



## 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Grant Proposal

Proposal Instructions: Please read this document carefully and provide the information requested below. Some questions may request that a separate narrative be completed. If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.

### Entity Information

Name of Entity: City of Lake City

Federal Employer Identification Number (if applicable): ██████████

Primary Contact Name: Mike Williams

Title: Interim City Manager, City of Lake City

Mailing Address: 205 N Marion Ave

Lake City, FL 32055

Phone Number: 386-515-2107

Email: williamsm@lcfla.com

Secondary Contact Name: David Kraus

Title: County Manager, Columbia County

Phone Number: 386-623-6320

### Workforce Training Grant Eligibility

Pursuant to 288.101, F.S., the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund was created to promote economic opportunity by improving public infrastructure and enhancing workforce training. This includes workforce training grants to support programs offered at state colleges and state technical centers.

Eligible entities must submit proposals that:

- Support programs and associated equipment at state colleges and state technical centers.
- Provide participants with transferable and sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.
- Are offered to the public.
- Are based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.
- Prohibit the exclusion of applicants who are unemployed or underemployed.

## 1. Program Requirements:

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

Each proposal must include the following information describing how the program satisfies the eligibility requirements listed on page 1.

**A.** Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed workforce training.

Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.A

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**B.** Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.B

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**C.** Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.C

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**D.** Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public?

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.D

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**E.** Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.E

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**F.** Does this proposal support a program(s) that will not exclude unemployed or underemployed individuals?

Yes       No

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- G.** Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training. Please include the number of program completers anticipated to be created from the proposed training. Further, please include the economic impact on the community, region, or state and the associated metrics used to measure the success of the proposed training.

Please see attached narrative: 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training; Section 1.G

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**2. Additional Information:**

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

- A.** Is this an expansion of an existing training program?  Yes  No  
 If yes, please provide an explanation for how the funds from this grant will be used to enhance the existing program.

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- B.** Does the proposal align with Florida’s Targeted Industries?  
 ([View Florida’s Targeted Industries here.](#))  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the specific targeted industries with which the proposal aligns.  
 If no, with which industries does the proposal align?

Aviation & Aerospace

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- C.** Does the proposal align with an occupation(s) on the Statewide Demand Occupations List and/or the Regional Demand Occupations List?  
 ([View Florida’s Demand Occupations Lists here.](#))  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the specific occupation(s) with which the proposal aligns.  
 If no, with which occupation does the proposal align?

Aircraft Mechanics & Service Technicians

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- D.** Indicate how the training will be delivered (e.g., classroom-based, computer-based, other).  
If in-person, identify the location(s) (e.g., city, campus, etc.) where the training will be available.

If computer-based, identify the targeted location(s) (e.g. city, county, statewide, etc.) where the training will be available.

The GRTAA curriculum is classroom based with hands-on, build lab activities being facilitated inside of existing hangars. The GRTAA facility will be located at the Lake City Gateway Airport within the City of Lake City.

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- E.** Indicate the number of anticipated annual enrolled students and completers in the proposed program.

The proposed facility and curriculum is capable of graduating 128 trainees per year.

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- F.** Indicate the length of program (e.g., quarters, semesters, weeks, etc.), including anticipated beginning and ending dates.

01/2023 Ongoing  
Begin Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Two courses will be offered at the onset of the GRTAA; entry level with no prior skill/knowledge needed is a 13 week course. Advanced course requiring minimal technical comprehension is a 21 week course.

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- G.** Describe the plan to support the sustainability of the program after grant completion.

The City of Lake City along with its partners Columbia County, Columbia County Schools, RIVEROAK Technical College and CareerSource Florida Crown will seek funding through workforce training programs such as WIOA to continue education. Additionally, private funding will be made available for years following the inaugural year of the Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy.

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- H.** Identify any certifications, degrees, etc. that will result from the completion of the program. Please include the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and the percent of completers in each code, corresponding with Section E.

