

# NEWS FROM THE EDCs OF MANATEE AND SARASOTA COUNTIES

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## Local companies expand global markets with state grant

Sarasota, Fla. (October 12, 2009) – Four Sarasota-Bradenton businesses successfully used state grants to expand their international contacts and sales. [Asian Medical](#), [Galati Yacht Sales](#), [Steelgate Inc.](#) and [Super-Sensitive Musical String Co.](#) capitalized on a grant administered by the [Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County](#) and the [Manatee County Economic Development Council](#).

The EDCs joined forces earlier this year to earn an International Business Expansion Grant from Enterprise Florida. The grant helps local companies with exportable products or services enter or expand into international markets. In addition to providing support for local businesses to participate in overseas trade missions, the EDCs are holding exporting workshops and are providing individualized business counseling with the support of the grant.

Michael O'Malley of Sarasota-based [Asian Medical](#) used the grant to travel to the Middle East to meet with more than 25 potential medical equipment dealers. Asian Medical is a manufacturers' representative that identifies, manages and motivates medical equipment dealers in Asia and the Middle East, O'Malley said. "The meetings were arranged by the respective U.S. Embassies and my contacts have resulted in orders of medical equipment to be exported from the United States to these countries," he said.

[Galati Yacht Sales](#), based in Anna Maria, also expanded its international customer base with a grant, which allowed the company to attend the Dubai International Boat Show, according to Brian Franc, certified professional yacht broker with Galati. "We were able to secure the listing of a large Azimut yacht as a result of the [boat show]," Franc said. "In addition, we met many new international contacts who are prospecting for boats from the United States."

Bradenton-based [Steelgate, Inc.](#) traveled to Belgium to participate in Biomedica, a European life sciences summit attended by more than 500 companies. Steelgate is a cryogenic specimen archiving, preservation and inventory management company. "In a slow economic environment, I am actively trying to grow my business and in response to my client's needs, expand into the global marketplace," said Kate Grayson, Steelgate president and CEO. "The grant helped me to defer some of the costs and attend a meeting I may not have been able to attend otherwise."

"Our current export sales make up 12 percent of our entire business and our goal is to increase export sales to 40 percent of our business within two years," said Jim Cavanaugh, president of The Cavanaugh Company in Sarasota. Cavanaugh's [Super-Sensitive Musical String Co.](#) division used the grant to participate in MusikMessee – a music trade show in Frankfurt, Germany. Super-Sensitive manufactures strings and accessories for instruments including the violin, cello and viola. Cavanaugh says that meetings like MusikMessee are essential for developing one-on-one relationships with prospects and customers.

For information about the EDCs' services to help businesses export products or services abroad, contact Mireya Eavey in Sarasota County, 309-1200, ext. 105, or Lauren Kratsch in Manatee County, 748-4842, ext 134.

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The Economic Development Council, a division of the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, is the sole organization responsible for developing and implementing programs designed to attract new value-added businesses and to assist in the retention and growth of targeted existing businesses in Manatee County. Information: [www.ManateeEDC.com](http://www.ManateeEDC.com)

The EDC of Sarasota County is the private, not-for-profit corporation leading the community's economic development strategy to add high-wage jobs and diversify the local economy. The EDC provides business assistance to companies in Sarasota County and helps forge solutions to community challenges that affect quality of life. The EDC works in partnership with chambers of commerce, local governments and other organizations throughout the county and the region. For more information, visit [www.edcsarasotacounty.com](http://www.edcsarasotacounty.com).