



Florida's Great Northwest

2025 / 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.



2025 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, well-implemented programs and strategies.



Pictured from left to right: Aragon Farnsworth, Marketing Coordinator; Jennifer Conolly, President & CEO; Shane Chadwick, Director of Business Intelligence; Suzanne Rendon, Accounting; Kasey Killebrew, Director of Strategic Initiatives



Financial Sustainability

FGNW receives funding from various sources, including the private sector, local economic development organizations, educational institutions, workforce development organizations, and community partners. The investors of FGNW hold the professional staff accountable to specific metrics and actively participate in driving regional transformation. Their industry expertise enables the team to leverage both financial and intellectual capital effectively while working with one unified voice for economic development in Northwest Florida.

2025 Total Budget: \$974,231



Investor Contributions . . .	61%
Private Sector	70%
Economic Development Organizations	10%
Education and Workforce Partners	9%
Community Partners	6%
Grants	32%
Marketing Sponsorships . . .	7%



Business Development & Marketing	52%
Engagement	14%
Operations	13%
Collaboration Efforts	12%
Advocacy	9%

Our Efforts = Return on Your Investment

Congratulations to our partners on these job creation announcements!

Beast Code, a data aggregation software company, announced its new 26,000-square-foot headquarters expansion project at Freedom Tech Center in Fort Walton Beach.

■ Jobs: 230 | Capital Investment: \$10 million

Global Impact Products, producer of commercial and residential glass and glazing, announced its new location in Bay County.

■ Jobs: 150 | Capital Investment: \$14 million

Oxford Technologies Corporation, manufacturer of the leading-edge abrasion strip for the Black Hawk rotor blade, announced its new location in Bay County.

■ Jobs: 40 | Capital Investment: \$7.5 million

PackEx USA, an all-aluminum packaging and bottling company, announced its new 400,000-square-foot facility in Jackson County.

■ Jobs: 75 | Capital Investment: \$50 million

Point Blank Enterprises, manufacturer of high-performance, protective solutions for the U.S. military and law enforcement officials, announced its new 118,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Wakulla County.

■ Jobs: 300 | Capital Investment: \$36 million

Pulse Industries, creator of industrial linear accelerators, announced its new 278,000-square-foot facility in Jackson County.

■ Jobs: 100 | Capital Investment: \$10 million

Sims-Lohman, the nation's largest provider of kitchen cabinets, granite, and quartz countertops to building professionals, announced its new 65,000-square-foot facility located in Okaloosa County.

■ Jobs: 90 | Capital Investment: \$8.2 million

Williams International, manufacturer of aviation gas turbine engines, announced its new 1-million-square-foot facility in Okaloosa County.

■ Jobs: 330 | Capital Investment: \$1 billion



Awareness of the
Region as a Competitive
Business Location



More Business for
Your Business



High-Skill, High-
Wage Job Growth



Additional Tax
Revenue



Promotion and Protection
for Triumph Gulf Coast



Creation of Regional
Champions



More Government
Services and
Infrastructure



Enhanced Quality of
Life for Us All



Promote

Promote Northwest Florida for economic growth and diversification

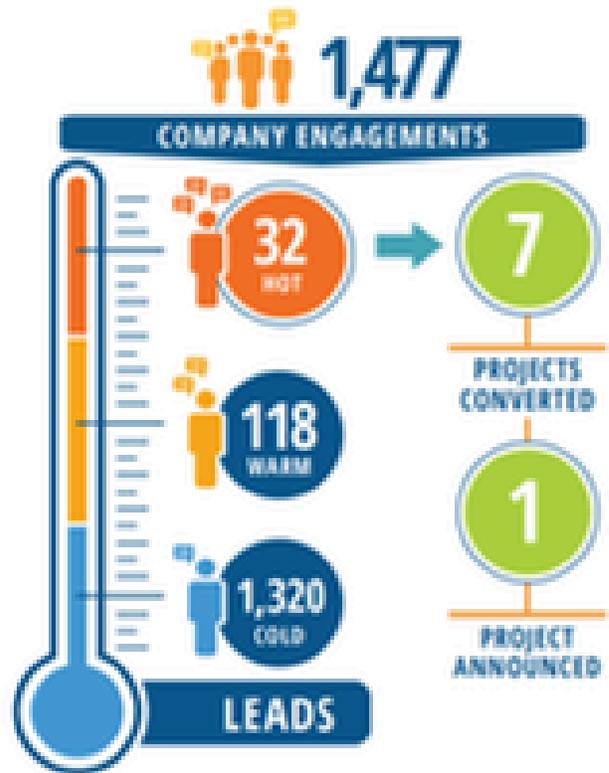
Broadcasting Northwest Florida

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. This ongoing strategy has 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 potential companies that may be interested in doing business in Northwest Florida.

