

Greater Fort Lauderdale

STATE OF TECH REPORT

by South Florida TechGateway

WORK IN THE CLOUD.
LIVE IN THE SUN.™



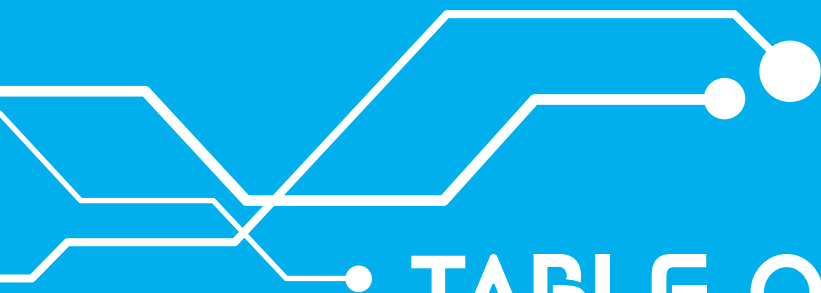


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CEO Council



BROWARD COLLEGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENCE



LETTER FROM THE TECHGATEWAY CHAIR AND FACILITATOR



BY DAVID CODDINGTON & BEN WESLEY

For generations, Greater Fort Lauderdale's role as part of a thriving technology hub was one of the best-kept secrets outside of South Florida. Ground-breaking, life-changing innovations like the personal computer, the smartphone, even the networks that connect people and organizations across town and around the globe were created and built in South Florida.

It was like some guarded secret – to all but those in the tech and innovation sectors.

Now, the word is out. Greater Fort Lauderdale's innovative, collaborative and creative technology and venture capital ecosystem continues to lure startups to mature companies alike that are disrupting their industries from a destination making its name on the global tech scene.

The brands born or raised in and around Greater Fort Lauderdale are well-known well beyond South Florida. From health-tech (Mako Surgical / Stryker), fintech (TradeStation), HR-tech (UKG), travel-tech (JetBlue Travel Products), edu-tech (Nearpod) and even "pet-tech" (Chewy), the names are common in C-suites and households alike.

Now, it's time to put some context to the broader story of how Greater Fort Lauderdale's tech, innovation, education and investment sectors exist at the epicenter of dramatic change.

Welcome to the State of Technology in Greater Fort Lauderdale Report, presented by South Florida TechGateway. This report has been compiled from dozens of discussions with the people changing our world - the CEOs and CTOs, VCs and visionaries, and educators, mentors and innovators from across Greater Fort Lauderdale.

The reporting is supported by statistics and research that reveal what locals have known for years: South Florida is a thriving and growing technology market.

Greater Fort Lauderdale is at the nexus of a connected and collaborative tech ecosystem. Today, Florida leads the Southeast in high-tech employment, with South Florida leading the state. The state boasts the nation's third-highest number of tech businesses.

To be sure, the COVID-19 pandemic forced dramatic change upon society and made employers and employees alike rethink the very nature of work. It accelerated the long-held notion that “work is a thing, not a place.”

“Thousands of new arrivals have discovered that they can ‘Work in the Cloud, Live in the Sun.’™” The pandemic infused this region with executives, entrepreneurs, skilled IT talent, investors and others untethered from their traditional offices or markets, who realized they could literally work from anywhere.”

– DAVID CODDINGTON

Senior Vice President Business Development, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance and South Florida TechGateway Facilitator

Coincidentally, using the latest versions of technology birthed here decades ago by Citrix, they no longer were stuck in markets that froze in the winter, were jammed in relentless traffic, or taxed them at rates sometimes double digits above a state with no personal income tax.

As the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance evangelizes, life here is “Life. Less taxing.” Arrivals find a progressive, diverse and inclusive community for Everyone Under the Sun, with a higher quality of life, and lower cost of living, in a region and state known for its resilience. Even before the arrival of this burgeoning “remote” workforce, the region was seeing billions in investor and infrastructure dollars. It’s made South Florida stronger and more welcoming for all.

“Businesses cannot afford downtime. Even when other states suffered weather-related shutdowns, FPL and utility companies here have invested billions and earned acclaim for a hardened and intelligent smart-grid infrastructure built for businesses and residents alike.”

– BEN WESLEY

External Affairs Manager at Florida Power & Light and South Florida TechGateway Chair

“Collaborative” is taken to heart in Greater Fort Lauderdale. This State of Technology in Greater Fort Lauderdale Report is powered by partners who share the mission of raising the awareness of the community’s long-standing status as a tech “megaregion.” We’d like to thank report partners the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance CEO Council, the Broward Workshop, NSU Florida, Florida Power & Light, Kaufman Rossin, Gunster, Broward College Entrepreneurial Experience, Wells Fargo and Las Olas Venture Capital.

If you know of a rising technology company in or considering South Florida as its home, and whose innovation is destined to change the market, tell us. We all know that those disruptive innovations and investment opportunities need sun to shine. Now and in the future, we hope this report will share how exciting it is to “Work in the Cloud. Live in the Sun.™”



DAVID CODDINGTON

LEED AP, is Senior Vice President of Business Development, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance and Facilitator of The South Florida TechGateway



BEN WESLEY

External Affairs Manager at Florida Power & Light and Chair of TechGateway.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



BY JEFF ZBAR

If you're reading this article on your smartphone, your personal computer or over your office's connected network, you can thank the Greater Fort Lauderdale and South Florida IT ecosystem.

The first smartphone - nicknamed "Simon" - was created in the Plantation, Florida laboratories of wireless pioneer Motorola, along with IBM in Boca Raton and BellSouth Technologies. The first IBM PC was developed in 1981, also at the same campus in South Florida.

Former IBM tech executive Ed Iacobucci, who worked on the OS2 project, left Big Blue and went on to found Fort Lauderdale-based Citrix Systems. The company's server, application and desktop virtualization, networking and cloud computing technologies during the pandemic empowered countless millions to work from places other than the traditional office.

And connecting the region to the globe is the NAP of the Americas. The massive South Florida-based "Network Access Point" is one of the world's largest Internet exchange points and data centers.

Though Greater Fort Lauderdale's technology tale stretches back generations, its story does not get told much outside of South Florida. TechGateway's State of Technology Report seeks to do that, exploring today's entrepreneurs, innovators, investors, educators and supporting professions

that make the region home to thousands of tech firms and tech-preneurs.

'FEEL GOOD FACTOR'

The Florida tech sector is a \$77.7 billion powerhouse, with some \$23.2 billion of that generated from South Florida, notes the 2021 Cyberstates report by CompTIA. Amid the pandemic, thousands of new residents were freed from their traditional offices and chose warmer, more welcoming and less costly climates. Countless tech execs and IT talent chose Greater Fort Lauderdale, which today employs more than 150,000 tech workers.

For employers scouting reasons to relocate to South Florida, amenities are many. The generally low cost of living and lack of any state or local personal income tax effectively gives labor a significant pay raise. Collaborative, progressive, diverse and inclusive, the *Financial Times* called these attributes "Florida's feelgood factor."