N/A

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- I.** Does this project have a local match amount?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe the entity providing the match and the amount. (Do not include in-kind.)

The City of Lake City has secured \$2.3M in EDA funding to repair two hangars and bring the fire system up to FAA standards to provide a safe space for practical application exercises. Additionally, the City's current tenant, HAECO (an aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul industry) will provide approximately \$280k in materials for practical application facilitation.

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J. Provide any additional information or attachments to be considered for the proposal.

Please see Attachment II; Map of the proposed project site

### 3. Program Budget

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

**Estimated Costs and Sources of Funding:** Include all applicable workforce training costs and other funding sources available to support the proposal.

1.) **Total Amount Requested**      \$ 3,960,000.00  
 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund

A. Other Workforce Training Project Funding Sources:

City/County                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Private Sources                \$ 763,800.00

Other (grants, etc.)            \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total Other Funding**        \$ 763,800.00

Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Workforce Training Project Costs:

Equipment                      \$ 280,000.00  
 Personnel                        \$ 397,800.00  
 Facilities                         \$ 3,960,000.00  
 Tuition                            \$ 0.00  
 Training Materials            \$ 86,000.00

Other                                \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total Project Costs**         \$ 4,723,800.00

Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The total amount requested must be calculated by subtracting the total other workforce training project funding sources in A. from the total workforce training project costs in B.

- C.** Provide a detailed budget narrative, including the timing and steps necessary to obtain the funding, how equipment purchases will be associated with the training program, if applicable, and any other pertinent budget-related information.

Please see Attachment III; Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy Budget Model

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#### **4. Approvals and Authority**

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

- A.** If entity is awarded grant funds based on this proposal, what approvals must be obtained before it can execute a grant agreement with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (e.g. approval of a board, commission or council)?

Approval in the form of a resolution is needed from the City of Lake City City Council.

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- B.** If approval of a board, commission, council or other group is needed prior to execution of an agreement between the entity and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:

- i. Provide the schedule of upcoming meetings for the group for a period of at least six months.
- ii. State whether entity is willing and able to hold special meetings, and if so, upon how many days' notice.

The Council meets the first and third Mondays each month. Special or emergency meetings can and will be held with twelve (12) hours notice to council members.

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- C.** Attach evidence that the undersigned has all necessary authority to execute this proposal on behalf of the entity. This evidence may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to: a delegation of authority, citation to relevant laws or codes, policy documents, etc.

Please see Attachment IV

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I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have express authority to sign this proposal on behalf of the above-described entity and to the best of my knowledge, that all data and information submitted in proposal is truthful and accurate and no material fact has been omitted.

Name of Entity: City of Lake City

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: Mayor Stephen Witt, Chairman

Representative Signature: *Stephen M Witt*

Signature Date: October 11, 2021

# **2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Grant Proposal – Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy**

## **Appendix of Attachments**

- I. 2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Grant Proposal – Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy Narrative
  - A. Title and detailed description of the proposed workforce training.
  - B. Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.
  - C. Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.
  - D. Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public.
  - E. Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.
  - G. Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training.
  
- II. Map of the proposed project site
  
- III. Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy Budget Model
  
- IV. Ordinance authorizing signature
  
- V. Letters of Support
  - A. Senator Bradley
  - B. Representative Brannan
  - C. Suwannee County School System/RIVEROAK Technical College
  - D. CareerSource Florida Crown
  - E. CareerSource North Florida
  - F. North Florida Economic Development Partnership
  - G. Dixie County Chamber of Commerce
  - H. Dixie Education Foundation, Inc
  - I. Suwannee River Chamber of Commerce



## **2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Grant Proposal – Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy**

