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Loss of NASA jobs isn't just Brevard's problem; it's regional concern

Jacob V. Stuart

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For the past six years, leaders have traveled across the entire Central Florida region, talking about linking regional assets, exploring regional opportunities, and supporting a regional agenda that will benefit the seven counties in our region: Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole and Volusia.

The recent Sentinel editorial concerning the projected loss of jobs as a result of the end of the space shuttle program in 2010 asked: "What should the Space Coast (Brevard County) do to reduce its dependence on the space industry?"

The old model of putting cities and counties into silos, working alone instead of working together for a common goal, is a failing framework. Through myregion.org, "How Shall We Grow?" and now the newly created Central Florida Partnership, we are working to communicate and collaborate on a regional basis; this is the new model of civic architecture.

Working together to preserve our regional assets, advocating regional strategies, and celebrating successful regional outcomes is the new pathway to success. The dramatic loss of jobs projected in Brevard County is not just "their" problem. It is a challenge for the entire region.

An example of how regional collaboration can work is evidenced by the extensive sharing of ideas, by thousands of citizens, elected officials, business and community leaders who came together and developed a regional growth vision for Central Florida. This led to the unprecedented formation of the Congress of Regional Leaders, representing Central Florida's counties, school boards and municipalities now working to implement that vision.

The promise of commuter rail is also a regional endeavor, one that will span 61 miles of track from Volusia to [Osceola County](#) -- easing traffic congestion, preserving our environment and creating the spine for a multimodal transportation network that will serve our entire Central Florida region.

The recent rallying cry for our community venues showed support from across Central Florida. When completed, they will provide our citizens and guests with access to world-class arts, sports and entertainment and will serve as another example of what we can accomplish -- when we are working together as a region.



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The advertisement features a photograph of two hands, one larger and one smaller, clasped together, symbolizing support or partnership. The text is presented in a clean, sans-serif font, with key terms like 'Guaranteed' and 'High Yield CD IRA' in red for emphasis. The Bank of America logo and 'MEMBER FDIC' are located at the bottom of the ad.

A call for construction of the Wekiva Parkway is not just a concern for Lake and Seminole counties; because it will serve the entire region, it is our responsibility to work hand in-hand with everyone in the neighborhood to make it happen.

Likewise, the aerospace industry in Central Florida is much more than space exploration. It is about research and medical science; it is about quality of life; it is about a powerful and positive economic impact; it is about homeland security and space tourism. And, most important, it is about the future of the Central Florida region.

Jacob V. Stuart is the president and CEO of Central Florida Partnership.

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