Beyond the NAP of the Americas, companies looking for global connectivity will find 10 international, private and executive airports with more than 2,000 scheduled flights daily. When Reef Technology, whose applications transform parking lots into neighborhood delivery hubs for local businesses, took more than 47,000 square feet in

Greater Fort Lauderdale, it availed itself of a highway network that one logistics executive has said puts any trucker one stoplight from California.

TECH SAVVY & TALENT RICH

The region is talent rich. Stretching 125 miles along the Atlantic coast, the Miami-Dade, Broward (Greater Fort Lauderdale) and Palm Beach county MSA's population of over six million people includes a labor pool of more than two million speaking around 90 languages. Some 35 colleges and universities offer programs from certificates to doctoral degrees. Demand for high-skilled tech talent saw a 29% surge in IT job listings across South Florida between the first and second quarters of 2021, noted a CompTIA analysis of Burning Glass Technologies Labor Insights data.

In fact, with a 15.4% surge in tech job growth, South Florida (the Miami-Fort Lauderdale DMA) beat out such markets as Houston, Dallas, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Denver for attracting tech talent, notes *Axios*.

Entrepreneurs are at home in South Florida. Some 457,000 workers, or 15.6% of the workforce, are self-employed. That figure outpaces the 10.1% national average.

Talent can be a highly alluring attribute. After its \$11 billion merger with Kronos, locally-born Ultimate Software could have moved anywhere. Instead, they stayed put. Says UKG Chief Technology Officer John Machado, "Diversity of talent is a key positive differentiator for UKG. Having a vast diverse representation of talent to work with is a huge positive."

They're in good company. Some 200 corporate, regional and international companies call Greater Fort Lauderdale home for their headquarters or regional offices. Local companies are high performers. Ten regional companies found top-100 spots on the 2020 Inc. 5000 list, tallying three-year growth rates above 3,400%. South Florida hits above its weight, with 31 companies among the 57 companies statewide in the top 500.

Investors are taking note. Billions in venture capital and private equity have been funneled into tech firms. In 2020, 92.4% of investment, was in IT firms, more

FLORIDA CAPITAL INVESTMENT RANKING WITHIN 18-MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2021

More than

\$408B

venture capital* invested in the U.S. in the 18-months ending June 30, 2021.

Florida ranked

6th

in the U.S. for venture capital investments with \$10.68 billion invested across 690 deals.

In 2020, Florida ranked

5th

with nearly \$6.3 billion invested thanks to an increase of private equity growth of nearly \$3 billion or 256% year over year.

FLORIDA METRO RANKING WITHIN 18-MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2021

1st

State metro ranking for the South Florida tri-county region (Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties).

\$7.27B

invested in region, or 68% of total invested in Florida. South Florida's capital investment* is 5.9 times higher than Tampa, the second largest metro in the state.

**Venture Capital including PE growth and equity crowdfunding*

Source: Pitchbook Data, Inc., GFLA research (January 2020 to June 2021)



Hotwire Communications server room in Fort Lauderdale

“ Leaders in the Greater Fort Lauderdale business community are committed to supporting our technology companies and growing the infrastructure they will need in the future as they locate and expand here.”



— RICHARD BERKOWITZ, JD, CPA
Founder and Executive Chairman,
Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors +
CPAs, Chair, Technology
Committee, Broward Workshop

than 13 percentage points higher than in 2018, to 79.35%.

From 2018 to June 2021, 300 companies headquartered in Broward County received venture capital or private equity funding from 502 investors.

VARIETY IN TECH

The diversity of tech sectors defies comparison. Many probably are part of daily life, even if people don't realize it. Citrix, SiriusXM satellite radio, and mixed reality developer Magic Leap are here. Ford Engineering is developing its “connected cars” initiative with technologists who previously designed BlackBerry phones and took mobile tech to the masses.

Pet supply ecommerce supplier Chewy Inc. remained here after its \$3.3 billion acquisition by PetSmart. Soon thereafter, Chewy's 36-year-old founder, Ryan Cohen, executed a takeover of GameStop, 2021's hottest tech stock resulting from Robinhood's investment guidance, and brought the

gaming retailer to the county.

Seeing the growth of the South Florida tech ecosystem, global cloud-based IT provider Amazon Web Services is partnering with area companies to deliver computing, storage, database, analytics, networking, machine learning and AI, mobile, developer tools, IoT, security, enterprise applications, and a host of other applications.

Success here adds up to the billions. Beyond the UKG and Chewy billion-dollar deals, instructional software provider Nearpod was acquired this spring for \$650 million in cash. e-Builder, a pioneer in cloud-based construction management software, was acquired by Trimble for \$500 million and has since launched a \$200 million venture fund.

The money keeps flowing across all sectors. Shipping solutions firm Shipmonk signed two deals for \$65 million in 2021, which followed \$290 million in funding the year prior. Robotic surgical device company Memic, whose chairman Maurice R. Ferré co-founded, along with Rony Abovitz (who then founded Magic Leap) and sold MAKO Surgical to Stryker Corporation, scored a \$96 million round earlier this year; the company landed another \$360 million through a SPAC merger in August. Telehealth provider MD Live raised \$75 million before being acquired by Cigna earlier this year.

There's something in South Florida's sun, sand, surf and innovation ecosystem that creates fertile grounds for tech entrepreneurs. Though news to many, long-time executives are eager to network, collaborate and share success with newcomers.

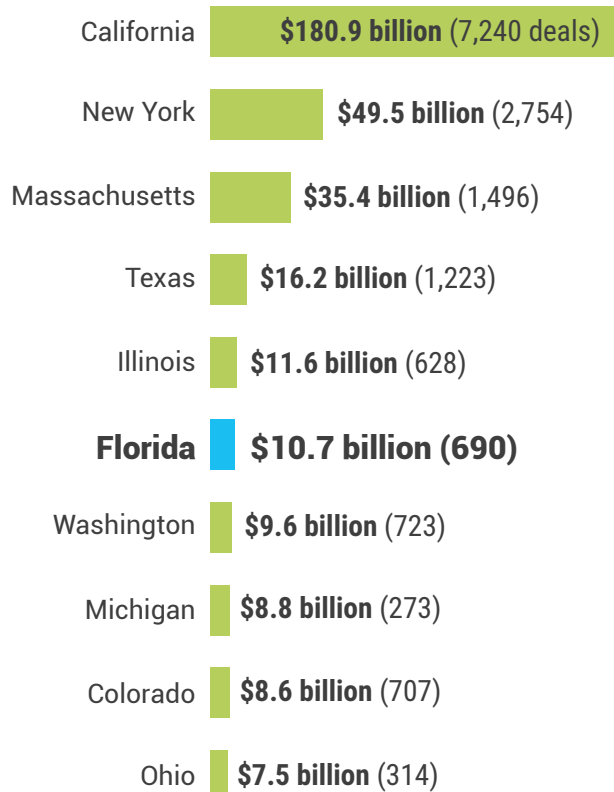
"South Florida has long been a land of entrepreneurs," says Will Fleming, founder of South Florida-based MotionPoint, which secured a significant investment in April, allowing it to grow its translation and globalization solutions for global websites, applications, and digital content. "Technology innovation is the natural continuation of what has propelled our region's meteoric growth since the invention of air conditioning."



