commodity – is shipped via noncontainerized breakbulk means at the Talleyrand Marine Terminal.



During his March 2022 State of the Port address, Eric Green, chief executive officer of the Jacksonville Port Authority, outlines JAXPORT's plans to further enhance capabilities for furnishing supply chain solutions.

Already at the forefront of providing steadfast logistics solutions for First Coast manufacturers and a full spectrum of shippers, the Jacksonville Port Authority is further bolstering its cargo-moving capabilities and service offerings.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, JAXPORT was methodically working to

invest in a deeper harbor and enhanced infrastructure, thus enabling the adept handling of record activity in fiscal 2021 and establishing a firm foundation for accommodating future volume growth.

"The solution to the nation's port congestion problem is right here in this room," Eric Green, JAXPORT's chief executive officer, told a sellout gathering

during his State of the Port address on March 8, 2022.

"As the industry looks to combat everything from truck capacity issues to labor and equipment challenges, protecting the supply chain is a global priority," Green told nearly 400 transportation and logistics

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professionals. “That’s where Jacksonville’s modern deepwater seaport comes in.”

Deeper channel beckons

With JAXPORT’s single biggest growth initiative – deepening of the Jacksonville shipping channel to 47 feet from 40 feet – on target to be completed through Blount Island Marine Terminal by mid-2022, along with a wider vessel turning basin,

the seaport is poised to handle increasingly large cargo ships.

Concomitant completion of more than \$100 million in Blount Island berth enhancement aims to enable simultaneous accommodation of two post-Panamas containerships at the SSA Jacksonville Container Terminal. And terminal operator SSA Atlantic looked to welcome three new eco-friendly container cranes and

complete the first 20 acres of a 93-acre modernization project by the end of 2022.

Meanwhile, at JAXPORT’s Dames Point Marine Terminal, Ceres Terminals has committed \$15 million in private investment in leading-edge cargo-handling equipment and systems as part of a 20-year, \$60 million agreement for operation of the 158-acre container facility, which provides direct ocean carrier links with ports throughout Asia and South America, joined in late 2021 by a rerouted European service.

“The ongoing supply chain disruption underscores the significance of this agreement and the importance of the capabilities offered by the TraPac Jacksonville facility,” Green said in a February 2022 announcement. “When we put together JAXPORT’s strategic master plan, our focus was growing cargo volumes and the private-sector jobs they support. This agreement is a major step forward in the evolution of that plan.”

JAXPORT also is expanding capabilities for handling roll-on/roll-off cargos at Blount Island and is exploring augmentation of facilities at its third cargo hub, Talleyrand Marine Terminal. The Talleyrand facility is the site of one of JAXPORT’s innovative activities – the shipping of traditionally containerized shipments via noncontainerized breakbulk means – a

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solution helping offset the global squeeze on shipping containers and containership capacity.

New services added

Early 2022 has also brought announcements of additional ocean carrier services calling JAXPORT, which provides competitive transit times to a total of nearly 150 ports in more than 70 countries.

Singapore-based Sea Lead Shipping unveiled plans to bring to Blount Island Marine Terminal its first U.S. East Coast container service, on a rotation calling four ports in China and Korea.

And Switzerland-based Mediterranean Shipping Co., already calling Jacksonville on three other services, announced it would begin calling Blount Island with a new Caribbean container service – the

Florida Gulf Feeder – connecting to major transshipment centers in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas.

In addition, the global supply chain crisis has resulted in JAXPORT receiving numerous calls by chartered container vessels bypassing congested U.S. ports.

Record volume achieved

The busiest of Florida's containerports, Jacksonville's seaport set a record for container volume in its fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2021, moving more than 1.4 million 20-foot-equivalent units, up 10 percent from fiscal 2020 and a 5 percent increase over the prior record, established in fiscal 2019.

At the same time, strong consumer demand bolstered the port's auto business to near pre-pandemic levels. More than 616,000 vehicles moved through JAXPORT during the fiscal year, a 13 percent increase over 2020 volumes.

"Achieving a container record and strong vehicle volumes while maintaining our efficiencies – all in the middle of a pandemic – speaks to the resiliency and capability of Jacksonville's maritime community," Green said.

"Our port workers, terminal operators and service providers," he said, "have shown the world that JAXPORT is a solution to the nation's port congestion problem." ❄️



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Leaders from several Northeast Florida companies take part in a First Coast Manufacturers Association front-line supervisors class at Commercial Metals Co.'s Jacksonville steel mill (below) before gathering for a photo outside the facility (above).

