



Florida's Great Northwest

GO BEYOND OUR BEACHES

**2023** / Annual Report

# A unified voice for Northwest Florida.

Florida's Great Northwest is the regional economic development organization for the 13-county region of Northwest Florida. Through promotion, advocacy and collaboration, FGNW is the unified voice for Northwest Florida's economic growth and diversification. We are a private sector funded 501(c)(6) organization led by professional staff and visionary leaders who focus on enhancing the region's economy.



## 2023 Goal

Enhance Northwest Florida's competitive position through industry diversification and quality job growth.

### Our Purpose



#### Promote

Promote Northwest Florida for economic growth and diversification



#### Advocate

Advocate for economic development issues that affect the region



#### Collaborate

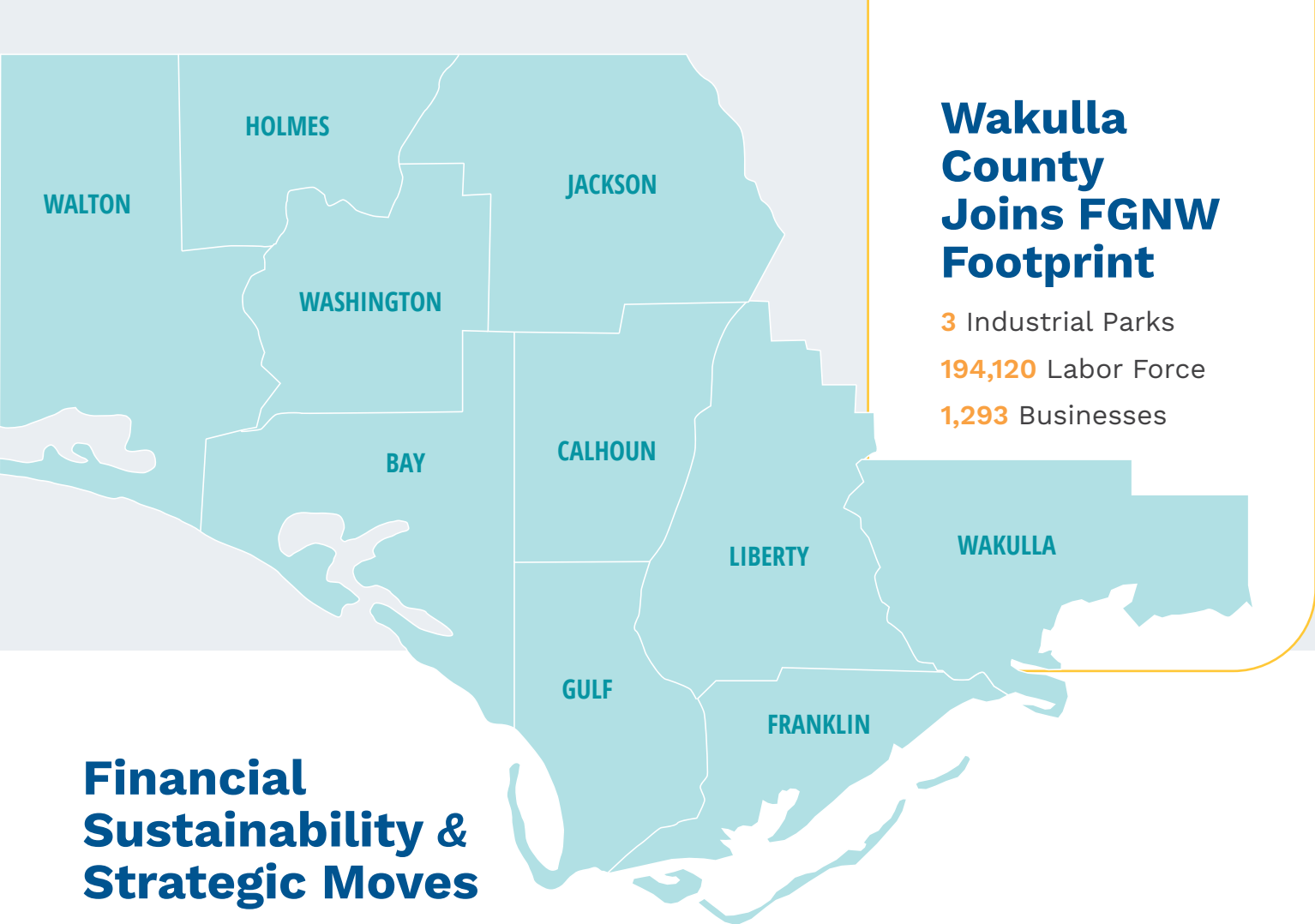
Collaborate to improve regional competitiveness

### Our Vision

To be the most highly effective regional economic development organization in the country with a reputation for stellar quality of service and well-designed, and well-implemented programs and strategies.