All articles by Jeff Zbar. The freelance business and marketing writer can be reached at jeff@jeffzbar.com.

STATES WITH HIGHEST CAPITAL INVESTMENT*

January 2020-June 2021 (18 months)



FLORIDA METROS WITH HIGHEST CAPITAL INVESTMENT*

January 2020-June 2021 (18 months)

1. Miami/Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach

\$7.3 billion (355 deals)

2. Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater

\$1.2 billion (106 deals)

3. Jacksonville

\$844 million (28 deals)

4. Orlando-Kissimmee

\$798 million (72 deals)

5. Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville

\$120 million (20 deals)

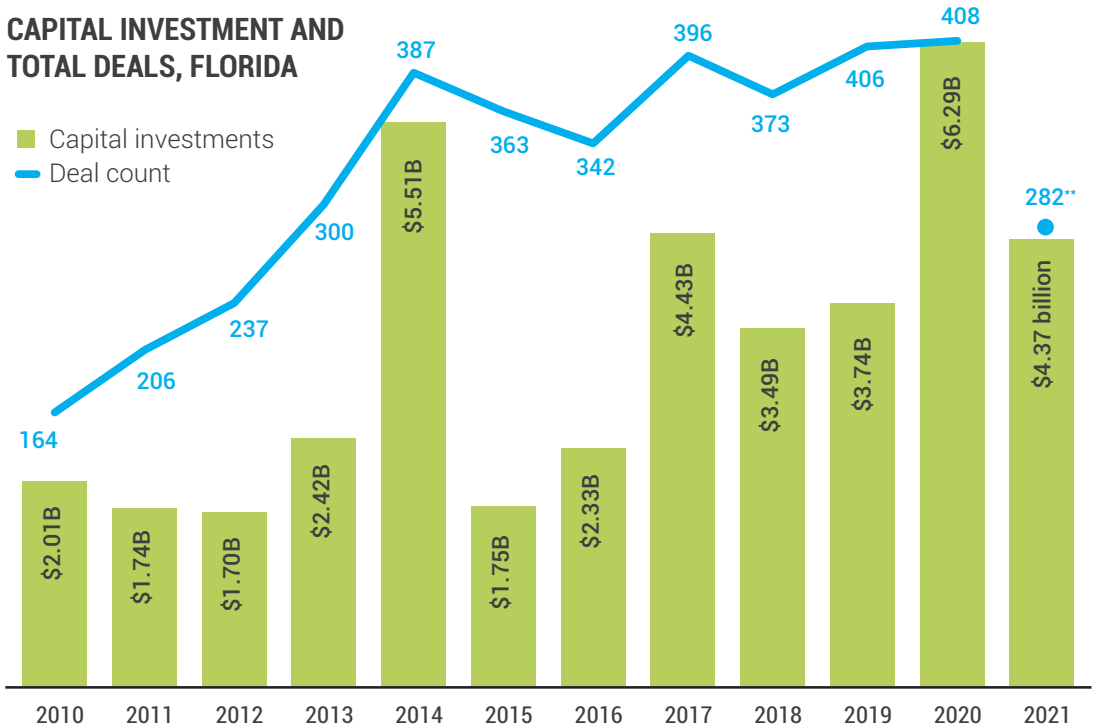
*Venture Capital including PE growth and equity crowdfunding

Source: Pitchbook Data, Inc., GFLA research (January 2020 to June 2021)

CAPITAL INVESTMENT* TRENDS

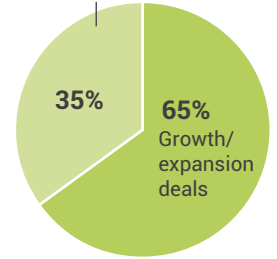
Florida's capital investment* increased nearly 259% in the past 5 years (2015 vs. 2020). South Florida's share ranged between 62% and 81% during the past five years.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND TOTAL DEALS, FLORIDA



2020 FLORIDA CAPITAL INVESTMENT

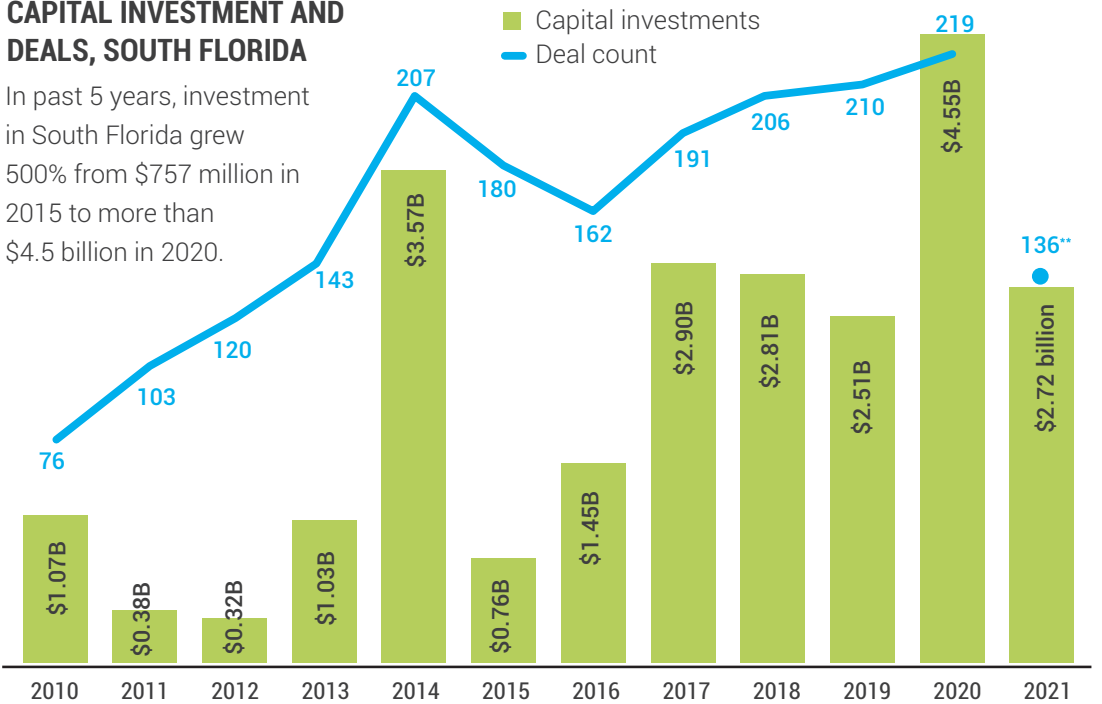
Startups and late-stage companies



In the first six months of 2021, Florida's capital investment is 25% higher than in 2018 and 17% higher than in 2019.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND DEALS, SOUTH FLORIDA

In past 5 years, investment in South Florida grew 500% from \$757 million in 2015 to more than \$4.5 billion in 2020.



5 tech companies received **\$3.6 billion in capital investment** (50% of the total invested in metro areas) in 18-months ending June 30, 2021.



