

## Expanding Community Dialogue

- ✓ Hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual **TeCMEN Industry Day** featuring a keynote presentation by Brigadier General Jeff Geraghty, Commander, 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing, an expo hall, panels, speed matchmaking and a workshop spotlighting Florida's manufacturing sector.
- ✓ Hosted One Okaloosa Business Roundtable Events – “**Assessing the Big Three: Growth, Inflation and Labor Markets**” featuring David Altig, Executive Vice President and Chief Economic Adviser, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Center in March and **State of Florida Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis** in September.
- ✓ Presented professional development webinars – “**Bridging the Gap: A Leader's Journey from Thinking to Knowing**” in May and “**Solutions to Impact Team Confidence**” in September.

## Supporting Entrepreneurs and Existing Industries

- ✓ Debuted third edition of Startup Okaloosa **Veteran Entrepreneur Video Series** designed to share best practices and key lessons from successful local veteran entrepreneurs. Veterans featured during 2024 included Shane Weddle (FastSigns), Alex Barthe' (UPS Stores, Courthouse Suites) and Michael Kee and Nathan Vannatter (Props Craft Brewery).
- ✓ Partnered with Florida Small Business Development Center and the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce to host workshop focused on “**Doing Business with Local Government**” in February.
- ✓ Utilized One Okaloosa's Business Expansion Support Team (BEST) to conduct **in-person surveys / interviews with 26 local businesses** operating in the aerospace, defense, engineering, manufacturing and technology sectors. Compiled a summary report of findings that was shared with local county and municipal elected officials.

## Supporting Workforce and Talent Development

- ✓ Partnered with CareerSource Okaloosa Walton and the Okaloosa County School District to host **20 students and teachers** for an **Educate the Educator Plus One** event in north Okaloosa County in April. The event included overviews and tours with the City of Crestview, ConexSmart, North Okaloosa Medical Center and the Crestview Area Chamber of Commerce.
- ✓ Partnered with the HSU Educational Foundation, the Okaloosa County School District and Rocky Bayou Christian School to host **33 area students, teachers and administrators** for interface with companies attending the TeCMEN Industry Day.

## Strengthening the Military Mission

- ✓ Developed a comprehensive **legislative position paper** speaking to key Federal funding and policy priorities and conducted issues briefings with Pentagon officials and key members of Congress.
- ✓ Assisted Eglin Air Force Base with hosting an Industry Day to solicit development interest for a **98 acre Enhanced Use Lease (EUL)** parcel located adjacent to the University of Florida Research Engineering & Education Facility (REEF).
- ✓ Utilized One Okaloosa EDC's **Tri-County Community Partnership Initiative (TCPI)** as a collaborative forum for incubating community / military partnership projects in three focal areas including **Infrastructure, Quality of Life and Education & Training**.
- ✓ Undertook a TCPI Strategic Planning process in September culminating in recommendations for new and refocused working groups.

## Enhancing Okaloosa's Competitiveness

- ✓ Assembled a committee comprised of representatives from local business support organizations to promote the importance of supporting a **county-wide referendum** seeking renewal of Okaloosa County's **Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption**, resulting in the measure passing with **70% support** during the November 5 General Election.
- ✓ Assisted the Okaloosa County School District with identifying a suitable location and pursuing Triumph Gulf Coast grant funding to support the establishment of a **northern campus of Okaloosa Technical College** directly adjacent to the Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview.

## Facilitating New Jobs and Investment

- ✓ Assisted **R4 Integration** with expedited permitting efforts for their new 30,000 SF Fort Walton Beach facility - a projected \$12 million capital investment that will support **30 additional jobs** with an average annual salary in excess of \$85,000.
- ✓ Assisted **Precision Measurement, Inc.** with efforts to expand into the law enforcement vehicle calibration market and supported their efforts to secure a **\$509,000 grant award** from the UWF Industry Resilience & Diversification Fund (IRDF).