



Presented by GrowFL in association with the Edward Lowe Foundation



## GrowFL Announces 2014 Florida Companies to Watch Winners

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### Award Honors Upcoming Second-Stage Businesses

GrowFL, the Economic Gardening Institute, is pleased to announce the winners of the annual *Florida Companies to Watch*<sup>SM</sup> awards program. Fifty leading second-stage companies have been selected from more than 500 nominations statewide. The 2014 class joins an esteemed group of 150 previous *Florida Companies to Watch* winners honored over the past three years.

**Florida Companies to Watch**  
**Presented by GrowFL, in association with the Edward Lowe Foundation**  
**Thursday, October 23, 2014**  
**6:00 pm – Dinner and Awards**  
**Hard Rock Live, CityWalk**  
**Orlando, Florida**

*Florida Companies to Watch* is an awards program that celebrates privately held second-stage companies headquartered in the state. To be eligible, applicants must employ between 6 and 99 full-time equivalent employees and have between \$750,000 and \$50 million in annual revenue or working capital in place. Awardees are selected for demonstrating the intent and capacity to grow based on employee or sales growth, exceptional entrepreneurial leadership, sustainable competitive advantage, outstanding corporate culture, inspired community giving and other notable strengths.

“*Florida Companies to Watch* is honored to recognize another outstanding group of stage-two companies,” said Dr. Tom O’Neal, executive director of the Florida Economic Gardening Institute and associate vice president for the University of Central Florida’s Office of Research and Commercialization. “This is our fourth year of celebrating second-stage business leaders throughout the state of Florida. Being selected for the *Florida Companies to Watch* awards program provides growing businesses the credibility and recognition that distinguish them among their competitors. In Florida, these businesses account for five percent of the companies and nearly 30 percent of the jobs. They make a difference and we’re happy to offer them the recognition they deserve.”

*Florida Companies to Watch* is unique because of its focus on second-stage companies and the wide-ranging industries they represent. The impact of these companies on Florida’s economy is immense, and this year’s honorees are examples of such companies in the state. Overall, the 2014 winners had \$370 million in total annual revenue in 2013, which was a 36 percent increase in total annual revenue compared to 2012. They employed 1,757 full-time equivalent employees, with 462 net new jobs projected for 2014. \*Data compiled in August 2014.

“If you were to draw a picture of an organization that gets it, it would look like GrowFL,” says Penny Lewandowski, Vice President of Entrepreneurship and Strategic Direction at the Edward Lowe Foundation.

“They understand how vital second-stage companies are to Florida’s economy and are committed to delivering tailor made services that help them succeed. *Companies to Watch* is a time to celebrate these amazing companies that make a difference in their communities, customers and employees every single day and to applaud the many efforts of GrowFL and their partners. We could not be more proud.”

“This event promotes the entrepreneurial spirit in Florida and highlights the incredible economic impact these companies have made,” says Mark Williams, Chairman of the GrowFL Advisory Board and Vice President, Wells Fargo. “We are honored to bestow these second stage companies across Florida this award on October 23rd. We thank all of the organizations that are committed to creating the entrepreneurial environment for these companies to continue to grow.”

The companies selected for the *Florida Companies to Watch* award will be celebrated at a special awards dinner on Thursday, October 23 at Hard Rock Live, CityWalk in Orlando, Florida. For more details on *Florida Companies to Watch*, visit [flctw.growfl.com](http://flctw.growfl.com) or email [info@growfl.com](mailto:info@growfl.com).

2014 Sponsors include Wells Fargo, TWSquared, University of Central Florida, Florida High Tech Corridor, atLarge, Inc., Carlton Fields Jordan Burt, Filmscape, OUC, AMTIS Inc., Edwards Financial Services, Enterprise Florida, Fifth Third Bank, Florida Power & Light, Insuperity, LSQ Funding, Sorensen Moving & Storage, SunTrust, USF CONNECT.

Sponsorships for the 2014 event are still available.

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#### 2014 Florida Companies to Watch Economic Impact of 50 Second-Stage Companies

\$370 million in total annual revenue  
 36 percent increase in total annual revenue compared to 2012  
 1,757 full-time equivalent employees  
 462 net new jobs projected for 2014

#### Increasing Impact

From 2010 through 2013, these companies generated nearly \$1 billion in revenue and added 959 employees, reflecting a 149 percent increase in revenue and 120 percent increase in jobs for the four-year period. That translates into a 31 percent annual revenue growth and 26 percent annual growth in employees.

These companies project continued growth in 2014, with a 36 percent revenue increase and 26 percent growth in employees compared to 2013. If their projections hold, these companies will have generated \$1.5 billion in revenue and added 1,421 employees over the last five years — a 243 percent increase in revenue and 178 percent increase in jobs since 2009.

FLCTW in the News



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