

Community Leaders Rally Around Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation as Construction Begins

Renderings; Executive Director; and Board of Governors Announced

FORT LAUDERDALE/DAVIE, Fla. – Community and business leaders from across South Florida are throwing their support behind the [Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation](#), which calls [Nova Southeastern University](#) (NSU) home. Slated to open July 2021, construction has begun in the 54,000-sq-ft space that occupies the top floor of the Alvin Sherman Library on the NSU campus. [Renderings](#) of the space can be viewed online here: <https://www.nova.edu/innovation/>.

The Board of Governors is truly representative of leadership in the corporate community, organizations, university and government. These individuals are CEOs and C-suite executives of a diverse range of industries with a large presence in the tri-county area. Those who will oversee the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation are:

- Ron Antevy – President & CEO, e-Builder
- Ron Chenail – EVP, Provost, Nova Southeastern University
- George L. Hanbury II – President and CEO, Nova Southeastern University
- Marcell Haywood – CEO, Encompass Onsite
- Bertha Henry – Broward County Administrator
- Keith Koenig – CEO, City Furniture
- Alan B. Levan – NSU Trustee; Chairman, Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation; Chairman, BBX Capital Corporation; Chairman and CEO, Bluegreen Vacations Corporation
- Lisa Lutloff-Perlo – CEO, Celebrity Cruises
- John Machado – CTO, Ultimate Kronos Group, formerly known as Ultimate Software
- Harry Moon – EVP, Chief Operating Officer, Nova Southeastern University
- George Platt – NSU Trustee; Managing Partner, LSN Partners
- Licenia Rojas – SVP/GM & CIO, American Express
- Carl Schramm – Professor, economist, author; former CEO, Kauffman Foundation
- Bob Swindell – CEO, Greater Ft. Lauderdale Alliance
- Javier Villamizar – Operating Partner, SoftBank Investment Advisors
- Jonathan Wolfe – Sr. Director, AutoNation

[Photos and full bios can be accessed on our website.](#)

“Broward’s businesses, large and small, have great vision and intellectual capacity to build on the rapidly changing landscape around the world,” said Bertha Henry, Broward County Administrator. “No doubt, we are poised to take advantage of the opportunities the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation will offer.”

“My highest priority as Mayor is to bring high paying jobs to Broward County,” said Steve Geller, Mayor of Broward County. “I will work with our friends and partners in the business community to accomplish this. The new Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation will help to provide the infrastructure to accelerate job growth, particularly in high-tech industries and other careers that require high levels of training and skill. Broward County has been good at creating small businesses, but bad at growing them

into large businesses. We're confident that the Levan | NSU Center will help these small businesses grow into big ones."

"This facility is the missing piece that will push South Florida forward as an innovation ecosystem," said Keith Koenig, CEO of City Furniture, Chair of the Broward Workshop and member of the Levan Center's Board of Governors. "To have a central location in Broward County where entrepreneurs have the resources and support to create, grow and expand their business will help advance our local economy."

The Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation is an economic development engine focused on three themes (Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship) and four pillars (ideate, incubate, accelerate and post-accelerate). The Levan | NSU Broward Center is designed to serve the community resulting in breakthrough ideation, new technologies, job creation, talent skills pipeline, company formation, and scaling of early stage and young startup companies. A comprehensive list of customized programs, events, and wraparound services will act as a catalyst for the region's innovation ecosystem by [attracting new enterprise and providing opportunities](#) for new skills, upskilling and reskilling.

The facility has been designed in a hub-and-spoke model to foster ideation and collaboration. Highlights of the facility include glass walls to create an open concept, state-of-the-art technology, including Skyfold™ technology walls, as well as a commercial-grade catering kitchen for event and food-focused entrepreneurs. A key differentiator will be the addition of a purpose-built cybersecurity training range outfitted with a leading-edge technology platform providing instruction opportunities for the NSU community, industry and potential government partners.

Programming will include industry certifications, specialized workshops, seminars and short courses, industry leading speakers, boot camps, pitch sessions and hackathons complemented by a thoughtfully designed co-working space for people to collaboratively develop their skills. In addition, the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation will offer incubator and accelerator programs for early-stage and young-startup companies; mentoring opportunities; a technology-focused makerspace; a virtual community platform; a showcase and pitch area; technology and innovation skills classes, and more.

"We are excited to have the Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation join our tech community here in Broward County," said Cecil Kidd, CEO of TechLauderdale. "The collaboration between our two organizations will greatly benefit our members and we look forward to connecting everyone together when the space opens."