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** and then requests proposals from our county partners to distinguish their assets to the company.



PROSPECTUS



COMPANIES TARGETED



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.



8,961
NEWSLETTER
READERS



1,011
NEW FOLLOWERS



403,500
SOCIAL MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS



24,200
WEBSITE VISITORS

Top Visiting Countries:
China, U.S., Singapore,
Netherlands, Germany,
Ireland and India

2025 Highlights

FGNW Secures \$4.77 Million Grant

In August 2025, FGNW received unanimous approval from Triumph Gulf Coast's Board of Directors for its transformative initiative: United Forward. Designed as a comprehensive, two-part strategy, the initiative will fast-track economic diversification across Northwest Florida.

- The Next Generation of Northwest Florida FORWARD
- Market Activation Plan

The initiative includes a refresh of the region's economic development strategy, in-depth marketing research, the creation of a targeted promotional campaign, and the launch of the most strategic, multi-channel Market Activation Plan ever executed in the region for economic development purposes.

Combined with FGNW's matching investment, the initiative's total economic impact will surpass \$4.6 million—marking the largest single investment in economic development strategic planning and marketing in Northwest Florida's history.



Restoring America's Maritime Dominance

This year, FGNW took a leadership role in promoting our region to officials at the U.S. Navy's Maritime Industrial Base (MIB) and the Defense Industrial Base Institute (DIBI). These efforts are to ensure that our region is considered for opportunities to build "The Golden Fleet" of vessels and respond to the Trump Administration's April 9th Executive Order on "Restoring America's Maritime Dominance." Northwest Florida has a rich history in maritime manufacturing and is well-positioned to perform within the Gulf Coast Maritime Corridor.



Our Team is Soaring

- Shane Chadwick was selected for the Hulburt Field Honorary Commander Program for the 505th Command & Control Wing.
- Jennifer Conoley was recognized for a third consecutive year by *Florida Trend* as one of Florida's most influential business leaders, and was chosen to chair SelectFlorida's inaugural Economic Development Advisory Council.
- Reagan Faircloth was awarded the M.D. "Mickie" Birdsell Scholarship from the FEDC Foundation allowing her to complete the IEDC-accredited Basic Economic Development Course.
- Kasey Killebrew was selected for Leadership Florida's Connect Class 15.



Beyond Our Beaches Site Selectors Inbound Mission in Port St. Joe

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.

Three industry-leading site selectors and two members from FloridaCommerce's business development team spent two days in Northwest Florida learning more about each area throughout the region, connecting directly with our local and regional economic development partners.

"There's a clear long-term vision for growth here. Northwest Florida is positioning itself as a serious player for companies looking to expand or relocate."

– Brian Corde, Managing Partner, Atlas Insight

Mission-Ready Veterans, Business-Ready Results

FGNW secured a Defense Reinvestment Grant from FloridaCommerce to launch a campaign called *Military Talent: Mission-Ready Veterans, Business-Ready Results*. The campaign leveraged key findings from a new study by the University of West Florida Haas Center. This led to the creation of a Military Talent Dashboard to effectively communicate this robust, pre-trained, and disciplined workforce advantage to target industries, positioning Northwest Florida as a premier location for high-skill job creation and economic growth.

The study provided FGNW with three major takeaways:

- On average, 5,200 service members transition out of Northwest Florida's military installations each year – significantly higher than previous estimates.
- Nearly 60% of those military members hold a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Over 47% of transitioning military members plan to remain in the region, and 19% are undecided.

Visit www.FGNWTalent.com to dive deeper into the findings.

Representing Northwest Florida

Site Selectors: 50+ Interactions

Beyond Our Beaches Inbound Mission
Economix by Consultant Connect
IAMC Fall Forum
PoweringFlorida Illumination
SEDC Emerging Leaders Conference
Site Selector's Guild Events



Site Selector's Guild - Winter Summit

Trade Shows: 58 Scheduled Meetings

Aviation Forum Hamburg
CAMX
MRO Americas
Paris International Air Show
SelectUSA Investment Summit



Paris International Air Show



Paris International Air Show

Point Blank Enterprises Selects Wakulla County for 300 Job Expansion

In June 2025, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis joined the Wakulla County Economic Development Council and FGW to announce Point Blank Enterprises will create 300 new jobs in the county's growing industrial employment center - Opportunity Park, where Wakulla County will construct a new 118,000-square-foot manufacturing facility for lease by the company. This is the largest investment in Opportunity Park and a significant investment using public and private dollars in Wakulla County to attract a target industry in the manufacturing sector. Wakulla County received \$13.5 million in Triumph Gulf Coast funding and approximately \$8 million in FloridaCommerce grants to support this opportunity.