## Financial Sustainability & Strategic Moves

FGNW operates on the investment of its corporate and community partners. Nearly 75% of the organization’s operational funding is from the private sector.

**\$53,300**

In new corporate and community dues to create a stronger foundation for our emerging organization.

**\$61,400**

Leveraged in sponsorship dollars for regional events.

**\$117,000**

Secured in grant funding for marketing activities.

## Strategic Activity Review

VisionFirst Advisors, an economic development strategy and site selection firm, performed a Strategic Activity Review in 2023 to assess the organization’s structure and partnerships.

### Two Major Outcomes from the Process:

1. FGNW’s investment levels and benefits were reevaluated and changed to meet the market value of the current level of investor benefits — the first time since the organization’s inception in 2000.
2. The organization’s geographic footprint was expanded to include Wakulla County, making FGNW a 13-county regional economic development organization. Because of the natural marketing synergies and its eligibility for Triumph Gulf Coast, the mutually beneficial opportunities were clear. This addition allows FGNW to increase private and public investment, promote additional industrial product, a skilled workforce, a talent pipeline as well as serve a county positioned to grow in industry, employment and residents for many years to come.



# Our Efforts = Return on Your Investment



Awareness of the Region as a  
Competitive Business Location



More Business for Your Business



High-Skill, High-Wage Job Growth



Additional Tax Revenue



Promotion & Protection for  
Triumph Gulf Coast



Creation of Regional Champions



More Government  
Services & Infrastructure



Enhanced Quality of Life for Us All

## Congratulations to our partners on these job creation announcements!

- Buffalo Rock | 350 Jobs  
*Milton*
- IHMC | 24 Jobs  
*Pensacola*
- Algaplast | 25 Jobs  
*Century*
- GS Gelato | 35 Jobs  
*Fort Walton Beach*
- Boeing | 12 Jobs  
*Fort Walton Beach*
- Central Moloney | 350 Jobs  
*Crestview*
- Premier Aviation | 250 Jobs  
*Panama City*
- Gulf Cable | 200 Jobs  
*Milton*

## See How You're Making A Direct Impact

Scan the QR Code to watch  
Northwest Florida. A Story Worth Telling.





# Promote

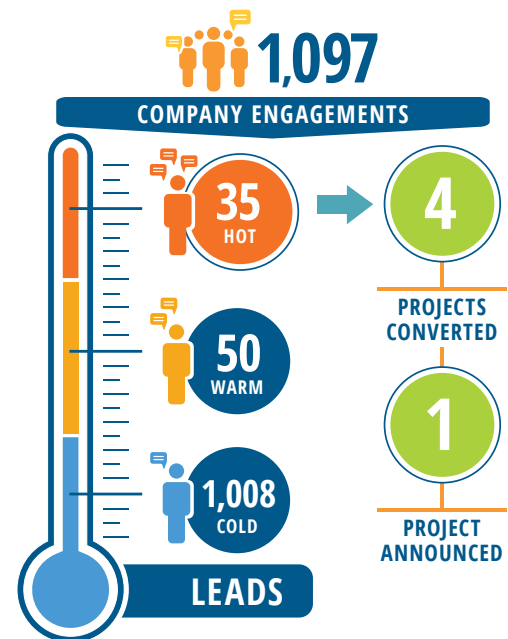
Promote Northwest Florida for economic growth and diversification

## Broadcasting Northwest Florida

Our strategy to build awareness about the region through relationships with company decision makers, site selectors and other influencers is the primary focus under promotion. As we focus broadcasting the story about the region, built around our assets and advantages of doing business in Northwest Florida, we operate this ongoing strategy with **two main components**:

### 1 Lead Generation for Job Creation

FGNW uses a proprietary proactive lead generation method to accelerate our targeted outreach efforts. This process, fueled by artificial intelligence, creates a pipeline of leads filtered out to our county partners. **COLD LEADS** are companies that FGNW has contacted because they have shown signs of potential expansion or relocation opportunities. **WARM LEADS** are those in which the company interacts with FGNW and shows signs of interest. The intention is to build trust with the company and convert it to a **HOT LEAD** where there is more interaction. Once FGNW receives specific details about the company's growth needs, it converts to an **ACTIVE PROJECT**.