FCMA leading collaborative efforts to attract, retain qualified workers

As the global supply chain begins to recover from COVID-19-induced challenges, including a shortage of appropriate labor, First Coast Manufacturers Association is hastening its efforts to attract and retain qualified workers in well-paying careers at Northeast Florida facilities.

With the pandemic having accelerated turnover in manufacturing jobs, the

ongoing workforce initiatives of FCMA have never been more essential.

"COVID hit us hard, just like everybody else, with the supply chain being impacted by a shortage of skilled labor," said Mike



Mike Templeton
Templeton Manufacturing
Solutions

Templeton, owner of Jacksonville-based Templeton Manufacturing Solutions and a member of FCMA's Workforce Development Committee, observing that meeting demand for skilled labor became as challenging as he has seen in 44 years of working with the manufacturing sector. "We are now seeing a rebound."



Templeton said supply chain concerns have impacted manufacturers by making it more difficult to receive inbound materials and supplies while also posing challenges to the outbound shipment of completed products.

FCMA advances training

In 2022, FCMA entered its eighth year of offering multiple major training programs to spur advancement of Northeast Florida's manufacturing employment base. More than 700 participants from nearly 50 FCMA member companies had gone through those programs by early 2022, according to Templeton.

Current programs, as of early 2022, included:

- Front-line supervisors training, offered in conjunction with Shift 7 Leadership, with classes at local manufacturing facilities;
- A mid-level manager leadership

program, also in partnership with Shift 7 Leadership, conducted at several locations;

- Introduction to Manufacturing, in collaboration with Florida State College at Jacksonville, covering five key components – electricity, hydraulics, pneumatics, pumps and valves, and programmable logic controllers, or PLCs; and
- Most recently, in association with Jacksonville Lean Consortium, or LeanJax, a program for continuous improvement in performance, waste elimination and delivery of added value.

FCMA is working to augment the program offerings, based upon member-identified needs, with addition of training focused on such subjects as conflict resolution, leadership of a multigenerational workforce, and diversity and inclusion.

College not required

FCMA also is raising awareness that people do not need a college degree to have a good career in manufacturing, with an abundance of opportunities at First Coast companies. Engagement encompasses schools in six counties – Duval, Clay, Nassau, St. Johns, Putnam and Baker.

"We've been working hard to get to the student population in high school," Templeton said.

Once people are hired, Templeton said, the challenge is to keep them on the job, so many companies are concentrating anew on retention strategies.

"Companies," he said, "are really having two major challenges these days – getting people and keeping people."

Raising awareness

Kevin Carr, chief executive officer of FloridaMakes – a statewide, industry-led partnership operated by an alliance



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of Florida's regional manufacturing associations – said it is important to boost awareness among prospective workers that manufacturing jobs provide some of the highest average salaries in Florida.



Kevin Carr
FloridaMakes

"As we see more baby boomers leaving the manufacturing industry, we increasingly face a shortage of skilled workers, which is a productivity issue that ultimately affects our supply chain," Carr said. "We also lack the awareness we need around manufacturing and the careers that exist in manufacturing."

"We continue to work with our partners throughout the state in developing our future and current workforce through apprenticeships and other programs designed to get more people trained and involved in manufacturing," he said.

"In addition," Carr continued, "most regional manufacturer associations throughout the state have business advisers who are working with manufacturers in those regions to adopt and train on technologies that improve productivity."

Jobless rate dropping

Pauline Brannigan, a commercial account executive with Kelly Services, who leads business development efforts in metropolitan

Jacksonville and Gainesville for the global staffing solutions company's professional and industrial division, pointed out that the jobless rate in Northeast Florida has been falling substantially.

"Metro

Jacksonville is a robust, talent-driven market with a multitude of employment opportunities for talent," Brannigan said, citing a sharp drop in the area's unemployment rate to 3.2 percent from 5 percent over the last half of 2021.

"Companies need workers to move product," she said. "A shortage in available labor directly impacts the supply chain. It also drives both wages and pricing. For example, the average pay rate for a forklift operator or warehouse worker in Metro Jacksonville is from \$16 to \$19 per hour, according to Kelly's recent wage analysis for Jacksonville.

"This is up significantly from only a year ago," Brannigan said. "The increases are hard for employers to absorb,

because it isn't one person but entire shifts of employees needing to be aligned with the market."

