## St Petersburg, FL Year 1 Progress Update

When Spectrum (Charter Communications) and US Ignite teamed up with leaders from St Petersburg, FL in early 2019, high levels of motivation and an existing Grow Smarter plan translated quickly to real smart city advancements. Under the leadership of Alison Barlow (Executive Director, St Pete Innovation District), new partners from city, state, industry, academia, and nonprofit sectors quickly aligned for the public launch, sought community buy-in, built a broad base of support, and initiated two successful smart city pilots.

**Community Engagement and Priority-Setting**
The office of the Innovation District hosted an invitation-only session with private, civic, academic, and Spectrum representatives to brainstorm project focus areas, create lists of additional partnerships, and discuss project priorities. Follow-up phone and in-person meetings created additional buy-in and increased participation.

**Public Launch**
After four weeks of planning for a launch event, executive leadership from Spectrum Enterprises, the St Pete Innovation District, and US Ignite held an event on March 25, 2019 to kick off a new public-private partnership. At the event, Mayor Rick Kriseman of St Petersburg and State Representative Jeff Brandes (FL-24) announced that St Petersburg would join a national network of smart communities. Members of the community and the media were well represented.

**Building a Broad Base of Support**
Led by the St Pete Innovation District, the Smart Gigabit Community (SGC) Steering Committee launched in collaboration with a broad base of partners, equipped with the power to define the vision and to lead this change. Smart LED and STEM education subcommittees included subject matter experts needed to guide the implementation and manage the risks of the first year's pilot projects.

**First-year Activities**
Each SGC community works to complete 1-3 smart city projects, applications, and/or services each year. St Petersburg leaders focused their efforts on the following:

1. Pedestrian Safety -- Deployed four, fiber-backed, smart LED light poles at the University of South Florida (USF) St. Pete campus:
   - Included sensors measuring traffic and environmental conditions
   - Engaged USFSP students in sensor technology, data analytics, and environmental monitoring
   - Derived insights from the data collected from the smart light poles to make better traffic, pedestrian, and environmental decisions.
2. Immersive Education -- Deployed a man-made reef in Clam Bayou:
   - Engaged the Boys and Girls Clubs youth in project design, sensor deployment, and sensor tracking
   - Developed a scalable curriculum that connects youth to scientists at the USF College of Marine Science for education and exploration, with a focus on coastal resiliency
   - Created an engaging "hands-on" experience by leveraging marine sensors, deploying an artificial reef, utilizing underwater drones, and transmitting live video
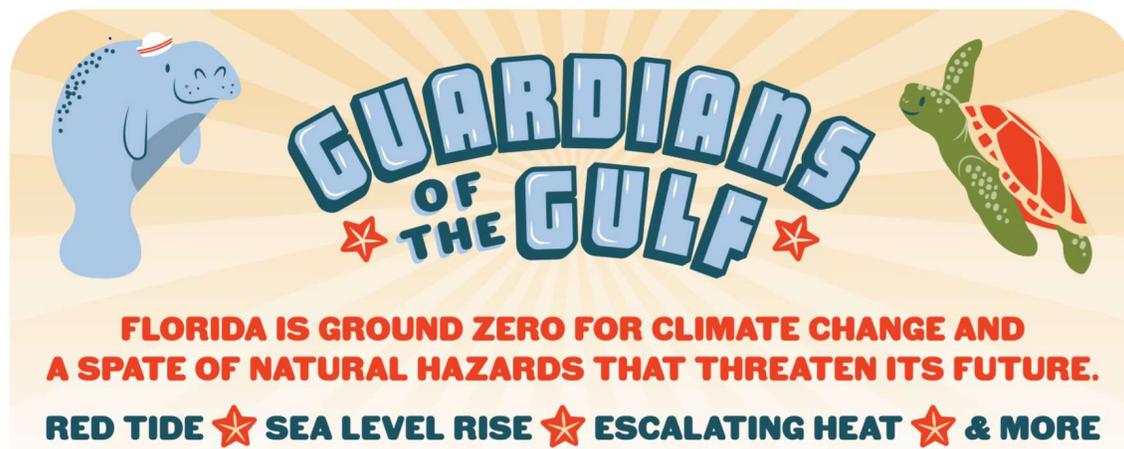   - Provided insights about careers in marine science and technology

## Capacity Building

Throughout the year, Ms. Barlow received individual technical support from Spectrum and US Ignite through the following types of activities:

- Bi-weekly meetings with Spectrum and US Ignite providing coaching and technical assistance to the partnership in St Petersburg
- Bi-weekly meetings with the Smart LED and the STEM subcommittees including subject matter experts from St Petersburg, US Ignite, and Spectrum
- Monthly meetings with representatives from other leaders in the Smart Gigabit Communities network to explore funding opportunities and share best practices from 34 other city leaders
- Support from US Ignite staff with federal grant applications to NSF and NOAA to support Guardians of the Gulf
- Best practice sharing visits from digital literacy experts from Washington, DC and Chattanooga, TN who conducted site visits and training in St Pete to kickoff Digital Inclusion Working Group
- Attendance at the US Ignite Application Summit and US Ignite Forum to learn best practices from smart city innovators

## Value of Industry Partnership

Through the Spectrum-sponsored projects in years two and three and ongoing participation in the US Ignite Smart Gigabit Communities program, the St Pete Innovation District will continue to drive jobs and startups in targeted industries (i.e., data analytics, healthcare, marine science, and fintech) and encourage additional investment in the expanding number of innovation activities in St. Petersburg.

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Powered by a new artificial reef with high-speed connections between Boys & Girls Club of the Suncoast and the to the sensors and cameras from the University of South Florida School of Marine Science, approximately 50 children, ages 7 – 10, will experience immersive web-based educational experiences (news-style broadcasts, gamified learning journeys), hands-on activities, and in-field excursions that reinforce concepts, stimulate inquiry, and sustain engagement. Anchoring the experience will be a children's book written with a Guardian of the Gulf as the central character who encounters many challenges these children will themselves face.