

Author and Motivational Speaker Simon Sinek wrote in his bestselling book, "Start With Why," that most companies can tell you what they do. A good percentage of those can even tell you how they do it. Most neglect to even mention their why and the majority of them don't even know why they do what they do. What separates the great companies from the rest is that they understand the core belief of their business and that is why they exist.

This is why, when we at the Chamber are asked why we don't just focus on business and jobs, we answer this way: Our work extends beyond the traditional realm of business and jobs because we know that the Chamber is at its best when we serve our members as a collaborative force and regional convener among business, government, education, nonprofits and the community at large.

We see evidence of this in the outcomes of the 2019 legislative session – which we spent focused on a spectrum of community priorities provided to us by our members and partners across the region, including:

- Small business-supporting reductions in costs and taxes, improvements to our state's legal climate and sales-tax holidays that boost consumer spending
- Full funding for Enterprise Florida and the preservation of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund and Visit Florida
- Increased opportunities for Florida students through training, career and technical education and apprenticeship programs in Florida
- A \$75+ million increase in Sadowski Trust funds designated to meet their intended purpose of supporting affordable housing solutions
- Measures to reduce healthcare costs for patients and providers, and empower hospitals and healthcare facilities to make market-driven expansion decisions

These advancements span a spectrum of areas, and all of them increase Greater Gainesville's capacity for business growth and job creation.

Throughout the rest of 2019, we will be winding down our current five-year economic development strategy with major successes to report, including the creation of over 12,600 jobs with nearly half of them in target industries and over \$1 billion in regional investment. As we prepare to launch our community's next five-year plan -- an economic and community development strategy -- these successes underscore our work across a spectrum of policy areas as necessary to support the economic opportunity and advancement of the entire community.

Jobs, both new and retained, will continue to serve as an indicator of our success. But to characterize jobs as the only indicator of our success does not recognize our organization for what it truly is: inextricably woven, over 95 years – as both people and businesses – into the fabric of a region that serves as the retail, education, healthcare and employment hub for over one million people in 11 counties and beyond.

We are the Greater Gainesville Chamber. We love our community. We will continue to explore, support and advance policies and funding requests that empower us to create a stronger region and a better life, together.

# Because Quality of Life Begins with a Job, and Grows with Economic Opportunity

- Fully fund Enterprise Florida and the Florida Job Growth Fund
- Fully fund Visit Florida
- Protect Florida's ability to remain an income tax-free state
- · Protect the things that make us unique, such as our environment, arts and culture
- Support measures that advance equity for all people in the region

# Because Investment in Rural Communities Connects People to Jobs, Educaton, Healthcare and More

- Increase resources to address the unique needs of designated rural communities and municipalities operating in urban counties
- · Advance policies and projects that better connect rural communities to state highways and metropolitan areas

## Because Investment in Transportation & Infrastructure is Preparing for the Future

- Continue to increase market certainty to advance the use of autonomous vehicles
- Support increased road capacity and safety for pedestrians, motor vehicle operators and users of alternative forms of transportation
- Support the continuation of septic to sewer conversation programs and other programs that reduce harm to water quality.

# **Because Access to Housing Empowers Businesses and People**

- Increase access to housing for teachers, first responders, healthcare workers and other critical members
  of the workforce
- · Clarify existing policies to support market-driven solutions and empower job creators
- Fully dedicate Sadowski Trust funds to address affordable housing needs
- · Increase access to financial education and tax counseling and preparation assistance
- · Increase opportunities for upward mobility to empower more citizens to afford housing

# Because Healthy People and Healthcare Innovation are Good for Communities and Businesses

- · Support moving the rate enhancement funding to the Base Rate and ensure dollars follow the patients
- · Advance reimbursement for hospitals based on who they treat, not who they are
- · Support healthcare providers' ability to expand or make changes to existing capacity
- Advance healthcare reimbursement that acknowledges the special roles that safety net hospitals play in providing care to Floridians
- Support innovative healthcare solutions that empower people with life skills, jobs and community engagement opportunities

### **Because Talent is the Lifeblood of Businesses**

- Support efforts to increase awareness of, and access to, career and technical education programs in key and/or critical industries, such as: healthcare; manufacturing; life sciences; information technology; logistics & supply chain; building, construction and engineering; agricultural sciences and technology; and others
- · Support funding for workforce training programs that offer businesses the opportunity to provide more jobs

### Because Education Levels the Playing Field and Fosters Success in People and Businesses

- Support the University of Florida's goals to recruit and retain researchers and teachers, and to become a Top-5 public university
- Support Santa Fe College's goals to expand the downtown Blount Center and remain a leading state college
- Hold the current Required Local Effort (RLE) constant to allow school funding to benefit from increasing property values rather than imposing the roll-back rate
- Increase the availability of quality early learning opportunities for all residents

# our community by the numbers

- Since 2015, more than 12,600 jobs have been created in Greater Gainesville, with nearly half created in target industries including Human Life Sciences, Software/IT, Agricultural and Life Sciences, Advanced Materials and Advanced Logistics.
- The Greater Gainsville Chamber's open economic development projects total more than 1,000 jobs and over \$250M in capital investment.
- The University of Florida moved up a spot to No. 7 in the nation this year, and spent \$865M on research in 2018. Since 2017, UF has hired 230 new faculty members who have brought more than \$246M in research funds to the University of Florida for projects on which they serve as principal investigator or mentor—or via funds that were transferred from their previous institution.
- Santa Fe College's \$36.4M Blount Center will create jobs, investment and education opportunities in an area where it is most needed.
- Two nationally-ranked health centers leading in more than 100 specialty and subspecialty areas employ over 24,000 people in Greater Gainesville.
- CareerSource North Central Florida has brought over **\$31M** in direct federal funding to our region's economy since 2011.
- Nearly one-tenth of Florida Job Growth Grant funds were awarded in Alachua County in 2018-2019.
- Sadowski Trust Funds dedicated to helping Floridians access affordable housing increased by more than \$75M in 2019.
- More than 57% of Alachua County Citizens age 25 and older hold only a high-school diploma or less. More career & technical education opportunities would widen the path to higher wages for the 23% of Alachua County citizens who live in poverty.