**PROSPECTUS**  
Targeted Marketing Package



**50**  
COMPANIES TARGETED



**85**  
ENGAGEMENTS

### 2 Digital Marketing

Our digital platforms allow us to engage with site selectors, company decision-makers, and our fellow Northwest Floridians. FGNW's social media content is carefully crafted to deliver timely, industry-focused, and relevant posts that keep users engaged and not overwhelmed.



Annual Increase  
of 5,000 Users



Annual Increase  
of 2,040 Readers



Growth Across  
All Platforms



From Social  
Media Content

In 2023, FGNW engaged with more than 500,000 corporate executives in targeted industry sectors through Google Search Marketing and LinkedIn Ads.

Below were the top performing markets:

■ Boston 17,643	■ New York 40,169
■ Chicago 18,542	■ Philadelphia 13,481
■ Dallas-Fort Worth 14,495	■ San Francisco Bay Area 15,128
■ Los Angeles 22,410	■ Washington DC /Baltimore 17,200

# 2023 Highlights

## Award-Winning Marketing

### Building the Northwest Florida Brand

FGNW's team continues to receive recognition for their innovation, strategy, and enthusiasm from organizations like the Florida Economic Development Council and Class I of Leadership Northwest Florida.



## Beyond Our Beaches

### Site Selectors Inbound Mission

Creating awareness for Northwest Florida includes identifying influential people to help our region grow and diversify. One of those groups is site selection professionals who work directly with companies seeking a new location for their business operations. This year was our 3rd Annual Beyond Our Beaches Site Selector Inbound Mission, hosted in Marianna.

Four industry-leading site selectors, an international partner from Germany, and a project manager from FloridaCommerce spent two days in Northwest Florida learning more about each area throughout the region, connecting directly with our local and regional economic development partners. Networking opportunities were offered to investors and other partners as well. These types of relationship-building activities allow us to create meaningful awareness about the boundless opportunities in every part of our region.



*"I wanted to take a moment to thank you for a great visit to NW Florida last week," said Larry Gigerich with Ginovus. "I truly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the region and Jackson County, see some of the key assets in the area, and enjoy great food and fellowship. I do not participate in more than a couple of these types of events each year, and the time with you was very rewarding and enjoyable."*



## Representing Northwest Florida

**One unified voice in domestic and global places and spaces for business attraction and investment.**

### 30+ Site Selector Interactions

- Meet the Greenville Consultants
- Site Selectors Guild Partner & Fall Forum
- Atlanta Outbound Mission
- Beyond Our Beaches Inbound Mission

### Trade Shows: 62 Scheduled Meetings

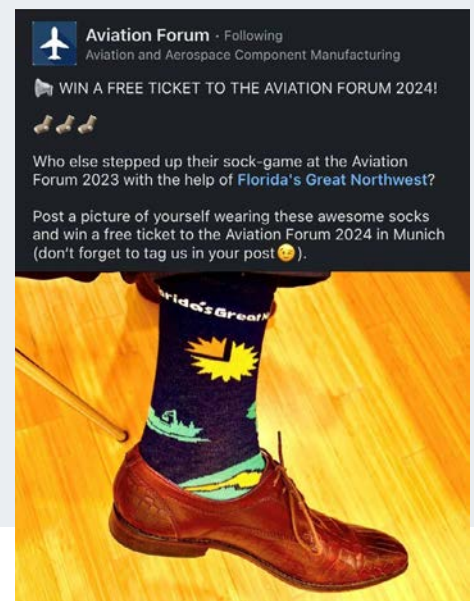
- MRO Americas
- NRW.Global Business Event
- SelectUSA Investment Summit
- International Paris Air Show
- CAMX | The Composites and Advanced Materials Expo
- Aviation Forum in Germany



## Aviation Forum

### The Airbus Suppliers Attraction Campaign

The Airbus Suppliers Attraction Campaign Kicked Off at the Aviation Forum in Hamburg, Germany. FGNW was the Exclusive Give-Away Sponsor connecting with 800 aerospace companies.