3 of these **companies headquarter** in Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County:

Plant-Ag	\$800M
ShipMonk	\$355M
Magic Leap	\$350M

*Venture Capital including PE growth and equity crowdfunding

SOURCE: Pitchbook Data, Inc., GFLA research

**Note: All figures for 2021 are from January to June.

Thrive, by South African artist Daniel Popper, at Society Las Olas



TOP SOUTH FLORIDA COMPANIES BASED ON TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT

COMPANIES	INVESTED	DEALS	HEADQUARTERS	INDUSTRY/VERTICAL
Phoenix Tower International	\$1.4 billion	1	Boca Raton	Industrial, TMT
Plant Agricultural Systems (Plant-Ag)	\$800 million	1	Fort Lauderdale	Ag-Tech, e-Commerce
REEF Technology	\$700 million	1	Miami	FoodTech, Mobility technology, Real estate technology
ShipMonk	\$355 million	2	Fort Lauderdale	E-Commerce, Real estate technology, Supply chain technology
Magic Leap	\$350 million	1	Plantation	Augmented reality, TMT, Virtual reality
Pipe (Financial Software)	\$316 million	2	Miami	FinTech, SaaS, TMT
Sequa	\$256 million	1	Palm Beach Gardens	Aerospace & defense, Manufacturing
PayCargo	\$160 million	2	Coral Gables	FinTech, Supply chain technology
Material Bank	\$128.6 million	2	Boca Raton	E-Commerce, TMT
Alfa Medical Group	\$100 million	1	Miami	Healthcare and diagnostic services
Introhive	\$100 million	1	Miami	SaaS, TMT
Memic Innovative Surgery Ltd.	\$96 million	1	Fort Lauderdale	Surgical devices, Robotics and drones, TMT
Nymbus	\$85 million	3	Miami Beach	FinTech, SaaS, TMT
Papa	\$78 million	2	Miami	Digital Health, Supply chain technology, TMT
MDLive	\$75 million	1	Miramar	Digital health, Health tech, TMT
Neocis	\$71.8 million	1	Miami	Robotics & drones, TMT
FlipOS	\$64 million	1	North Miami Beach	Real estate technology
OrthoSensor	\$51.7 million	1	Dania Beach	HealthTech, SaaS
Lean Staffing Solutions	\$42.5 million	1	Coral Springs	HR Tech
PlanHub	\$41 million	1	West Palm Beach	Construction technology, SaaS

Magic Leap's mixed reality technology was developed in Greater Fort Lauderdale (Plantation) in the former Motorola R&D facility



TOP INVESTMENTS AND EXITS



Greater Fort Lauderdale is fertile ground for successful startups, growth companies, mature firms - and exits.

Just read the recent headlines. Before it was acquired for \$650 million in cash earlier this year, educational platform application Nearpod already was heralded as an industry success story.

Founded five years ago as a platform to help teachers and students better connect with one another, K-12 teachers in three-quarters of U.S. school districts use the platform. Last year alone, teachers launched some 19.5 million Nearpod lessons, collecting approximately 1.5 billion real-time insights into student learning.

Nearpod isn't alone as a Greater Fort Lauderdale tech success story recently making news. Other names dot the landscape and headlines as significant mergers, acquisitions and exits, or simply for their market-changing technology.

Plant-Ag, an agricultural technology company headquartered here, raised \$800 million venture funding in March. This ranked as the entire South Florida region's largest early-stage deal in the first half of 2021.

Last December, leading ecommerce fulfillment and technology solutions provider ShipMonk announced a \$290 million growth equity round, led by global growth investor Summit Partners. This was followed by \$65 million in development capital from Periphas Capital on January 2021.

Some technology and innovation firms located here have become almost household names or industry leaders as the billions fueling these companies keep adding up. Magic Leap has raised some \$3.48 billion in funding as it explores the emerging realm of augmented reality. Ultimate Software grew to become a formidable HR platform, before its \$11 billion merger with Kronos Group in 2019. Fast-growing online pet supply retailer Chewy was acquired by PetSmart for \$3.35 billion.

Construction management application e-Builder was a college startup that was acquired for \$550 million. Its principal now heads a \$200 million venture fund.

The South Florida tri-county region of Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties ranked first statewide with nearly \$7.27 billion invested, accounting for 68% of the total invested in Florida in the past 18 months. South Florida's capital investment, including VC deals including private equity, growth and equity crowdfunding, is 5.9 times higher than Tampa/St. Petersburg, the second largest metro in the state, according to data from Pitchbook Data, Inc.

The tri-county metro region ranks ninth in the U.S. based on the amount invested in the 18-months ending on June 30, 2021.

In fact, seven of the region's top companies based on total capital investment between January 2020 to June 2021 call Greater Fort Lauderdale home. That



Virtual reality game by Magic Leap

doesn't include the likes of Citrix, which was founded here and today has \$2.97 billion in annual revenue.

In March, fast-growing software-as-a-service governance, risk and compliance solutions and cybersecurity firm ERP Maestro was acquired by SailPoint Technologies Holdings. The millions ERP Maestro has raised included \$12 million in 2018.

Healthtech is a significant force in Greater Fort Lauderdale. One of the nation's largest urgent care, dermatology, therapy and psychiatry telehealth providers, MDLive had received some \$200 million in funding, followed by \$75 million in September 2020, making it a local unicorn, or VC-backed company with a \$1 billion valuation. The company was

acquired in April 2021 for \$2.028 billion by Cigna's health services subsidiary Evernorth.

In January, local surgical innovator OrthoSensor was acquired by Stryker, one of the world's leading medical technology companies, which formerly acquired another Broward-based surgical robotics company, MAKO for \$1.65 billion in 2013. As an aside, MAKO was co-founded by serial healthtech entrepreneur Maurice R. Ferré and Rony Abovitz, the founder and former CEO of Magic Leap.

That these local success stories have remained local employers speaks to the region's enduring lure for tech entrepreneurs, skilled talent, and even the investors seeking the next big success. This legacy

“ Greater Fort Lauderdale is the real heart of South Florida. From its location to its infrastructure, it really is the best of the region. Lesser known, as Miami always gets the headlines, Greater Fort Lauderdale is where the real promise of South Florida is delivered. Diversity, housing, the community and government support are all really true differentiators for South Florida, but they are even more prominent in Greater Fort Lauderdale.”



— JOHN MACHADO
Chief Technology Officer, UKG

SOUTH FLORIDA STARTUPS

Nearly \$7.7 billion invested in South Florida startup and late-stage companies in the past three and a half years.

\$3.23 billion

Total venture capital investments

PALM BEACH COUNTY

\$342 million

11%

BROWARD COUNTY

\$1.53 billion

47%

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

\$1.36 billion

42%

#1

Metro Area in Florida based on invested dollars.

68%

South Florida represents 68% of the total Florida state startup and late-stage venture capital investments.

310

Deals for South Florida startups and late-stage companies from January 2020 to June 2021.

SOUTH FLORIDA FUNDING ROUNDS

20%
Later stage
venture
capital

9%

Equity
crowdfunding

28%

Angel
(individual)

8 of 10

Deals made in South Florida were either angel, seed, equity crowdfunding, or early-stage rounds.

21%

Seed round

22%

Early stage
venture capital

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

\$2 billion

Venture capital investment across 120 startup and later-stage deals in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach metro in the first half of 2021 according to Pitchbook Data.