### **1 A. Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed workforce training.**

The City of Lake City, along with its educational partner, RIVEROAK Technical College (RTC), is requesting funds to construct a 20k-sf training facility that will be home to the Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy (GRTAA). The initial phase of the GRTAA will offer entry level programming, allowing an unskilled adult to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries, including aviation, in as little as twenty-one weeks while opening the door for a life-long career. The proposed courses to be offered by the GRTAA will be open to all adults as well as dual enrollment high school students with a desire to build occupational skills necessary for employment in a qualified target industry such as aviation and/or manufacturing. The current training model is designed to graduate 128 students annually. The proposed curriculum will teach skills such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. Additionally, complex problem solving, equipment maintenance, system analysis and evaluation, and critical thinking skills are an important part of this curriculum. Future plans of the GRTAA include the addition of an Airframe and Powerplant certification program, commonly referred to as A&P, which is a highly sought after certificate.

The GRTAA will be built on land at the Lake City Gateway Airport (LCQ) which is a public-use general aviation airport, owned and operated by the City of Lake City within Columbia County. LCQ began life as a U.S. Naval Air Station during WWII to facilitate pilot training. In 1947, ownership of both land and hangars was transferred from the Federal Government to the City of Lake City. Those hangars remain in use today; however, were in need of significant repair. LCQ's current tenant and one of Columbia County's largest employers, HAECO Americas, has invested over \$2M to bring two of the hangars up to modern code. The City and County governments have partnered together to secure \$2.3M from the Economic Development Administration CARES funding for hangar repairs. The City and County are also finalizing two additional applications through DEO's CDBG program for fire suppression upgrades in another two hangars. Increased interest in airport property from prospective companies and the pressing need for skilled workers at HAECO, a Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) company, only intensify the need for a training program that could only be offered through an academy such as the GRTAA.

The need for this type of training program extends beyond Columbia County and into the entire north central Florida rural region. The continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in the closure of many manufacturing facilities leaving many people unemployed because they lack a four-year degree or underemployed because they lack the skills needed for high-paying, industrial jobs. Included in this application are many letters of support from surrounding counties, partners within CareerSource, and economic development organizations which reflect the urgency to find a long term solution for the hard-working, blue collar folks in our entire region.

## **1.B Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.**

The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy embodies the mission of our partner, RIVEROAK Technical College - to provide opportunities for the development of qualified workers for the job market; to upgrade occupational skills to re-enter, maintain, or advance employment opportunities; and to enable students to become self-sufficient and self-confident, and to encourage students to become highly productive citizens with positive values and a strong work ethic.

Florida's state colleges exist on the concept of a higher education which has flexible boundaries between the college and its community. RTC is a proud partner of #MoveAheadWithAdultEd, a new national campaign enrolling adult learners into career training programs that equip them with skills that lead to jobs paying a family-sustaining wage. The campaign targets the millions of Americans who need to reskill or upskill to re-enter the workforce.

The GRTAA, in partnership with RTC supports our community by preparing its students directly for manufacturing careers. This program will allow students affordable access to practical skills and qualifications needed to secure high-paying, career oriented employment within several growing industries, without the additional concern of obtaining a four-year degree.

The GRTAA will offer practical skills training such as sheet metal fabrication, composite fundamentals and repair, as well as complex problem solving and technical troubleshooting skills.

## **1.C Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.**

Lake City/Columbia County is home to several industrial and manufacturing businesses with workforce demands that would directly benefit from courses offered at the GRTAA. These industries include well respected companies such as:

- HAECO Americas
- Werner Enterprises
- New Millennium
- LKQ North Florida
- DBI Services
- Hunter Panels
- Aerotek
- Amerit Fleet Solutions

In addition to the industries who already call Lake City/Columbia County home, Columbia County Economic Development is in active discussions with multiple companies interested in locating with the North Florida Mega Industrial Park which is adjacent to the Lake City Gateway Airport. The City of Lake City is also in negotiations with a major development group looking to establish a distribution hub within airport property. Courses offered at GRTAA would be an attractive incentive available to these businesses.

