

**SARASOTA TOMORROW**



The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce

# News Release

For Immediate Release

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## **Sarasota Tomorrow Raises Over \$2.5 Million to Revitalize Local Economy, Protect Environment and Enhance Quality of Life**

### **Five-year Collaboration of Diverse Community Organizations Pledges a Partnership Approach to Creating a Future that Works**

SARASOTA, FL (June 25, 2008) – The Sarasota Tomorrow Campaign Leadership Cabinet announced an outstanding fundraising total of \$2,590,000 at the Sarasota Tomorrow victory celebration “Over the Top!” Wednesday, June 25 at The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota.

With approximately 300 attendees, the celebration recognized the fundraising achievements of Sarasota Tomorrow, a five-year collaboration of business, neighborhood, civic, environmental and government organizations committed to enhancing Greater Sarasota’s job climate, protecting the environment and maintaining Sarasota’s quality of life.

“Sarasota Tomorrow has begun to build powerful, effective partnerships to coordinate initiatives that revitalize the economic and civic health of our community,” said Pamela G. Truitt, president of Truitt Consulting, Inc. and chair of the board of directors at The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, which organized the fundraising campaign and led formation of Sarasota Tomorrow. “Our goal is to create a future that works for everyone who calls Greater Sarasota ‘home.’”

Truitt, along with other business and community leaders and Sarasota Tomorrow investors, celebrated surpassing the \$2-million goal with a balloon drop as the total was revealed. The celebration, presented by the Herald-Tribune Media Group, recognized between 100 and 200 investors, as well as fundraising volunteers, who contributed financial resources and personal involvement.

Attendees also learned about early action taken by Sarasota Tomorrow. For example:

- Sarasota Tomorrow, cooperating with other regional economic development and business agencies, helped forge a successful community-wide decision to increase Sarasota County’s bond cap to a much-needed \$300 million, allowing an economic stimulus program to be launched.
- Sarasota Tomorrow is working with local governmental leaders to fast-track more than \$250 million in desperately needed infrastructure improvements, which will generate 2,000 jobs.
- Representatives of Sarasota Tomorrow encouraged the School Board to accelerate more than \$250 million in additional renovations to school district properties, which will restore or create hundreds of jobs across our community.

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- Applying the Sarasota Tomorrow approach of collaboration and teamwork, stakeholders in downtown Sarasota formed the City Alliance, a group that includes merchants, residents, property owners and civic groups. Through a unified effort, the Alliance will work to ensure an appealing and vibrant city center that sustains an attractive and prosperous city.

“This type of collaborative leadership is what the community can look forward to from Sarasota Tomorrow over the next five years,” said John Cranor, chair-elect of The Chamber and chair of the Sarasota Tomorrow Action Council. “We encourage interested residents to visit the web site at [www.sarasotatomorrow.org](http://www.sarasotatomorrow.org) to learn more and sign up to stay in touch. We hope to harness the volunteer efforts of the diverse and talented people who make up the Greater Sarasota community.”

#### **About Sarasota Tomorrow**

To an extent other communities in the United States have envied, Sarasota has been insulated from national economic trends by a consistently high and steadily rising real estate market. But economic forces, both locally and in the world at large, have come together to change Sarasota's economy and threaten our quality of life. To counter this negative spiral and preserve the community's appeal, Sarasota must expand opportunities for its residents by adding good jobs while maintaining the environment's well-being. Sarasota Tomorrow is a partnership of business, neighborhood, civic, environmental and government organizations working to enhance Greater Sarasota's job climate, protect the environment and maintain the community's quality of life. Information: [www.sarasotatomorrow.org](http://www.sarasotatomorrow.org).

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