Best hiring fits sought

Chris McCauley, founder and vice president of business development and talent acquisition at Jacksonville-based Highlander Consultants, said it is important for recruiters to know their clients and candidates well enough to make the best fits.

"It's imperative to get to know what a hiring manager's managerial style is like and what the subculture is like within their group or department," McCauley said. "You need to be able to present that information to potential candidates and paint a vivid and realistic picture for them. If you know what your candidate is looking for in a role and a company, you should be able to make a good match.

"It is a candidate-drive market right now, and companies need to make changes if they want to win and earn their talent," McCauley said. "The problem is not having enough talent to pick from."



Pauline Brannigan
Kelly Services



Chris McCauley
Highlander Consultants



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"The companies that will succeed right now and in the coming months and years are the ones who have great talent attraction and retention policies and courses of action," he said. "Good benefits that are helpful and meaningful to their staff and having a great culture are keys to success."

Logistics workforce hit hard

Dr. Robert Wood, president and chief executive officer of Florida Logistics Solutions, a Jacksonville-headquartered firm focused on the training side of the supply chain industry, said the pandemic has had numerous negative impacts, not the least of which are broad-based workforce shortages.

"The essential workforce challenges," he said, "can be outlined in a nutshell: Lack

of trained skilled drivers; lack of trained skilled manufacturing workers; lack of trained skilled positions in the maritime industry; and lack of trained skilled workers in the logistics and supply chain industry, including warehouse workers."

Wood, who holds his doctorate in public administration, said transportation industry leaders in many states, including Florida, have been actively seeking the easing of governmental age restriction on truck drivers so that qualified 18-year-olds may get behind the wheel. And, he said, companies needing drivers have increasingly been underwriting truck driver training school tuitions.

Technical colleges, in partnerships with local manufacturing, are offering scholarships to those wanting to work in manufacturing,



Dr. Robert Wood
Florida Logistics Solutions

encompassing those wanting to be welders, pipefitters, maintenance mechanics and operators of machines, including those with skills to run automated manufacturing equipment.

At the same time, Wood has been engaged with assisting

companies in identifying training needs and in securing workforce grants to help them meet such demands.

"Much of my work is in the continuous improvement areas for manufacturing and logistics industries," Wood said. "We have seen many companies implementing new strategies to cut costs, run lean and operate more efficiently with less people. Training is key to making sure their current workforce has the latest skills, and training is invaluable." ❄️

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First Coast Manufacturers Association carries on a time-honored tradition of advocating for interests of its members at the Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee.



FCMA successfully advocating on behalf of manufacturers of Northeast Florida



State Rep. Clay Yarborough

from the desk of State Rep. Clay Yarborough, Member, Florida House of Representatives, and Chairman, Duval County Legislative Delegation

First Coast Manufacturers Association continues its long history of successfully advocating for its members with state lawmakers in Tallahassee.

After many years, FCMA was able to help guide the state in adopting a permanent sales tax exemption on manufacturing equipment. More recently, through the

2021 and 2022 annual sessions of the Florida Legislature, several measures that align with FCMA's vision to strengthen and grow manufacturing in Northeast Florida were signed into law or, at the conclusion of the 2022 regular session, were pending signature of Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Here are some bill highlights:

☐ **Liability Protection for Damages Relating to COVID**

(signed by Gov. DeSantis in March 2021):

The bill provides several COVID-related liability protections for businesses, educational institutions, government entities, religious organizations and other entities. A covered entity that makes a good-faith effort to substantially comply with applicable COVID guidance is immune from civil liability from a COVID-related claim. In bringing a claim, a plaintiff must meet high thresholds in order for his or her case to be valid.

Requirements include:

- A complaint must be pled with particularity;
- At the time of filing suit, a physician's affidavit confirming the physician's belief that the plaintiff's COVID-related injury occurred because of the defendant's conduct; and
- Proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that the defendant was at least grossly negligent.

□ Liability Taxes on Remote Sales; Business Rent Tax Reduction (signed by Gov. DeSantis in April 2021):

- Requires out-of-state retailers and marketplace providers with no physical presence in Florida to collect Florida's sales tax on sales of taxable items delivered to purchasers in Florida, if the out-of-state retailer or marketplace provider exceeds \$100,000 in remote sales into Florida during the previous calendar year;
- Mitigates pandemic effects on re-employment tax rates by directing the additional sales tax collections to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund until the trust fund reaches its pre-pandemic balance (approximately \$4 billion); and
- Reduces the business rent tax rate to 2 percent from 5.5 percent when the trust fund reaches its pre-pandemic balance.