## **1.D Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public?**

RIVEROAK Technical College serves adults, high school and dual enrollment students. Admission is open to adults who are least 16 years old and not presently enrolled in a secondary school. RTC also cooperates with private industry through continuing education programs, such as the Gateway Regional Aviation Academy, who are interested in RTC's efforts to produce quality graduates.

## **1.E Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.**

The mission of the Florida College System is to provide access to high-quality, affordable academic and career educational programs that maximize student learning and success, develop a globally competitive workforce and respond rapidly to diverse state and community needs.

With an award of this Florida Jobs Growth Grant application, Lake City will construct, furnish, and equip a state of the art, *high-quality* training facility which includes a computer lab and practical application lab.

Skills such as sheet metal fabrication are a critical component of the *career educational programs* included in the curriculum of the GRTAA. Careers in maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircrafts as well as industrial manufacturing are identified as Qualified Target Industries by Enterprise Florida. The proposed program prepares students for these industries.

The GRTAA addresses an immediate need to industries throughout the region, providing a *rapid response* to the ever-changing, *community need* to provide entry level training for growing business that can be completed in weeks instead of years. The proposed courses will serve individuals, communities, and the state with a low-cost, high-quality educational opportunity that will train workers for high-wage and high-demand occupations.

## **1.G Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training.**

The mission of the Columbia County Economic Development Department is to foster a strong local economy and vibrant community by promoting a favorable business environment to attract private capital investment and increase employment opportunities.

The concept of the Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy is a direct result of input from existing industries within our community who have challenges hiring skilled workforce, hindering their ability to grow their businesses. The addition of the GRTAA will give potential companies the confidence to recruit workers with the practical skills needed in many industries. The courses

provided will also allow those struggling due to COVID related unemployment or minimum wage jobs to secure high-wage jobs that can support a family.

The GRTAA will offer two courses with basic and advanced training in both; Interiors Training includes the maintenance and repair of the internal components of an aircraft is a 13-week course. Structures Training includes advanced sheet metal skills, tooling, etc. is a 21-week course. The current curriculum and training outline allows for 48 Structures students and 80 Interiors students to be trained annually. It is anticipated that we will incorporate dual enrolled high school students by year two of the program, essentially doubling the capacity of graduates.

Using JobsEQ to study the impact of adding 128 employees with skills associated with Structures and Interiors training, reveals a significant impact on our local economy:

	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>	<b>Induced</b>	<b>Total</b>
Employment	128	29	26	182
Sales/Output	\$15,601,153	\$3,145,679	\$3,382,975	\$22,129,807
Compensation	\$10,183,899	\$1,684,541	\$1,191,971	\$13,060,411

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Data as of 2021Q1

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.



 FUTURE LOCATION OF THE GATEWAY REGIONAL TECHNICAL AVIATION ACADEMY

<b>GATEWAY REGIONAL TECHNICAL AVIATION ACADEMY BUDGET MODEL</b>
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<b>WEEKS OF TRAINING</b>				
<b>Skill</b>	<b>Fundamentals</b>	<b>Basic Skills Course</b>	<b>Advanced Skills Course</b>	<b>Total Weeks of Training</b>
<b>Structures</b>	2	13	6	21
<b>Interiors</b>	2	9	2	13

<b>Skill Instructor Needed</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Estimated Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
<b>Structures Instructor</b>	2	\$28	\$145,600
<b>Interiors Instructor</b>	2	\$28	\$145,600
<b>Training Supervisor</b>	1	\$41	\$106,600
			<b>\$397,800</b>

<b>STRUCTURES TRAINEE PROGRAM</b>			
<b>Structures Maximum class size</b>	12		<b>Annual Costs</b>
<b>Structures Tooling Equipment cost per student</b>	\$2,500	<b>48 Toolboxes (4 classes of 12 students) cost</b>	\$120,000
<b>Structures Class training materials per class</b>	\$10,000	<b>Training Materials cost for 4 classes</b>	\$40,000
		<b>Annual Advanced Course Material refresh cost</b>	\$30,000
<b>Employees Trained</b>	<b>48</b>		

