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## **Best-selling author to speak in Naples next month**

Is economy building reliant on great business minds? Not necessarily, says Richard Florida, who asserts that areas with more creative minds have greater levels of economic development. "This is just the kind of new thinking that we need as we re-set our economy," comments Economic Development Council of Collier County President and CEO Tammie Nemecek.

That's why the EDC's Project Innovation program is bringing Richard Florida, educator, researcher, global best selling author, sought after speaker, and noted urban theorist to headline "It Pays to be Creative" program on Wednesday, May 20. Advanced registration is required and will be held at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club, registration will begin at 5 p.m.

The Project Innovation mission is Action to Power our Local Economy, explains EDC President and CEO Tammie Nemecek. "Richard Florida is among the foremost experts in economy building. As this community comes together to develop our action plan for sustainable future, we welcome his perspective and enthusiasm. If you believe building a healthy economy is critical, we urge you to join us at this breakthrough session."

Director of the Martin Prosperity Institute and professor of Business and Creativity at the Rotman School of Management of the University of Toronto, Florida is perhaps best known for his work in developing his concept of the creative class and its ramifications in urban regeneration, and for his books including *The Rise of the Creative Class* that describes and analyzes his research in this area. "Recession is the mother of invention," he has said, espousing greater emphasis on creativity and ideas as drivers of economic development.

Professor Florida's theory asserts that metropolitan regions with high concentration of the group he describes as "high bohemians" - high-tech workers, artists, musicians, and so forth - achieve a higher level of economic development. He suggests that the creative class fosters an open, dynamic, personal and professional environment that, in turn, attracts more creative people, as well as businesses and capital. His conclusion, then, is that attracting and retaining high-quality talent, versus a singular focus on infrastructure projects such as sports stadiums, iconic buildings, and shopping centers, would be a better primary use of a city's regeneration resources for long term prosperity. For additional information on Richard Florida please visit [www.creativeclass.com](http://www.creativeclass.com).

Being showcased as well at the "It Pays to be Creative" program will be a local artist gallery, featuring several local artists, sponsored by a Project Innovation endorser, United Arts Council of Collier County. The displaying artist's works will also be available for sale the night of the event. William O'Neill, Chairman of the EDC Board of Directors comments "Collier County is fortunate to be creatively inspired and graciously endowed with extraordinary creative resources, our hope is that we continue to provide, attract, and encourage creativity and intellectual inspirations within our community and industries."

Advanced registration is required to attend and will be held at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club. Overnight accommodations are available at a reduced rate to program attendees, to confirm your room reservations you may visit <http://tinyurl.com/djssec>. Event registration will begin at 5:00 pm, with a reception beginning at 5:30 p.m. the program will conclude at approximately 9 p.m. Cost to attend the It Pays to be Creative event is \$150 per person; you may register online at: [www.projectinnovation.cc](http://www.projectinnovation.cc) or by calling the EDC at (239) 263-8989.

It Pays to Be Creative event sponsors are: 4What Interactive, United Arts Council of Collier County, Regional Business Alliance, Urban Land Institute, EMBARQ, Hill, Barth & King, LLC, Cheffy Passidomo, Swope Lamberson & Charbboneau, P.A., Express Employment Professionals, Oswald Trippe, Physicians Regional, Davison & Nick, C.P.A., Barron Collier Company, Bank of America, Florida Power and Light, Roetzel and Andress and RWA. Sponsorship opportunities are still available, for more information on sponsorship opportunities please contact Beth Skotzke at (239) 263-8989 ext. 105.

- Contributed by Economic Development Council of Collier County