

**Aug. 7, 2008**

## **Summit to engage community in economic jump-start strategies**

Sarasota County is participating in a collaborative economic summit that will identify actions to jump-start the local economy. The Re-Energizing Our Local Economy (ROLE) summit will be from **7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 3**, at the Gulf Coast Conference Center, 4740 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota.

People who want participate in the summit or nominate others to participate should visit [www.scopexcel.com](http://www.scopexcel.com) by Sept. 8. to fill out the nomination form. Self-nominations are encouraged. The fee is \$25 and includes lunch.

Organizers seek a balanced group of participants who represent diverse facets of the Sarasota County community including business, municipal, education, faith-based, environmental, neighborhood and civic groups.

All nominees will be notified about their attendance. Because of the size of the facility and the nature of the event, all nominees may not be selected to attend. Nominees selected for participation will be those who are likely to become catalysts to implement the changes.

Summit discussions will focus on four issues to improve the local economy:

- Job creation
- Business support
- Government/community collaboration
- Business climate

Participants will work in small groups which will be pre-assigned to have a diversity of age, gender, occupational sector, and viewpoint. Each group will spend the day narrowing ideas from dozens brainstormed in the morning to a single idea that a group member will present in the closing session. Each group will discuss two of the four topics. Participants will be able to give feedback on more than one topic, but groups won't work with the same ideas the entire day.

A representative from each group will present an idea for action and participants will vote on their support for it. The action plans that receive the most support will become the top ideas and will be the focus of committees that will work to enact them.

The summit, coordinated by Sarasota County Openly Plans for Excellence (SCOPE), is a collaborative effort of public and private entities including AM Engineering, North Port, Sarasota, the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau and Sarasota County Government.

“The summit provides an opportunity for community members to play an active role in revitalizing a healthy economy for Sarasota County,” said Tim Dutton, executive director of SCOPE. “Our hope is that diverse participants will develop unique and actionable ways to improve the economy in the short-term and then use the momentum created by the summit to make their ideas come to fruition.”

A nomination form and more information about the Re-Energizing Our Local Economy summit are available at [www.scopexcel.org/rolesummit](http://www.scopexcel.org/rolesummit) or by contacting SCOPE at (941) 365-8751.