<b>INTERIORS TRAINEE PROGRAM</b>			
<b>Interiors Maximum class size</b>	20		<b>Annual Costs</b>
<b>Interiors Toolbox cost</b>	\$2,000	<b>80 Toolboxes (4 classes of 20 students) cost</b>	\$160,000
<b>Interiors Class training materials per class</b>	\$4,000	<b>Training Materials cost for 4 classes</b>	\$16,000
<b>Employees Trained</b>	<b>80</b>		

Section 302. - General powers and duties.

- (a) All powers of the city shall be vested in the city council, to be also known as "council," except as provided by law or this Charter.
- (b) Three (3) councilmembers shall be considered a quorum and may carry out all functions according to law as if all members were present.
- (c) At the first council meeting after each regular city election and annually thereafter, the council shall elect one of its members as vice-mayor. The mayor shall preside at meetings of the council and shall be considered a member of the council, shall be recognized as head of city government for all ceremonial purposes, by the governor for purposes of military law, for service of process, execution of contracts, deeds and other documents and agreements with other governmental entities or certifications to other governmental entities. He shall annually prepare a state of the city message, prepare an annual budget message, set forth the agenda for all meetings of the council, name committees of the council and appoint members of the city boards with the approval of the council. He shall have no other administrative duties except as required to carry out the responsibilities herein. The vice-mayor shall act as mayor during the absence or disability of the mayor. In case of the death, resignation or removal of the mayor, the vice-mayor shall serve as mayor until the next regular or special election when the office shall be filled. In case of the death, resignation or removal of the vice-mayor or his assumption of the office of mayor, the council shall elect one of its members to serve the unexpired term of the vice-mayor.
- (d) The council shall have the authority by ordinance to set the annual salary of the mayor, councilmembers and its members.

(Ord. No. A-444, § 1, 2-18-80)



## THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

**SENATOR JENNIFER BRADLEY**

5th District

### COMMITTEES:

Community Affairs, *Chair*  
 Agriculture, *Vice Chair*  
 Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
 Environment, and General Government  
 Education  
 Ethics and Elections  
 Judiciary  
 Reapportionment

### SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE:

Select Subcommittee on Congressional  
 Reapportionment, *Chair*

### JOINT COMMITTEES:

Joint Legislative Auditing Committee  
 Joint Select Committee on Collective Bargaining

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
 Plaze Level, The Capitol  
 400 South Monroe Street  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis,

I am pleased to offer my support of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application for the new Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy to be located within the Gateway Regional Airport in Lake City, Florida. This application was submitted by the Lake City/Columbia County in partnership with RIVEROAK Technical College.

In addition to aviation training, the Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will offer curriculum such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. This entry level program will allow an unskilled adult to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries in as few as twenty-one weeks while opening the door for a life-long career. The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will provide career training that will benefit that residents of the City of Lake City / Columbia County and the North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity for generations to come.

I would greatly appreciate your support of this important workforce program initiative. I am pleased to support the Lake City/Columbia County and RIVEROAK Technical College partnership in this effort.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bradley

### REPLY TO:

- 1279 Kingsley Avenue, Kingsley Center, Suite 117, Orange Park, Florida 32073 (904) 278-2085
- 324 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5005

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**WILTON SIMPSON**  
 President of the Senate

**AARON BEAN**  
 President Pro Tempore





**Representative Chuck Brannan**  
**The Florida House of Representatives**  
**District 10**

1262 Southeast Baya Drive  
Lake City, FL 32025-5555  
Phone: (386) 758-0405

1101 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300  
Phone: (850) 717-5010

Baker County Courthouse  
339 East Macclenny Ave  
Macclenny, FL 32063-2231  
Phone: 904-259-0994

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

October 7, 2021

Dear Governor DeSantis,

Please accept this document as my letter of support of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application for the new Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy to be located within the Gateway Regional Airport in Lake City, FL. This application is being proposed by the City of Lake City/Columbia County in partnership with RIVEROAK Technical College.