"The Broward Workshop Technology Committee is focused on enhancing the Technology ecosystem in Broward County and Greater Ft. Lauderdale and this collaborative initiative advances the opportunity to establish Broward County as a top 25 technology hub," said Richard Berkowitz and Christopher Leonard, Co-Chairs of the Broward Workshop Technology Committee.

"Our community has a long tradition of innovation and a deep pool of entrepreneurial talent. The services, coaching and support that will be found at the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation will serve as a catalyst to help take Greater Fort Lauderdale's startup ecosystem to the next level of success," said Bob Swindell, President/CEO of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance. "An incubator of this magnitude will be an asset not only locally, but nationally as the Alliance works to attract businesses and entrepreneurs from around the country and world."

In addition, NSU is proud to announce John Wensveen, Ph.D. as NSU's Chief Innovation Officer and Executive Director of the [Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation](#).

“This is a dream position and an opportunity for NSU to be a changemaker fostering an innovation mindset in Broward County and beyond, resulting in a hub of scientific, technology and innovation development,” said Wensveen. “The Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation will connect students, faculty, staff and the community creating products, solutions and jobs that will drive revenue creation and investment opportunities. Over the coming months, we will continue to develop our core programming as we add additional staff members and commence construction.”

Wensveen oversees the day-to-day operations and strategic planning. He is tasked with supporting the growing entrepreneurial ecosystem in Broward County by attracting and retaining industry-leading entrepreneurs, technology, sources of investment capital and seeking out resources to create a premier innovation center.

“I am confident that John has the leadership and skills needed to lead NSU’s new Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation as we charge forward in our mission to be recognized as a preeminent university,” said Dr. George L. Hanbury, NSU’s President and CEO. “We look forward to opening this center, providing a resource for our community and our students to be the facilitators of innovation.”

To complement the launch of the new Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation, Alan B. Levan will take the helm as Board Chair. “I am so honored to have such influential individuals join our mission as we work to elevate South Florida’s economic and scale-up abilities,” said Mr. Levan. “These leaders will be a driving force to help identify what additional support the community needs to grow our local businesses and create an ecosystem of innovation where entrepreneurs are supported and can bring their skills up to that next level needed to be successful.”

Professionals involved in the project include ACAI Associates, architecture; P2 Interiors, space planning and design; Sharpe Project Developments, project management; and JWR Construction Solutions, construction, all in collaboration with NSU’s Office of Facilities Management.

For information about the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation, visit nova.edu/innovation.

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To sign up for the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation’s e-newsletter, visit <https://www.nova.edu/innovation/join-us.html>

About the Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation:

The Alan B. Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation (the Center) is a public-private partnership between Nova Southeastern University (NSU) and Broward County. The Levan | NSU Broward Center of Innovation is focused on three themes (innovation, technology, entrepreneurship) and four pillars (Ideate, Incubate, Accelerate, Post-Accelerate). The Levan | NSU Broward Center serves the NSU and Broward County communities resulting in breakthrough ideation, new technologies, job creation, talent skills pipeline, new company formation, and scaling of early-stage and young startup companies. Each of the four pillars are supported by customized programs, events, and wraparound services. The Levan Center is an economic development engine for Broward County and South Florida with potential for national and international impact. By powering the innovation ecosystem, the Levan Center is a major stakeholder in the establishment of a tech hub for Broward County and South Florida.

About Nova Southeastern University (NSU): At NSU, students don’t just get an education, they get the competitive edge they need for real careers, real contributions and real life. A dynamic, private research university, NSU is providing high-quality educational and research programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree levels. Established in 1964, the university includes 15 colleges, the 215,000-square-

foot Center for Collaborative Research, the private JK-12 grade University School, the world-class [NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale](#), and the [Alvin Sherman Library, Research and Information Technology Center](#), one of Florida's largest public libraries. NSU students learn at our campuses in Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Jacksonville, Miami, Miramar, Orlando, Palm Beach, and Tampa, Florida, as well as San Juan, Puerto Rico, and online globally. With nearly 200,000 alumni across the nation and globe, the reach of the NSU community is worldwide. Classified as having "high research activity" by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, NSU is one of only 50 universities nationwide to also be awarded Carnegie's Community Engagement Classification, and is also the largest private institution in the United States that meets the U.S. Department of Education's criteria as a Hispanic-serving Institution. Please visit www.nova.edu for more information.