□ Educational Opportunities Leading to Employment (signed by Gov. DeSantis in June 2021):

- Increases access to post-secondary education and workforce readiness, enhancing the pool of qualified labor; and
- If a student 18 years of age or younger who is providing unpaid services through a work-based learning opportunity (for example, a pre-apprenticeship), workers compensation insurance for that student can be reimbursed to the employer providing the opportunity

through the local school district and/or Florida College System institutions.

□ Workforce-Related Programs and Services (signed by Gov. DeSantis in June 2021):

- Creates an online opportunity portal to provide Floridians access to available state, federal and local services and evaluative tools to determine short-term employability and long-term self-sufficiency. In addition, the portal should provide broader access to education and training options, real-time labor market information, career planning and career services tools, and other support available for workforce training and education linked to middle- and high-wage in-demand jobs;
- Requires local workforce development boards to be assigned a letter grade, which must be made public, based on improvement of participant long-term self-sufficiency and return on investment; and
- Charges the Labor Market Estimating Conference as the entity responsible for determining Florida's real-time supply and demand in the labor market.

□ Local Business Protection Act (advanced for gubernatorial signature in March 2022, to take effect upon becoming law):

- Creates a process through which a private, for-profit business can recover business damages related to local government action in specified circumstances.

□ Taxation (advanced for gubernatorial signature in March 2022, to take effect July 1, 2022), including several provisions related to sales tax:

- A 14-day "Back-to-School" tax holiday in July and August 2022 for certain clothing, school supplies, learning aids and puzzles, and personal computers;

- A 14-day "Disaster Preparedness" tax holiday in May and June 2022 for specified disaster preparedness supplies for families and their pets;
- A seven-day "Freedom Week" tax holiday in July 2022 for specified recreational items and activities;
- A seven-day "Tool Time" tax holiday in September 2022 for tools and equipment needed in skilled trades;
- A two-year exemption for impact-resistant windows, doors and garage doors for residential properties;
- An exemption on admissions to Formula One Grand Prix races, World Cup matches and Daytona 500 events;
- An exemption for machinery and equipment used in the production of green hydrogen; and
- Increasing to \$5,000 from \$500 the value of property exempt from ad valorem taxation for residents who are widows, widowers, blind or totally and permanently disabled.

FCMA's Government Relations Committee is charged with providing support for all of the organization's advocacy endeavors. The committee actively meets with elected officials throughout the entire First Coast region to stay abreast of issues that could affect FCMA members.

During election years, the committee also conducts candidate interviews and makes recommendations to the FCMA board of directors on potential political action committee (PAC) endorsements – a rewarding experience in which all members are encouraged to participate.

FCMA Government Relations Committee meetings are typically held the second Tuesday of each month, from noon to 1 p.m., at FCMA's Jacksonville offices, offering opportunities to network with other members, as well as to get to know local and state elected officials. All FCMA members are welcome to attend. ❄️

First Coast Manufacturers growing presence while producing vast array of vital goods

Northeast Florida's First Coast is home to more than 1,100 manufacturing companies, providing more than 34,000 jobs while generating almost 15 percent of the area's total gross regional product.

"The Jacksonville region continues to be a top destination for manufacturers looking to invest and expand in the U.S. Southeast," said Aaron Bowman, senior vice president of business development of JAXUSA Partnership, a private, not-for-profit division of JAX Chamber, serving as the regional economic development initiative encompassing the seven counties of Northeast Florida.

In the past year, seven advanced manufacturing projects were announced in Northeast Florida, with these endeavors projected to create more than 850 new jobs and attract more than \$500 million in capital investment, Bowman noted.

Large investments by such companies as Boeing and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care are expanding their presences in the community and helping ensure they will maintain First Coast operations for decades to come.

"As the westernmost location on the East Coast with access to rail, air, ports and highways, the First Coast offers companies same-day access to more than 98 million



Aaron Bowman, senior vice president of business development of JAXUSA Partnership, sees the First Coast continuing to attract increasing investments by manufacturers of a wide spectrum of products.

consumers," Bowman said. "Construction costs remain 15 percent lower than the national average, and the cost to lease industrial space is also below most major U.S. metropolitan areas."