The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will offer much more than aviation training. The proposed curriculum will teach skills such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. Additionally, complex problem solving, equipment maintenance, system analysis and evaluation, and critical thinking skills are an important part of this curriculum. This entry level program will allow an unskilled adult to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries in as little as twenty- one (21) weeks while opening the door for a life-long career.

Long lasting impacts from the devastating COVID-19 can be felt throughout the entire north Florida region. Many hard working citizens can no longer find high paying jobs or afford to take a more traditional college education path. The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will provide a solution.

I am excited to see this workforce program succeed. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Brannan".

Chuck Brannan  
State Representative, District 10

Committees:

Chairman Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee  
Environmental, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee  
Judiciary Committee  
Public Integrity & Elections Committee  
State Legislative Redistricting Subcommittee

Proudly serving Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, Suwannee, and a portion of Alachua County.

# SUWANNEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**JERRY TAYLOR**  
DISTRICT 1  
**NORMAN CRAWFORD**  
DISTRICT 2  
**TIM ALCORN**  
DISTRICT 3



**ED DA SILVA**  
DISTRICT 4  
**RONALD WHITE**  
DISTRICT 5  
**LEONARD DIETZEN, III**  
BOARD ATTORNEY

1740 Ohio Avenue, South  
Live Oak, Florida 32064  
Telephone: (386) 647-4600 • Fax: (386) 364-2635

**TED L. ROUSH**  
Superintendent of Schools

September 15, 2021

Glenn Hunter  
Director  
Columbia County Economic Development  
971 West Duval Street, Suite 150  
Lake City, Florida 32055

RE: Letter of Support for Columbia County Avionics Educational Training Program

Dear Mr. Hunter:

This letter is to endorse Columbia County Economic Development's efforts to implement an avionics training program to assist in serving the workforce needs of Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Company Limited (HAECO). The Suwannee County School District (SCSD) and RIVEROAK Technical College (RTC) recognize the workforce demand for aircraft maintenance in the service region. As the Pandemic devastated the airline industry for several months and had a detrimental impact upon HAECO and its workforce, the SCSD and RTC are excited and optimistic in Columbia County's plan to support the revitalization of HAECO and develop an aviation technical academy through procurement of several grants.

As it is estimated 128 skilled employees will be needed yearly (HAECO's projected growth), we fully support the development of an aviation technical academy. The academy will afford participants the opportunity to become skilled, while participating in salaried work-based learning to further develop and hone necessary skills for the aviation industry. This investment will positively affect several counties within the service region including Columbia, Baker, Bradford, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee, Union counties and have the capacity to serve secondary and adult students.

We are excited for North Florida residents to have the opportunity to be trained in a fast-growing and in-demand career field that will provide an abundance of opportunities for residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ted Roush', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ted Roush, Superintendent  
Suwannee County School District

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mary M. Keen', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mary-M. Keen, Principal  
RIVEROAK Technical College



[careersourcefloridacrown.com](http://careersourcefloridacrown.com)

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

September 13, 2021

Dear Governor DeSantis,

Please accept this document as our letter of support of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application for the new Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy (FRTAA) to be located within the Gateway Regional Airport in Lake City, FL. This application is being proposed by the City of Lake City/Columbia County in partnership with RIVEROAK Technical College.

The Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy will offer much more than aviation training. The proposed curriculum will teach skills such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. Additionally, complex problem solving, equipment maintenance, system analysis and evaluation, and critical thinking skills are an important part of this curriculum. This entry level program will allow an unskilled adult to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries in as little as twenty- one (21) weeks while opening the door for a life-long career.