\$940 million

Venture capital investment in Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County in the first six months of 2021 (137% higher compared to the first half of 2020).

\$800 million

Venture funding on March 15, 2021 for Plant-Ag, an agricultural technology company headquartered in Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County. It is the **largest early-stage deal** in South Florida in the first half of 2021.

*Venture Capital including PE growth and equity crowdfunding

Note: All figures for 2021 are from January to June.

SOURCE: Pitchbook Data, Inc., GFLA research



UKG employees have a brainstorming session.

of successful tech firms, from startup to growth-stage to exit, fuels further success in the Greater Fort Lauderdale market, says Steven Nunes, chief commercial officer at Memic Innovative Surgery. The Israel-based medical device company in August announced it had merged with Medech Acquisition Corporation, which is valued at more than \$1 billion.

Such successes “make it easier to recruit talent because there’s a track record,” Nunes says. The industry is taking note, with Johnson & Johnson, Cardinal Health and others making significant

regional investments.

It’s not exclusive to the medical device and healthtech sectors. Consumer applications, logistics and fulfillment, or mixed reality firms have borne out a reality here: Greater Fort Lauderdale’s success begets success for its innovation, technology and investment sectors.

“These people here with companies like Memic have done this all before,” Nunes says. “People now know that it’s possible to build a solid medical device or technology company here in South Florida.”

“ Greater Fort Lauderdale is ranked among the top 50 U.S. tech talent markets, and our talent pool has benefited from the robust tech programs and pipeline of qualified candidates available in South Florida. One of our core values at JM Family is innovation. Being headquartered in a region that offers a vast diversity in workforce, as well as being an incredible place to live and have a robust work-life balance, keeps us on the cutting edge of our industry.”



— COLIN BROWN

Chairman, JM Family Enterprises, Inc.
Chair, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance CEO Council

SIRIUSXM – LOCAL R&D WITH NATIONAL REACH

When XM Satellite Radio opened its office in Greater Fort Lauderdale in 1998, the decision would seem fortuitous, even prophetic.

Not only was South Florida a fast-growing commuter hub rich with millions of potential subscribers, the region was an emerging technology and automotive-sector market. Local car industry leaders JM Family Enterprises and AutoNation today each employ hundreds of technologists; Ford Engineering is exploring its connected cars initiative here.

Atop those attributes, the marine industry in Greater Fort Lauderdale - known as the “Venice of America” for its more than 120 miles of navigable waterways and the “yachting capital of the world” for the vessels that call here - has grown to become a \$9.7 billion industry.

It all began for satellite radio from an office in Deerfield Beach under the long-time guidance of Stell Patsiokas. The entrepreneur had been recruited from a nearby division of Motorola to lead innovation at XM Radio.

He then helped develop much of the satellite technology that millions of subscribers enjoy each day, bringing it to life and the airwaves via the company's vast research and development facilities here.

Its 2007 merger with Sirius Radio led to exponential growth. With 34.5 million subscribers, SiriusXM Satellite Radio today is the market leader and the innovations continue from its Greater Fort Lauderdale-based tech team.

“The same local attributes that Patsiokas previously said lured him to South Florida continue to attract the next generation of tech talent,” says Christa Petros, the Deerfield Beach office's VP of product development.

People who relocated for jobs decades ago decided to stay, in part for the weather, lack of state income tax, the coastal environment, a higher standard of living and an overall opportunity for an active, high-quality lifestyle.

Inbound migration of tech talent is not bound to soon change. The greatest promise that South Florida offers a tech company like SiriusXM is the continued industry growth and development. This is fueled in part by expansion of area universities, including NSU Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University and Broward College.

The Greater Fort Lauderdale community is a snapshot of diversity and inclusion. The local office's recent senior vice president and general manager of engineering and local head, Lynn Longo, was part of the company's history of diversity and inclusion. In 2020, Jennifer C. Witz, the company's president, sales, marketing and operations was named CEO.

In that way, SiriusXM is at home in South Florida. With employers region-wide placing women in critical leadership positions, expanding diversity creates value and makes companies more



CHRISTA PETROS

SiriusXM



SiriusXM R&D facility in Deerfield Beach

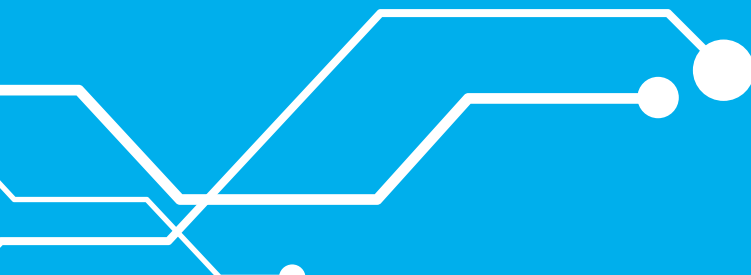
attractive to fresh talent.

“This will expand the funnel and continue to pull in companies that recognize this value proposition,” Petros says. She noted Covid’s continuing effects, drawing ever more companies and talent freed by the benefits of cloud-based computing - and raising

the tide for tech firms across the region.

“We will continue to see a mass exodus of big-name companies from the higher-cost West Coast,” she predicts. “South Florida is primed to be the landing pad for more technical acumen and expertise.”

TECH THAT'S DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE



Any conversation about Greater Fort Lauderdale's largest or most noteworthy tech companies must include a discussion of diversity and inclusion.

Mixed-reality pioneer Magic Leap is led by CEO Peggy Johnson. Comcast Cable Florida region is headed by Regional Senior Vice President Amy Smith. Until her retirement, Doria Camaraza drove American Express's regional operations, including oversight of its new 400,000-square-foot operations center in Sunrise.

SiriusXM radio, whose CEO is Jennifer C. Witz, was until recently headed locally by General Manager Lynn Longo.

International executives hold prominence across the market. 3PL fulfillment provider ShipMonk was founded by Czech national Jan Bednar. Argentines Guido Kovalskys, Felipe Sommer and Emiliano Abramzon founded and earlier this year sold mobile learning platform Nearpod for \$650 million.

Indian-Americans lead both Chewy Inc. (Sumit Singh is CEO and director) and six-time Inc. 5000-listed global software solutions provider Chetu (Atal Bansal is founder and CEO).

D&I IS NO SURPRISE HERE

This should be no surprise. Some 90 languages are spoken here. Progressive policies are advanced at the county and municipal levels and leaders take pride in their diversity. It's reflected in the companies that do business here and the cities

where they reside. Pembroke Pines, the county's second largest city, is also the nation's second-best city for Hispanic entrepreneurs, and it's joined by Fort Lauderdale as being among the most Hispanic-friendly businesses, notes WalletHub.

Immigration and cultural trends historically have embedded the region with "incredibly robust diversity," which undoubtedly will only grow, says Martha Poulter, senior vice president and CIO of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Coincidentally, sister line Celebrity Cruises is helmed by CEO Lisa Lutloff-Perlo, who in 2015 named the first American female captain to a major cruise ship.

South Florida's melting pot culture is certain to "spur innovation and new trends for years to come," Poulter says.