Point Blank Enterprises is a manufacturing company based in South Florida, with multiple global locations, employing approximately 5,000 people. They custom-design and produce body armor for law enforcement and the nation's war fighters. The 300 new jobs cover general manufacturing, research and development in the physical, engineering, and life sciences, and order fulfillment for merchant wholesalers. The company will pay an average annual wage of \$52,900 plus benefits. FGW played a critical role in the project by connecting the local community with the opportunity.



"This new location represents a significant investment in innovation and collaboration, bringing us closer to markets in the Southeast U.S. By partnering with organizations like FSU's High Performance Materials Institute (HPMI) and Wakulla School District's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, we aim to not only deliver cutting-edge protective solutions but also contribute to the growth and prosperity of the region."

-Daniel Gaston
CEO, Point Blank Enterprises, Inc.



FEDC Conference



Major Investors Tour



Site Selector Mission in Port St. Joe



Nicole Gislason
FGNW Chair



Scott Shamburger
Foundation Chair



Jennifer Conoley
CEO

2025 FGNW Executive Committee

Chair

Nicole Gislason
*University of West Florida
Hoos Center*

Immediate Past Chair

Verdell Hawkins
Florida Power & Light

Vice Chair

Chris Hart
Central Moloney, Inc.

Secretary

Jason Crowe
Community Bank

Treasurer

Kevin Bowyer
Warren Averett

Economic Development Representative

Ben Moorman
*Bay County Economic
Development Alliance*

Higher Education Representative

Dr. Sarah Clemmons
Chipola College

Workforce Board Representative

Dr. Marcus McBride
CareerSource Escrowee

Sustaining Members

David Bear
The Lewis Bear Company

Marc Hoenstine
Duke Energy

Gordon King
Okaloosa Gas District

Scarlett Phaneuf
PowerSouth Energy Cooperative

General Members

Hong Potomski
Florida Blue

Jonathan Taylor
Lordrum

2025 FGNW Foundation Board of Directors

Chair

Scott Shamburger
The Highland Group

Immediate Past Chair

Rhea Goff
St. Joe Company

Vice Chair

Eddie Thompson
AT&T

Secretary

David Harless
Regions

Treasurer

Kevin Bowyer
Warren Averett

Director

John Sumrall
Trustmark

Director

KC Gartman
Baptist Health Care

Florida's Great Northwest REGIONAL LEADERS

Sustaining Investors



Cornerstone Investors



Champion Investors



Advocate & Ally Investors

Accounting

- Warren Averett

Banking & Finance

- Capital City Bank
- Centennial Bank
- Community Bank Advocate Investor
- Farm Credit of Northwest Florida Advocate Investor
- Innovations Financial Credit Union
- Navy Federal Credit Union
- Pen Air Credit Union
- Synovus
- Trustmark

Cities in Northwest Florida

- City of Lynn Haven

Construction & Engineering

- ARCO Design/Build
- Baskerville-Donovan, Inc.
- BRPH
- Cardella Construction Advocate Investor
- Culpepper Construction
- DHM Melvin Engineering
- HPM
- NOVA Engineering & Environmental
- System Service & Engineering Advocate Investor
- The Highland Group
- Three Notch Group
- Wharton-Smith, Inc. Advocate Investor
- White Construction Advocate Investor

Healthcare

- Baptist Health Care Advocate Investor

- HCA Florida West Hospital
- Pancare of Florida

Infrastructure

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

Law

- Clark Partington
- Phelps
- Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick Advocate Investor

Professional Services

- Appleyard Duncan McCall
- ASTRO America

- CBRE
- DSI Security Services
- Liberty Partners of Tallahassee
- Performance Personnel Services
- The Moore Agency Advocate Investor

Remaining Sectors

- Buffalo Rock
- Cat Country 98.7 / News Radio 1620
- Fort Walton Machining
- Merrick Industries Advocate Investor
- Opportunity Florida

Economic Development Partners

- Bay EDA
- FloridaWest EDA
- Franklin County
- Gulf County EDC
- Holmes County Development Commission
- Jackson County EDC
- Liberty County Chamber of Commerce
- One Okaloosa EDC
- Santa Rosa County Economic Dev. 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
- Florida State University Panama City
- Gulf Coast State College
- Northwest Florida State College
- Pensacola State College
- University of West Florida's Haas Center