

FREE FLORIDA TREND NEWSLETTERS



# Florida Trend

The Issues, People and Ideas that Define Florida Business



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September 17, 2018



Hilomast LLC  
DeBary, FL

ActivEngage, Inc.  
Maitland, FL

Photo: CareerSource Florida



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## FloridaFlex Grants Strengthening Businesses Statewide

| 9/13/2018

The CareerSource Florida network is committed to cultivating and growing talent for businesses in Florida through nationally recognized, flexible training grants that strengthen businesses across many industries.

"Finding talented applicants to fill new, high-skill jobs and keeping your current employees' skillsets competitive can be challenging," said Michelle Dennard, President and CEO of CareerSource Florida. "Budgets are tight, and training is expensive – so it's important to know that if you run or help lead a business in Florida, there are grants and partnerships available to assist your company."

FloridaFlex training grants are customized, business-driven grant programs that help companies of all sizes grow and compete by keeping employees at the top of their game. These flexible grants support businesses at all stages – Quick Response Training for new and expanding businesses needing to quickly train new hires, and Incumbent Worker Training, specifically geared to assist existing businesses with as few as one full-time employee in need of upskilling to maintain competitiveness.

### Quick Response Training

Over the past 25 years, the Quick Response Training grant program has given nearly 140,000 employees the opportunity to receive customized, skills-based curriculum development and training. Evolving to keep pace with industry needs and ensure that thousands of newly hired employees have access to leading-edge instruction and technology, this grant has become an important contributor to Florida's economic growth.

One of the unique features of Quick Response Training is its flexibility in businesses' choice of training and training providers.

ActivEngage, a Maitland-based company, provides live chat services for the automotive industry that inspire conversations and build lasting relationships between businesses and customers worldwide. Thanks to Quick Response Training, ActivEngage was able to implement new and ongoing training for employees to uphold its mission of providing world-class customer service.

"We are handling conversations on behalf of other companies, and we want to make

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An overview of the features and articles in this month's issue of Florida Trend.

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### Florida Business News

» **Nearly half of Florida's counties have fewer jobs than a decade ago**

Three dozen Florida counties had fewer jobs in 2017 than they had in 2007, before the Great Recession began.

» **Florida Trend Exclusive**

**High Tech, Low-Carb**

Ken Ford and the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition are famous for robotics and also a high-fat, no-carb ketogenic diet.

» **Lawmakers adopt 'positive' long-range financial forecast**

Florida lawmakers adopted a new long-range financial forecast that could bode well when they meet next spring to write a new state budget.

» **Floating homes that can withstand Category 4 hurricanes will soon become a reality**

A Florida-based housing startup called Arkup has created a residence that can withstand rising sea levels and Category 4 hurricanes.

» **The WORK of ART: In an arts town, most artists still**

sure that the standard of communication, our methodology and the way we communicate are handled in a very specific way that's familiar for the consumer," said Ted Rubin, co-founder and president of ActivEngage. "It would be impossible for us to be able to accomplish that, with so many people, if we didn't have ongoing, diligent training."

More information about the Quick Response Training grant program:

- » Companies must create new, full-time, permanent jobs in qualified targeted industries including manufacturing, information technology, financial/professional services and more.
- » Companies can qualify for training grants of up to \$500,000.
- » The application process is straightforward, and approval is quick.

#### **Incumbent Worker Training**

The Incumbent Worker Training grant program has provided customized training to more than 2,500 Florida companies, many of them small businesses, since 2000. Through this customer-driven program, our state is able to effectively retain and keep businesses competitive through advanced skills training for existing full-time employees.

Companies can be reimbursed for employee training that's focused on industry or business-specific skills, technical or computer skills, or foundational skills such as leadership, teamwork and management.

Hilomast managers had a big goal for their small company in Debary: to produce the most reliable telescopic mast and equipment on the market. Training received through an Incumbent Worker Training grant allowed the company to improve internal auditing processes needed to obtain a rigorous international certification that gives them credibility worldwide.

"When we started this special project, we were wondering how we were going to achieve it. CareerSource Florida helped us obtain the grant, and they helped us maintain the grant," said Bruce Sousa, general manager of Hilomast. "Obtaining that certification is not easy. For a small business, it's something to really be proud of." More information about the Incumbent Worker Training grant program:

- » Must be an existing Florida business.
- » Companies can qualify for up to \$200,000 per grant.
- » Businesses with 50 or fewer employees may qualify for up to 75 percent reimbursement.

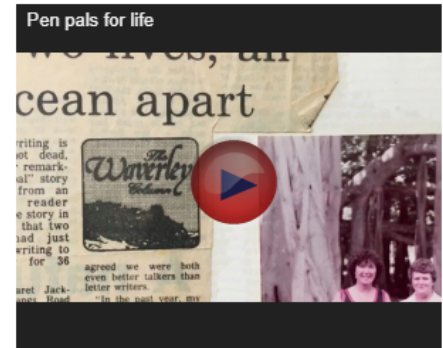
Priority given to businesses in brownfields, rural or distressed areas. All grant applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis until available funding has been awarded. Priority given to first-time applicants. To learn more, [click here](#).

Tags: [employment](#), [Trending](#)

» The front of each, in all the town, most show can  
**need second jobs**

Sarasota actors, dancers, singers, musicians and visual artists know the high points and low comedy of starting a career.

#### **Florida Trend Video Pick**



Brevard's Alice Jacobs Brandon has been pen pals with Margaret Gordon Jackson for 75 years and counting.

[Earlier Videos](#) | [Viewpoints@FloridaTrend](#)

#### **Ballot Box**

With Florida's government projecting a positive budget outlook, what do you think is the most important for state to invest in?

- Education
- Environment
- Health care reform
- Infrastructure
- Not spending it, keeping cash reserve
- Public safety
- Other (comments welcome)

[See Results](#)