Manufacturing in the region is well-positioned to keep growing, Bowman said. Northeast Florida is home to Cecil Commerce Center, the largest aviation industrial park in the Southeast, and Crawford Diamond Industrial Park, with 500 shovel-ready acres

for industrial use.

Innovators are making their way to Jacksonville, with Redwire Space headquartered in Jacksonville and electric vehicle maker Cenntro Automotive Corp. choosing Jacksonville for its first U.S. manufacturing facility.

The list of products made in Northeast Florida includes such diverse goods as acoustical wood ceilings, aerospace systems, beer, fragrance ingredients, high-performance wire and cable, medical devices, plastic packaging,

sewer-cleaning machines, steel structures and writing instruments.

Here, in alphabetical order, are brief profiles of a few of the hundreds of diverse members of the First Coast Manufacturers Association that collectively make Northeast Florida a perfect place to do business:

Anheuser-Busch

America's longstanding leading brewer, Anheuser-Busch produces more than a dozen brands of beer at its 1,037,000-square foot brewery facility at 111 Busch Drive in Jacksonville, serving consumers in Florida, South Georgia, South Alabama, Southeast Mississippi and the Carolinas.

Opened in 1969, the Jacksonville brewery, located on a 205-acre site, ships out 235 truckloads of product on a typical weekday, with 700 employees under the supervision of Craig Tomeo as general manager and Jeff Jenkins as brewmaster.

Brands produced at Anheuser-Busch's



For more than half a century, Anheuser-Busch has been producing beer at its brewery at 111 Busch Drive in Jacksonville.

Jacksonville site include Budweiser, Bud Light, Busch, Busch Light, Michelob Light, Michelob AmberBock, Michelob ULTRA, Natural Light, Natural Ice, Shocktop, Landshark, Rolling Rock and Stella Artois, with the Stella Artois brand added in 2021.

For more than 160 years, Anheuser-Busch, headquartered in St. Louis, has carried on a legacy of brewing great-tasting, high-quality beers that have satisfied beer drinkers for generations. Today, the company owns and operates more than 120 facilities, including breweries, wholesaler distribution centers, agricultural facilities and packaging plants, with a total of more than 19,000 colleagues across the United States. From responsible drinking programs and emergency drinking water donations to industry-leading sustainability efforts, Anheuser-Busch is guided by an unwavering commitment to supporting

the communities it calls home.

IFF Chemical Holdings Inc.

A partner in the Jacksonville community for more than 80 years and a founding member of the First Coast Manufacturers Association, IFF Chemical Holdings Inc. plays a vital role in global food, beverage, beauty, household, personal care and pharmaceutical supply chains.

With a passionate workforce of more than 90 employees, the IFF Jacksonville facility on Lane Avenue manufactures ingredients found in a broad spectrum of products found on grocery store aisles,



IFF Jacksonville's Lane Avenue plant manufactures fragrance ingredients found in a broad spectrum of consumer products, including soaps and detergents.

from soaps and detergents to shampoos and conditioners to deodorants and shaving creams

IFF – short for International Flavors & Fragrances – utilizes natural raw materials from renewable sources, such as pine trees, and relies solely upon renewable electricity by supporting local solar energy.

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IFF is recognized as an innovative global leader in environmental, social and governance performance, underscored by the company's longstanding commitment to sustainability.

Through application of a pioneering circular design approach to the world of scent creation, IFF embraces closed-loop systems in which materials are constantly reused and waste becomes a resource. After delivering positive outcomes, ingredients are designed to biodegrade back into the ecosystem, thus completing the biological cycle of a circular economy model that safeguards well-being of consumers, health of planet Earth and integrity of business.

Medtronic

Medtronic is the leading global



Medtronic's Jacksonville site, at 6743 Southpoint Drive North, employs about 900 workers in development and manufacture of innovative healthcare solutions.

healthcare company boldly attacking the most challenging health problems by searching out and finding solutions. The company's mission – to alleviate pain, restore health and extend life – unites a global team of 90,000-plus passionate people across 150 countries.

Medtronic's technologies and therapies treat 70 health conditions and include

cardiac devices, surgical robotics, insulin pumps, surgical tools, patient monitoring systems and more. Powered by diverse knowledge, insatiable curiosity and desire to help all those who need it, Medtronic delivers innovative technologies that transform the lives of two people every second, every hour, every day.

