



West Boca Forum

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MICHAEL DASZKAL

Vice Chairman, The Research Park
at Florida Atlantic University

Is this your second stint as vice chairman?

I was just appointed by the Palm Beach County Commissioners. But I've been on the board since July 2007. I was brought on by Mike Arts, [former chamber president]. They were looking for a financially sophisticated board member, and I was the treasurer initially. [The new treasurer is Daniel C. Flynn, vice president for search at FAU]. I was vice chairman from 2008 to 2009, and then I was elected chairman in 2010. [The new chairman is Robert D. Parks, a former school board member in Broward County]. I was already on the board of the College of Business at FAU, so this is synergistic.

Why are you doing this again?

This is my second round because I love them so much. There are only nine university-affiliated research parks in Florida, including us. We're the only university-affiliated research park south of St. Lucie County. There's a new biotech at the University of Miami. I'm an angel investor, part of New World Angels, and it's fun to mentor young people with a start-up company. When their companies mature, they do become clients of our accounting firm, Daszkal Bolton.

How big is the research park, and is it getting more international?

There are 19 in the Technology Business Incubator and 19 in the research park, 38 altogether. What we're ideally looking for is companies that use the various departments at FAU like engineering, mathematics and communications. Being in the park means being with like-minded companies. Our shining stars are Modernizing Medicine and Pace Americas.

Where do you want to go from here?

Making sure everybody knows there are world-class companies in here and having a cluster of engineers and businessmen is a great place to be.

Give readers a pitch on FAU Tech Runway.

It's owned by FAU, but in the research park. It's attracting entrepreneurs that come out of the university who are starting companies. They have to qualify, and they give them free rent for one or two years and provide mentoring services, access to capital and help them launch a business. When they graduate tech runway, they can go into our incubator or a space in the research park.

What else do you want people to know about you?

I have a 19-year-old son, Adam, studying business finance at FAU. I've been in Boca for 30 years. I'm on the advisory board of Place of Hope and board president of PROPEL, [the nonprofit that supports education and leadership for less fortunate youth in Boca]. I'm a trustee and board member of the Boca Chamber and chairman of the finance committee. Running a company and being on all these boards, I still have a 5 handicap in golf.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TAXPAYERS SHOULDN'T PAY FOR SAND

To the Editor:

As a taxpayer, I protest having to pay the freight for the wealthier inhabitants. When my wife and I go to the beaches we pay through the nose for parking, added costs for meals, etc., simply due to the location and toward maintaining the area. If I were to own property on the ocean I would expect to have to maintain the beach related to that property. Only areas (they are all supposed to be open to the public but we know they are not, wink, wink) where all beachgoers have free and easy access to should even be considered for sand restoration. It takes a lot of nerve to ask the taxpayers to foot the bill for someone's private playground.

KENNETH MOORE
BOCA RATON