Marcell Haywood is founder and CEO, Encompass, and CEO of Thesis Holdings. The Fort Lauderdale-based company's holdings include a range of SaaS and traditional service businesses.

"There's a baked-in acceptance for people of different cultural backgrounds," Haywood says. "We have a natively diverse ethnic, gender and cultural foundation that we are building upon."

D&I A REGIONAL 'GOLD MINE'

Leaders appreciate where the market is today, but want even more diversity and inclusion. Kristin Johnson, co-founder and CEO of Hotwire Communications, wants to close the disparity in



“ There's a baked-in acceptance for people of different cultural backgrounds,” Haywood says. “We have a natively diverse ethnic, gender and cultural foundation that we are building upon.”



MARCELL HAYWOOD
CEO, Encompass and
Thesis Holdings

venture funding between diverse and non-diverse organizations. Increased diversity, however, is a “potential gold mine” for fast-growing, progressive-minded companies, she says. “All of those things that make us distinct, unique people ripple effect into every avenue of our lives.”

As a woman head of accounting technology firm Xendoo, Lil Roberts encourages parents to speak to their children - especially their daughters - early about careers in technology. South Florida is “at the top of the list” in multicultural diversity. She inspires her team to strive for more.

“Kids growing up here have the most unique

“ Fort Lauderdale is among the 25 most ethnically and racially diverse cities in the country, and with that diversity of background and origin come different perspectives, different experiences, and different ways of looking at things. For a rapidly growing company that thrives on innovation, that is a potential gold mine. All of those things that make us distinct, unique people ripple into every avenue of our lives. That includes the ability to look at a problem from a fresh perspective to find a creative solution that nobody else even considered.”



— KRISTIN JOHNSON
Co-Founder and CEO,
Hotwire Communications

opportunity,” she says. “It’s the equivalent of growing up in the Silicon Valley corridor 30 years ago.”

Jaclyn Baumgarten, CEO and founder of Boatsetter, the world’s leading boat sharing platform, mentors young women in business and entrepreneurship. She also encourages female-led organizations to consider the positive impact they’re having in the technology sector.

“People who think differently about the industry empower us to drive innovation and expand the market to a broader set of customers,” she says. “Boatsetter’s advantage will always be our strong female leadership team. It’s truly our superpower.”



Broward College Student Venture Fund pitch winners with BCEX Director and AVP Imran Siddiqui



General Provision Work Club in downtown Fort Lauderdale provides a comprehensive coworking space including programming for its members.



INNOVATION AND TOOLS FOR SUCCESS



Greater Fort Lauderdale has the organizational infrastructure any startup or established business and its teams need to improve performance and scale operations.

Consider this short list of offerings. The region teems with outstanding academics and workforce development, continuing education and executive mentorship, organizations that drive peer-to-peer networking and robust collaboration, and modern class-A offices and collaborative workspaces.

It starts with education. Along with more than two dozen colleges and universities, including several R1 and R2 research universities, the region has been expanding its undergraduate degree and workforce development and certificate programs. The Broward College Entrepreneurial Experience (BCEX) has expanded higher education to inspire and facilitate entrepreneurship.

Founders build their business plans, work on their pitch decks, test their ideas and find a product-market fit on the path to “creating a company, not a job,” says Imran Siddiqui, associate vice president, BC Eduventures and BCEX.

ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES

With an eye on diversity, the lean launchpad accelerator also puts female and diverse founders on a path to not only transform their own lives, but to diversify the entrepreneurial pool and overall economy.

“Entrepreneurial competencies are valuable for

all career paths, whether students want to start a business, work for a startup or become employed at a Fortune 500 company,” adds Mildred Coyne, the school’s senior vice president of Workforce Education and Innovation.

Just west of downtown Fort Lauderdale, Nova Southeastern University’s H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business & Entrepreneurship created the Huizenga Business Innovation Academy. Its accelerated entrepreneurial curriculum, coupled with co-curricular activities, such as its summer “boot camp,” spur creation of and monetary investment into their business following graduation.

Nearby, the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation is a public-private partnership between NSU and Broward County that supports the entrepreneur’s journey from birth of an idea through successful exit or global expansion. The 54,000-square-foot, purpose-built facility reduces barriers of entry and links entrepreneurs with academia, industry, government, funders, and professional networks.

Key outcomes include breakthrough ideation, new technologies, talent skills pipeline, company formation, job creation, and scaling of businesses, says John Wensveen, Ph.D., the center’s executive director and NSU’s chief innovation officer.

NSU faculty boast \$126.9 million in current authorized active funding awards for work that advances research, academic excellence and public service.



Inside 35 Mules

“Fort Lauderdale is a leading technology hub and there has never been a more opportune time for tech-related entrepreneurship,” he says. “The Levan Center is a catalyst moving the needle to elevate South Florida’s status as a nationally-ranked tech hub.”

WHERE COMPANIES THRIVE

The 70-acre Research Park at Florida Atlantic University, which has 14 acres in Deerfield Beach, is or has been home to some of South Florida’s thriving technology companies. Among them are Modernizing Medicine, Aerospace Technologies Group (ATG) and Dioxide Materials.

In fiscal year 2020, the university achieved a record \$78.5 million in research expenditures.

“Increasingly, South Florida is recognized as a contributor to the development of new ideas, entrepreneurial energy and jobs of the future,” says park CEO Andrew Duffell.

Local power utility Florida Power & Light launched its own business accelerator to spur thinking in the energy, technology and energy-adjacent industries. Now selecting its second cohort, the 35 Mules innovation hub helps entrepreneurs nurture their ideas and bring them to life faster, smarter and at scale.

Along with rent-free space, up to \$100,000 in grants and connections to investors and funders, startups in the program receive comprehensive, tailored business training in lean startup

methodology and customer discovery; access to FPL experts in renewables, solar and smart grid; and leadership coaching from executives with the Fortune 200 company.

“Our 35 Mules innovation hub is an example of FPL’s commitment to Florida’s business ecosystem by developing the next generation of innovators right here in South Florida and growing the state’s economy through innovation and small business,” says Crystal Stiles, FPL senior director of economic development.

SERIOUS MENTORSHIP

Mentors take their roles seriously here. At FAU Tech Runway, a public-private partnership and hub created to accelerate technology development and incubate startup companies, scores of mentors work with area incubators and accelerators, helping aspiring tech execs work through their go-to-market strategies, make connections to help with funding, and build the ecosystem.

Among those mentors are current and former entrepreneurs - including those with international experience - who sold their businesses and retired to South Florida.

“It’s robust, strong and all growing rapidly, which is critical to support the ecosystem. You can’t have one weak link,” says Tyler Quinn, a career-long entrepreneur and mentor with Tech Runway. He also is co-leader of accounting firm Kaufman Rossin’s technology practice. “We have an

“ *The ‘Tech Hub’ is a unification between South Florida’s longest standing tech organization, South Florida Technology Alliance, and the region’s largest corporate member driven nonprofit, Tech Hub South Florida. The unification is aimed at continuing to produce long-term economic impact by attracting new business, supporting startups, building the talent pool, and unifying our tech ecosystem. With a unified mission and overall message, the organization aims to be the voice for the region’s tech ecosystem to continue on the oath to becoming a globally recognized tech and innovation hub.*”



— NIKKI CABUS

Interim CEO, South Florida Tech Hub (Tech Hub)

extremely strong mentor cadre from across a broad range of entrepreneurs.”