# Advocate

*Advocate for economic development issues that affect the region*

## 2023 Endeavors

- 1** Created and advocated for its 2023 Legislative Priorities.
- 2** Continued one-on-one meetings with Northwest Florida's state legislative delegation throughout the year.
- 3** Hosted Northwest Florida Days in Tallahassee during Legislative Session.
- 4** Strengthened relationships, created partnerships, and elevated our influence with agencies such as:
  - FloridaCommerce
  - Florida Council of 100
  - SelectFlorida



*"Between the networking reception and the legislative appreciation breakfast, over 200 chamber professionals, tourism experts, economic developers, business owners and community leaders came to Tallahassee to celebrate the strong leadership we have in our 10 legislators representing Northwest Florida in our State's Capitol. When we cross county lines and join forces as one region, we have a larger voice and make a greater impression on decision makers throughout the state of Florida."*

—Jennifer Conoley,  
Event Co-host of Northwest Florida Days





# Collaborate

*Collaborate to improve regional competitiveness*

## Regional Collaboration

## Difficult Conversations About Workforce

Over 100 regional leaders gathered to hear from nationally recognized workforce and data strategist Kate McEnroe. The Chicago-based consultant spoke about new insightful data trends that dispel myths related to workforce challenges.

During her presentation, McEnroe provided social demographic data, discussed public policy implications, and highlighted characteristics of a livable community. She emphasized that a growing population does not necessarily mean an increase in skilled labor talent and that access to affordable housing and childcare can impact an individual's ability to work.

“Conversations will get us farther than data, and once we are able to have some small wins, we can scale up for ultimate impact, benefiting us all in Northwest Florida.”



## Leadership Northwest Florida

A program of Florida's Great Northwest Foundation

## Class I Graduates! Class II is Now in Session...

Leadership Northwest Florida is an educational program offered for professionals in all industry sectors desiring to grow their knowledgebase, network, and skillset in the 13-county region of Florida's Great Northwest footprint.

“For Northwest Florida to continue to compete, diversify, and thrive, it will take informed, dedicated leaders who understand the complex and competitive environment of economic transformation,” said Jennifer Grove, Chair of the FGNW Foundation.

The program focuses on regional collaboration through community, content, and connection. It informs participants on a holistic view of the conditions, challenges, and opportunities that are shared throughout Northwest Florida, focusing on the areas of Business Vitality, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Infrastructure, Talent, and Quality of Life, which are the five pillars of Northwest Florida Forward, the regional strategy for economic transformation.



**Leadership Northwest Florida Class I**  
2022-2023



**Leadership Northwest Florida Class II**

# Central Moloney, Inc. Selects Second Facility in Northwest Florida



In July 2023, Central Moloney, Inc. (CMI), a manufacturer of distribution transformers and transformer components headquartered in Pine Bluff, Ark., announced its plans to expand to a second location in Northwest Florida as they focus on their long-term growth.

The company's second manufacturing facility will be a state-of-the-art 302,000 sq. ft. building in Crestview (Okaloosa County) on a 48-acre parcel at the Shoal River Ranch Gigasite. CMI will be the first tenant of the 10,500-acre industrial property. At this facility, CMI will specialize in producing pad-mounted transformers. The cost of constructing and equipping the new advanced manufacturing facility is projected to be \$50 million, and 350 jobs are expected to be created as the company scales up to full production.

CMI's first commitment to the region was in January 2022. They selected an existing 140,000 sq. ft. advanced manufacturing facility at VentureCrossing Enterprise Centre in Panama City (Bay County) where they are producing single-phase pole-mounted transformers.

At full capacity, the two Northwest Florida locations are expected to employ 550 individuals with a capital investment of \$75 million.

"Establishing two facilities within the thriving region of Northwest Florida offers numerous advantages," said Jennifer Conoley, President & CEO of Florida's Great Northwest. "Through both manufacturing locations, a total of 830 direct, indirect, and induced jobs are projected to be created, equaling over \$46.7 million in new salaries because of the ripple effect of this high-impact industry. We are thrilled to have found a corporate partner like

Central Moloney, Inc. that is committed to long-term growth in Northwest Florida."

"We will, once again, be moving toward our commitment to become the world's premier manufacturer of electrical distribution transformers," said Chris Hart, President & CEO of CMI. "We looked at some other sites and some other locations, but quite frankly, the opportunities and incentives in Northwest Florida made it a can't-miss. Northwest Florida is the future for us."