The Jacksonville site not only serves as the global headquarters for Medtronic's Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) operating unit but also manufactures solutions for diagnosis and treatment of chronic diseases and disorders of the ear, nose and throat; surgical devices and implantable products for treatment of cranial and spinal conditions; and advanced navigation and imaging solutions used in operating rooms.

Originally operating as Xomed Surgical Products before being acquired by Medtronic

2021 MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

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in 1999, the Jacksonville site expanded its campus footprint in 2012 with a new 75,000-square-foot building, including two state-of-the-industry surgical skills laboratories. The site now totals 210,000 square feet, with about 900 on-site employees.

Pilot Corporation of America

Established in the United States in 1972, Pilot Corporation of America is a premier manufacturer of quality writing instruments. Its parent company, Tokyo, Japan-headquartered Pilot Corp., founded in 1918, is the oldest and largest writing instrument manufacturer in Asia.

Pilot's diverse line of pens has been created in a culture that has revered the art of writing for more than 1,000 years. Namiki, Pilot's luxury line of pens, consists of handmade works of art, recognized globally for beauty, craftsmanship and excellent writing capabilities. This heritage of art, design and quality can be seen throughout Pilot's entire range of product offerings, from everyday pens – G2, FriXion, Precise and Acroball – to fine writing instruments – Explorer, Vanishing Point and Pilot MR.

Pilot's ongoing growth has been driven by consistent development of highly innovative products that deliver unsurpassed quality and an exceptional writing experience. Pilot's spirit of innovation has always focused on serving consumers' unmet writing needs and making writing a pleasure with exceptionally designed, smooth-writing pens. In a digital age in which immediacy has been gained but

intimacy lost, Pilot facilitates self-expression effortlessly while providing connection through the written word.

The company's facility on Regent Boulevard in Jacksonville employs more than 250 people.

Veritas Steel

Recognized by First Coast Manufacturers Association as 2021 Manufacturer of the Year, Veritas Steel operates a steel fabrication and assembly plant on a 120-acre site in Palatka, in Putnam County, about 50 miles south of downtown Jacksonville. The facility is located adjacent to the St. Johns River, providing direct water access for receiving and shipping materials.

With 120 employees, the Palatka plant houses all of the necessary equipment for complex bridge and girder fabrication, with separate buildings for steel fabrication and assembly, as well as an advanced paint facility.

Veritas Steel makes use of state-of-the-art computer numerical control (CNC) equipment to annually fabricate a total of more than 60,000 tons of structural steel at its three U.S. plants. In addition to the Palatka location, the company has fabrication facilities in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and Wausau, Wisconsin. An Atlas



The Veritas Steel plant in Palatka is located on a 120-acre site with direct access to the St. Johns River.

Holdings company, Veritas Steel maintains its corporate headquarters in Lisle, Illinois.

Veritas Steel has more than 100 years of experience in the steel bridge industry and holds multiple certifications from the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC). Committed to "Building Tomorrow's Infrastructure," Veritas Steel provides customers with dependable quality and best-in-class start-to-finish project management, ensuring the consistent meeting of schedules and budgets. ❄️



Pilot Corporation of America's Jacksonville manufacturing facility, located at 3855 Regent Blvd., produces a diverse range of quality writing instruments.



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First Coast is home to diverse roster of advanced manufacturing companies

Leading employers of the First Coast include a diverse roster of advanced manufacturing companies. Here is a listing of such manufacturers with 100 or more employees, as of March 2022, according to figures from JAXUSA Partnership (a private, not-for-profit division of JAX Chamber) and First Coast Manufacturers Association:

Company	Number of employees	Company	Number of employees
Fleet Readiness Center Southeast.....	4,200	Gerdau Ameristeel.....	300
Johnson & Johnson Vision.....	1,800	Pepsi Beverage Co.....	300
Flightstar Aircraft Services	1,300	Vac-Con	300
Northrop Grumman	1,200	Greencore Group.....	280
Georgia Pacific Corp.	1,000	Kaman Aerospace	280
Medtronic.....	900	Pilot Pen	250
Anheuser-Busch	700	SEMCO Southeastern Materials	250
BAE Systems Southeast.....	650	Bacardi Bottling Corp.	230
Carlisle Interconnect Technologies	650	Metal Container Corp.....	230
Unison Industries	600	Boston Whaler.....	200
Ring Power	545	Maxwell House.....	200
Colomer USA.....	500	Redwire Space.....	190
Swisher.....	500	Keurig Dr Pepper	160
WestRock	460	Collins Aerospace.....	150
Coca-Cola Refreshments	450	Rayonier.....	150
Beaver Street Fisheries.....	425	Aviation Systems Engineering Co.	140
Baker Hughes, a GE Company	400	Saft America.....	120
Boeing	400	Veritas Steel	120
Southeastern Toyota Distributors	400	Ideal Aluminum	115
Hydro Extrusions North America	355	Avmax.....	100
Safariland.....	350	Continental Building Products	100
Vulcan Materials Co.	350	Embraer.....	100
Commercial Metals Co.....	300		