Long lasting impacts from the devastating COVID-19 can be felt throughout the entire north Florida region. Many hard-working citizens can no longer find high paying jobs or afford to take a more traditional college education path. The Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy will provide a solution that will benefit that citizen, the City of Lake City Columbia County and the North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity for generations to come.

We are excited to see this workforce program succeed and look forward to partnering with the City of Lake City and Columbia County in their efforts to establish the Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy. I request that you consider award of this grant to the Lake City/Columbia County and RIVEROAK Technical College partnership,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Jones".

Robert Jones  
Executive Director

[careersourcefloridacrown.com](http://careersourcefloridacrown.com)

1389 US Hwy 90 West, Suite 170 | Lake City, FL 32055

p: 386.755.9026 | f: 386.487.1218





The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

15 September 2021

Dear Governor DeSantis,

CareerSource North Florida whole-heartedly supports the Jobs Growth Grant application for our partners creating and implementing the workforce initiative of the Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy (FRTAA) at the Gateway Regional Airport in Lake City. The City of Lake City, Columbia County, and RiverOak Technical College, through this program, will change the trajectory of the aviation industry in North Florida as well as create pathways for job seekers within a large radius of the site.

The Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy will offer much more than aviation training. The proposed curriculum will teach skills such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. Additionally, complex problem solving, equipment maintenance, system analysis and evaluation, and critical thinking skills are an important part of this curriculum. This entry level program will allow an unskilled adult to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries in as little as twenty-one (21) weeks to jump start their career while opening the door for a life-long career.

The Aviation and Manufacturing industries are essential for rural North Florida as they pay higher than average wages and provide pathways for continuous growth and development of the employee. The Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy will provide a solution that will benefit the citizens and the North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity for generations to come.

I cannot be more excited to see this workforce program succeed and look forward to partnering with the City of Lake City and Columbia County in their efforts to establish the Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy. I request that you consider award of this grant to the Lake City/Columbia County and RiverOak Technical College partnership,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Head".

Diane Head  
Executive Director

705 E. Base Street | Madison, FL 32340  
careersourcenorthflorida.com  
p: 866.367.4758



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# NORTH FLORIDA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

September 14, 2021

Dear Governor DeSantis,

Please accept this letter of support for the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application to create a new Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy to be located within the Gateway Regional Airport complex in Lake City, FL. This application is submitted by City of Lake City and Columbia County in partnership and a strong collaboration with RIVEROAK Technical College, Columbia and Suwannee County District Schools, the Northeast Florida Education Consortium (NEFEC), and the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP).

The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will offer much more than aviation training. The proposed curriculum will teach skills such as sheet metal fabrication with hand tools, pneumatic tools, brake sheets, etc. Additionally, complex problem solving, equipment maintenance, system analysis and evaluation, and critical thinking skills are an important part of this curriculum. This entry level program will allow unemployed, underemployed and/or unskilled youth and adults to begin a career in multiple manufacturing industries in as little as twenty- one (21) weeks while opening the door for a life-long career. This has proven to be the most successful way for adults to begin a new career path with opportunities for advancement based on their effort.

Long lasting impacts from the devastating COVID-19 are being felt throughout the entire north Florida region. Many hard-working citizens can no longer find high paying jobs or afford to take a more traditional college education path. The Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy will provide a solution that will benefit those citizens, the City of Lake City, Columbia County, and the North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO) 14-county region for generations to come. Many of the NFEDP county school districts have high school classes in aviation to create a pipeline of interest, learning and experience in a high-demand career.