“Real-world-based innovation education, university-based incubators and altruistic mentorship often separate emerging and mature, venture-based tech markets. Community-based and non-profit mentors can have a substantial impact nurturing growing companies,” says Jim Ryan, with Venture Mentoring Team.

High-caliber executives and successful entrepreneurs “are rewarded with the gift of ‘paying it forward’ to the benefit of mentor, mentee and the community alike,” he says. “These businesses launch with opportunities such as high paying jobs and potential wealth creation.”

CREATING THE RIGHT SPACE

Collaborative workspaces are reshaping the region. In 1988 entrepreneur Doug McCraw acquired his first parcel in what would become FAT (food, arts and technology) Village. Today, the multi-acre, mixed-use destination has defined the area north of downtown, with offices, coworking spaces and art studios a short walk from the Las Olas Central Business District.

The area’s latest venture: T3 FAT Village. The

seven-story, Class A office building from Texas developer Hines will be among the most tech-infused, environmentally friendly and sustainable developments in Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Companies here exude a tech ethos. General Provision “GP FATVillage” is an industrial-inspired work club that is home to Fort Lauderdale’s creative class. This location offers meeting space, hot desks, dedicated desks, and private offices for teams of up to eight professionals. Nearby, in the Historic Sistrunk Neighborhood, Startup.club is helping aspiring founders through the entire startup process, with tools such as education, business planning, mentorship, customer acquisition, funding and staffing.

The space welcomes all comers, like the Greater Fort Lauderdale tech community itself, says founder Colin Campbell, who also founded and this spring sold the .Club domain to GoDaddy for an undisclosed sum. As the Brightline train that connects the downtowns of Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach rolls past outside his window, Campbell speaks to the “culture of inclusion” woven throughout the region.

“You can just move into a city and for \$150, get a desk and start a business and surround yourself with people who want to help with your business,” he says.



(Top) Xendoo team.
(Bottom) Rendering of forthcoming development in FATVillage, downtown Fort Lauderdale



TECH NETWORKING

The region is host to several highly collaborative tech groups. The South Florida TechGateway (TechGateway.org), is a public/private partnership to grow, attract and retain technology business, capital and talent. South Florida Tech Hub (TechHubSouthFlorida.org) hosts multiple tech information and networking events each month, as well as the annual "ITPalooza." Other regional groups include eMerge Americas, Refresh Miami, CIO Council and meetup groups of many different focus areas.

WORLD-CLASS PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Legal & Accounting Firms Support Entrepreneurial Growth

"Can I find a lawyer or accountant as good as the one I have back home?"

This once was the worry of technologists and entrepreneurs relocating to South Florida. The answer is an unequivocal, "Yes."

The region's professional services providers long ago matured to meet the needs of any innovation, technology and entrepreneurial venture. Ron Antevy was just one of those entrepreneurs. After growing their construction online management platform e-Builder in Gainesville, Florida, Ron and brother Jon decided to come home to Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Beset by the complicated tax issues of serving clients nationwide, the brothers also knew there may be "a nine-figure moment with the private and growth equity partners," he says. "So we had to have all our ducks in a row."

With the guidance of his CFO, Jeanne T. Prayther, a KPMG veteran who as CFO with Prolexic Technologies, Inc., in 2014 led its \$500 million sale to Akamai Technologies, they scouted and landed a Greater Fort Lauderdale firm.

With next generation exits such as Ultimate Software, Chewy and e-Builder dotting the market, accounting firms like Kaufman Rossin are aware of the market's demands, says Louis Balbirer, a firm principal. The top tier of local firms, such as Berkowitz Pollack Grant, Marcum, Keefe McCullough, and others, have honed their "deep technical roots" needed to work with tech companies facing unique federal and multi-jurisdiction tax matters or with visions of an exit.

"This market has matured and developed," adds Tyler Quinn, co-leader of Kaufman's technology practice.

Much the same can be said for legal services. The Greater Fort Lauderdale area provides access to a very high level of sophisticated professional services, says Robert C. White Jr., a shareholder and chair of law firm Gunster's Technology Committee. Some of the area's largest firms, such as Gunster, Tripp Scott, Holland & Knight, Greenberg Traurig, and others represent clients in mergers, acquisitions, with some also handling transactions involving blockchain, cryptocurrency and



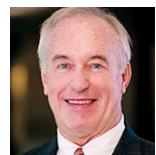
**LOUIS
BALBIRER**

Kaufman
Rossin



**TYLER
QUINN**

Kaufman
Rossin



BOB WHITE

Gunster



various technologies. White regularly negotiates with lawyers from law firms in Silicon Valley, New York and Boston.

“Bigger” isn’t necessarily best, White says.

Startups require a certain legal skill to understand and represent smaller innovative companies, while also “protecting their interests [and] maximize their growth potential.”

“ The entrance of new businesses into South Florida and particularly Broward County, is attracting great talent to the area. AutoNation, as one of the largest employers in Broward, is benefiting from the additional workforce, including in the tech space.”



— MARC CANNON

Executive Vice President and
Chief Experience Officer, AutoNation

BANKING & VC PARTNERS ABOUND

Success begets success. As companies here seek banking and financial partners, they're finding financiers skillful, savvy and eager for new opportunities. Crunchbase tallies some 80 Fort Lauderdale-based investors, VC and micro VC, private equity, investment banks and accelerators here.

Banking has broadened its expertise to meet entrepreneurs' needs, says Erick Strati, senior vice president, South Florida market executive with Wells Fargo Bank. Growing tech verticals, often by supporting local banking executives with out-of-market experts, brings competency once relegated to other high-tech markets. This includes optimal capital structure, infrastructure, and risk management, especially for those operating with overseas partners or foreign currencies.

In the 18-months ending June 30, 2021,

five regional tech companies received \$3.6 billion capital investment, or 50% of the total invested in the area, according to Pitchbook. Three are in Greater Fort Lauderdale: Plant-Ag (\$800 million), ShipMonk (\$355 million) and Magic Leap (\$350 million). In 2020, Florida ranked No. 5 with nearly \$6.3 billion invested. South Florida was first with nearly \$7.27 billion invested, 68% of the total invested in Florida in the past 18 months.

Las Olas Venture Capital's investments into ReloQuest, Plum, CarePredict and SmartHop enabled each high-growth tech company to grow their business and expand their team, says founding partner Mark Volchek. That has helped create more excitement.

"One of the most important factors for a great tech ecosystem are success stories," he says.



ERICK STRATI

Wells Fargo Bank



MARK VOLCHEK

Las Olas Venture Capital







“ For decades, Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County has been a magnet for technology, innovation and investment. The region has the “special sauce” needed to nurture a thriving ecosystem, as evidenced by the success of homegrown tech superstars UKG, Citrix, Chewy, ShipMonk, eBuilder, Magic Leap and new businesses entering our community daily. The fun, excitement and culture of South Florida, plus existing innovation assets like co-working spaces in cool locations, and new investments like the Alan B. Levan NSU Broward Innovation Center will only continue to attract skilled talent looking to “Work in the Cloud and Live in the Sun.™”



— MICHAEL UDINE
Broward County Mayor, County Commissioner

GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE/BROWARD COUNTY

\$2 billion was invested* across 75 deals within 18 months, from January 2020 to June 2021. Most of the capital invested – 75% (\$1.52 billion in 61 deals)– was raised by startup or late-stage companies.