The transformer industry has a backlog of demand because of aging infrastructure and growth demands. Customers are in high demand for these

**"We looked at some other sites and some other locations, but quite frankly, the opportunities and incentives in Northwest Florida made it a can't-miss. Florida is the future for us."**

—Chris Hart,  
President & CEO of CMI

products, which exceeds the production capability of CMI's current manufacturing footprint as well as that of its competitors.

Florida's Great Northwest was the lead facilitator in introducing CMI's leadership team all the opportunities for business success throughout Northwest Florida. Through FGNW's strong partnership and collaboration with the county partners of the Bay Economic Development Alliance and One Okaloosa Economic Development Council, these two organizations, alongside countless partners, brought these projects to completion.



**Verdell Hawkins**  
FGNW Chair



**Jennifer Grove**  
Foundation Chair



**Jennifer Conoley**  
CEO

## 2023 FGNW Executive Committee

### Chair

Verdell Hawkins  
*Florida Power & Light*

### Immediate Past Chair

Scarlett Phaneuf  
*PowerSouth Energy Cooperative*

### Vice Chair

Nicole Gislason  
*University of West Florida  
Haas Center*

### Secretary

Chad Pippin  
*White Construction*

### Treasurer

Kevin Bowyer  
*Warren Averett*

### Economic Development Representative

Tiffany Garling  
*Jackson County Economic  
Development Alliance*

### Higher Education Representative

Dr. Sarah Clemmons  
*Chipola College*

### Workforce Board Representative

Michele Burns  
*CareerSource Okaloosa Walton*

### General Members

Chad Neukirch  
*Hensel Phelps*

David Gaines  
*Goldring Gulf Distributing*

### Sustaining Members

Chris Hart  
*Central Moloney, Inc.*

Mary Swoope  
*Duke Energy*

David Bear  
*The Lewis Bear Company*

## 2023 FGNW Foundation Board of Directors

### Chair

Jennifer Grove  
*Baptist Health Care*

### Immediate Past Chair

John Daniel  
*Beggs & Lane*

### Vice Chair

Rhea Goff  
*St. Joe Company*

### Secretary

Eddie Thompson  
*AT&T*

### Treasurer

Kevin Bowyer  
*Warren Averett*

### Director

John Sumrall  
*Trustmark*

### Director

Scott Shamburger  
*The Highland Group*



# Florida's Great Northwest **REGIONAL LEADERS**

## Sustaining Investors



## Cornerstone & Champion Supporters



## Other Investors & Supporters

### Accounting

- Saltmarsh, Cleaveland & Gund
- Warren Averett

### Banking & Finance

- Centennial Bank
- Community Bank  
*Advocate Investor*
- Farm Credit of Northwest Florida  
*Advocate Investor*
- Navy Federal Credit Union
- Pen Air Credit Union
- Regions
- Synovus
- Truist
- Trustmark

### Cities in Northwest Florida

- City of Panama City
- City of Pensacola

### Construction & Engineering

- BRPH
- Culpepper Construction
- NOVA Engineering & Environmental
- The Highland Group
- Volkert
- White Construction  
*Advocate Investor*

### Healthcare

- HCA Florida West Hospital
- Pancare of Florida

### Infrastructure

- AT&T
- Charter Communications
- Cox
- Northwest Florida Beaches Intl. Airport
- Pensacola Intl. Airport
- Panama City Port Authority
- Port of Pensacola
- West Florida Electric Cooperative

### Law

- Beggs & Lane
- Clark Partington

### Support Services & Remaining Sectors

- Buffalo Rock
- CBRE
- Cat Country 98.7 /News Radio 1620
- Duncan McCall Advertising
- Fort Walton Machining
- LandrumHR
- Liberty Partners of Tallahassee
- Opportunity Florida

### Economic Development Partners

- Bay EDA
- FloridaWest EDA
- Franklin County
- Gulf County EDC
- Holmes County Development Commission
- Jackson County EDC
- One Okaloosa EDC
- Santa Rosa County Economic Development Office
- Wakulla County EDC
- Walton County EDC
- Washington County EDC

### Workforce Development Investors

- CareerSource Chipola
- CareerSource Escarosa
- CareerSource Gulf Coast
- CareerSource Okaloosa Walton

### Higher Education Investors

- Chipola College
- Florida State University Panama City
- Gulf Coast State College
- Northwest Florida State College
- Pensacola State College
- University of West Florida's Haas Center