We have a focused enthusiasm to see this workforce program succeed and look forward to partnering with the City of Lake City and Columbia County in their efforts to establish the Gateway Regional Technical Aviation Academy. I request that you strongly consider award of this grant to the Lake City/Columbia County TEAM in close partnership with RIVEROAK Technical College, Columbia and Suwannee County District Schools, the North East Florida Education Consortium, and the North Florida Economic Development Partnership.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hendry, Executive Director  
North Florida Economic Development Partnership



September 13, 2021

*The Honorable Ron DeSantis*

*The Capitol*

*400 South Monroe Street*

*Tallahassee, FL 32399*

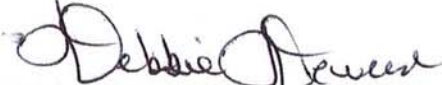
*Dear Governor DeSantis:*

*As you are aware our North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity is constantly seeking to provide Career/Technical training in a variety of career fields. We are offering this letter of support of one such opportunity through the Florida Jobs Growth Fund application by Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy. This program is to be located within the Gateway/Lake City Airport and is being proposed by the city of Lake City/Columbia County and RIVEROAK Technical College.*

*This academy will offer a variety of skills that will gain the graduates access to multiple manufacturing jobs in only twenty-one (21) weeks! Skills such as sheet metal fabrication, pneumatic tools and brake sheets are utilized in aviation and many other manufacturing industries.*

*The majority of our Dixie County graduates are not college bound, and today's global economy deems a skill beyond high school as vital to future careers and successful lives. We therefor ask your consideration for this workforce program and the opportunities it will provide to our area.*

*Sincerely,*

  
*Debbie Deweese, Vice-President*

*A great place to Live, Work and Play!*

P O Box 547, Cross City, FL 32628 | [www.DixieChamber.org](http://www.DixieChamber.org)

# *Dixie Education Foundation, Inc.*

Serving Dixie County Since 1997



*P.O. Box 2655, Cross City, Florida 32628*

*September 14, 2021*

*The Honorable Ron DeSantis*

*The Capitol*

*400 S. Monroe Street*

*Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001*

*Dear Governor DeSantis:*

*Please accept this letter of our support of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund application for a new Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy, to be located at the Gateway/Lake City Regional Airport. The application is proposed by the City of Lake City and Columbia County, together with RIVEROAK Technical College.*

*This program will offer area student the opportunity to learn sheet metal fabrication, pneumatic tools, brake sheets and related equipment. Other key factors include complex problem solving, maintenance of the equipment, analysis and evaluation of the systems involved. While this is an entry level program, it will allow unskilled student to obtain a career in multiple manufacturing industries in just twenty-one weeks, and will offer many career options.*

*This program will be available to our Dixie students as another Career/Technical training for those who are not college bound. We look forward to see this workforce program come to fruition and humbly request that you consider awarding this grant and providing this opportunity, as our Foundation primary focus is scholarships for such Career/Technical programs.*

*Respectfully,*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Carol M. West". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*Carol M. West, President*

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*Suwannee River Chamber of Commerce*

P.O. Box 373  
Suwannee, FL 32693

[www.suwanneeriverchamber.com](http://www.suwanneeriverchamber.com)

September 14, 2021

The Honorable Ron DeSantis

The Capitol

400 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We offer this letter of our support of the Florida Jobs Growth Grant Fund application by the **Florida Regional Technical Aviation Academy**, to be located within the Gateway Regional Airport in Lake City, in partnership with the City of Lake City, Columbia County and RIVEROAK Technical College.

This academy will not only offer aviation training, but the proposed curriculum will include skills such as sheet metal fabrication, brake sheets, pneumatic tools as well as complex problem solving, maintenance of equipment, and system analysis and evaluations. While this entry level program will allow an unskilled student towards a career in only 21 weeks, it will also open the door for further advancement in multiple manufacturing industries.

Our Dixie County non-college bound students are seeking a variety of Career/Technical opportunities and this grant will provide a welcome addition to existing programs, benefiting employers in the area as well. Our North Florida Rural Area of Opportunity supports this programs as an avenue to future careers and successful citizens.

We humbly request your consideration of this grant award to Lake City/Columbia County and RIVEROAK Technical College partnership.

With much gratitude,



Owen Prince, President