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First Coast manufacturing companies offering high-wage job opportunities

Northeast Florida manufacturers offer a wide variety of high-wage employment opportunities. The information below, based upon First Coast Manufacturers Association's 2021 wage and benefit survey, provides a representative snapshot of real job titles and commensurate hourly wages being paid by companies of the First Coast:

Manufacturing sector

Plant manager \$25.00 - \$120.19

Directly responsible for overall plant operation.

Printing/press operator \$13.26 - \$19.45

Prints product labels and/or other packaging components using either multicolor or offset printing process.

Forklift operator \$13.00 - \$25.89

Operates gasoline-, electric- or diesel-powered industrial forklifts. May include pallet jack operators.

Process operator \$12.00 - \$36.00

Monitors and operates plant process equipment. May include scheduling, organizing and controlling preparation of materials going into process.

Machine operator, entry level \$12.00 - \$27.00

Operates and tends equipment or machinery to perform product assembly or fabrication.

Sanitation worker \$12.00 - \$18.96

Disassembles, sanitizes and reassembles equipment.

Assembler \$10.00 - \$37.00

Assembles or fits together parts to form completed units or subassemblies. May work at bench or conveyor line or on facility floor. Does not perform precision work.

General production worker, nonspecific \$10.00 - \$26.12

Relatively unskilled employee, usually entry level. May be laborer, materials mover, painter or helper.

Janitor \$10.00 - \$25.00

Performs routine janitorial duties. May include working in production area.

Trades sector

Metal fabrication worker \$15.00 - \$30.00

Fabricates, assembles, installs and repairs sheet and other metal products and equipment.

Electrician \$14.23 - \$43.33

Installs, maintains and repairs electrical wiring, equipment and fixtures.

Welder / cutter / pipefitter \$14.23 - \$37.00

Uses hand welding and flame cutting equipment to weld together, cut, trim or scarf metal components.

Machinist \$14.23 - \$36.80

Sets up and operates machine tools. Fits and assembles parts. Makes or repairs metal parts, mechanisms, tools or machines.

Maintenance mechanic \$13.00 - \$42.30

Repairs and maintains operating condition of industrial production and processing machinery.

Technical sector

Plant engineer \$33.65 - \$93.66

Plans, organizes and directs engineering activities concerning design, cost, construction, installation and maintenance of equipment, machinery and properties in industrial facility.

CAD draftsman \$18.03 - \$40.87

Uses computer-aided design (CAD) equipment to provide support to designers by preparing routine layouts, detailed drawings, sketches and diagrams, with details to include all views and dimensions necessary for manufacturing. Requires solid understanding of drafting techniques and familiarity with engineering technology. May also include computer graphics, layout, typesetting and/or form creation.

Lab technician \$15.00 - \$37.25

Works in laboratory on projects and experiments relating to research and development, process control and problem analysis.

Engineering technician \$14.00 - \$54.10

Assists degreed engineers with analysis, collection, recommendations and/or project installation. May be degreed.

Quality assurance inspector \$12.00 - \$45.09

Performs inspection, testing and grading of parts, products and equipment for defects or deviation from specifications.

Administrative sector

Controller / chief financial officer \$22.00 - \$148.63

Top financial officer for business unit.

Computer analyst \$22.00 - \$40.48

Designs, programs and maintains complete applications and software. Provides software and operational support to operating departments. May include both mainframe and personal computer equipment and/or geographical information system (GIS) database management.

Purchasing manager \$21.65 - \$80.00

Plans, organizes, directs and controls activities of buyers, purchasing agents and other purchasing employees.

Human resources manager \$19.23 - \$148.00

Responsible for entire human resources department at facility.

Administrative/clerical support \$12.12 - \$48.97

May perform one or any combination of following duties: Copying, collating, filing, answering phone calls, compiling data, processing mail and general support functions.

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