TOP 5 COMPANIES HEADQUARTERED IN GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE/BROWARD COUNTY

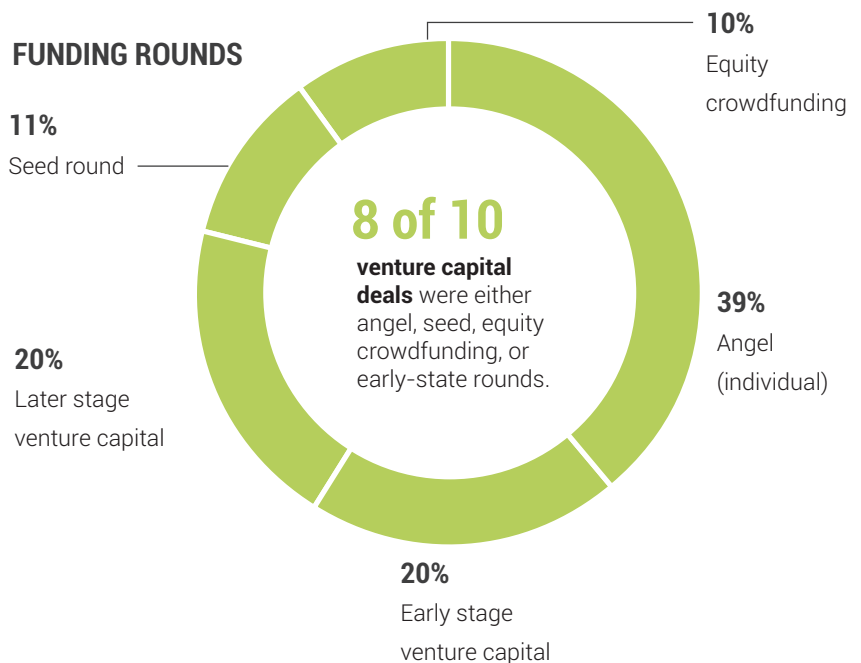
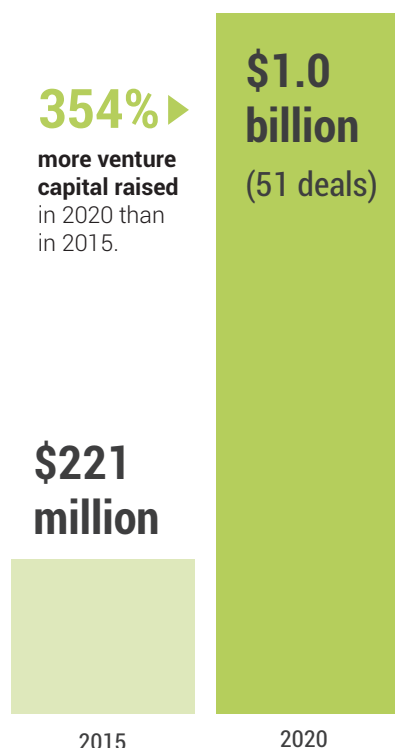
INVESTMENT	COMPANY	HEADQUARTERS	YEAR OF DEAL
\$800M	Plant-Ag	Fort Lauderdale	2021
\$355M	ShipMonk	Fort Lauderdale	2020, 2021
\$350M	Magic Leap	Plantation	2020
\$96M	Memic Innovative Surgery Ltd.	Fort Lauderdale	2021
\$52M	OrthoSensor	Dania Beach	2020*

*OrthoSensor was acquired by Stryker at the end of 2020 for an undisclosed sum.

TOP EXITS SINCE 2020

PURCHASE	COMPANY	DETAILS
\$11B	Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG)	Acquired by Kronos, through its financial sponsors Hellman & Friedman, The Blackstone Group, JMI Equity and Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC) in a leveraged buyout (LBO) on April 1, 2020.
\$2.03B	MDLive	Acquired by Cigna on April 19, 2021, after becoming a unicorn in September 2020 with a later stage VC investment of \$75M.

GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE/BROWARD COUNTY 2020 STARTUP AND LATE-STAGE CAPITAL INVESTMENT:



Note: All figures for 2021 are from January to June.

*Venture Capital including PE growth and equity crowdfunding

SOURCE: Pitchbook Data, Inc., GFLA research

LEADERSHIP THOUGHTS ON...

GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE...

“ We decided to base JetBlue Travel Products in South Florida, the budding epicenter of the travel and hospitality industry. In addition to being close to Fort Lauderdale, one of JetBlue Airways' focus cities, the abundance of top tech talent we're able to tap into from emerging startups in the area coupled with South Florida's rich cultural diversity create perfect conditions for us to shake up the travel and vacations space. Convincing our employees based in New York to move down south was relatively easy, considering the year-round sunshine, pristine beaches and unrivaled range of outdoor activities Florida has to offer.”



— ANDRES BARRY
President, JetBlue Travel Products

THE WORKFORCE...

“ The tech scene in Greater Fort Lauderdale is quite unique and offers many business advantages. There are many highly experienced technical people in the area that gained experience with the well-known companies that fostered the early South Florida technical community, like Motorola, IBM, Citrix, SiriusXM and others. Now there are more tech companies than ever, and the local universities are educating a large and talented group of new graduates each year. The spectrum of talent from highly experienced engineers to new graduates is a highly attractive asset for the area.”



— RANDY FRASER
In-house Electronics Chief, VESC,
Ford Motor Company



COLLABORATION...

“CITY believes it's absolutely necessary to be a part of the South Florida tech community to help us grow and support our business and people's needs. It's been very helpful to be part of the Greater Fort Lauderdale and South Florida tech community and innovation ecosystem, to be a voice, help where we can with real tech industry decisions needed to be made in our backyard, to learn what others in the community are doing that's working for their businesses, to share what is working with us, and to have the ability to reach out to others to benchmark and network. This is what this community provides.”



— ANDREW KOENIG
President, CITY Furniture

SOUTH FLORIDA'S TECH INDUSTRY

“We hear how we are 10 million jobs shy of where we were pre-pandemic. And while every job is important, about 6 million of those jobs are in the leisure and hospitality sector and they are going to come back fairly quickly. Manufacturing and construction... they are nearly back. When you look at the tech sector, employment in the tech sector is higher today than it was pre-pandemic. You might wonder, why is he talking about the tech sector in Florida? The tech sector in Florida employs more people than construction does.”



— MARK VITNER
Senior Economist, Wells Fargo being interviewed by Andy Rosen, Chairman / CEO, Kaplan, Inc. in March 2021

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CEO Council



Thank you to our sponsors for underwriting this report on Greater Fort Lauderdale's thriving technology, innovation, investment / VC, education and collaborative ecosystem. Discover why top tech companies "Work in the Cloud. Live in the Sun.™"

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