

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, West Tampa, Florida was established in 1892 when Hugh C. MacFarlane purchased land just west of the Hillsborough River for development, and within a few years, thousands of people moved into the area, and on May 18, 1895, West Tampa was incorporated, and by 1905, the robust community became Florida's fifth largest city; and

WHEREAS, the City of West Tampa was annexed by the City of Tampa on January 1, 1925, and it continues to be a valued part of Tampa's success story with its vast contributions to the development of our city and the diverse cultural and historical impact it has made over the years; and

WHEREAS, the **West Tampa Chamber of Commerce**, originally the West Tampa Commercial Club, was established in 1918, and its mission includes providing leadership and business opportunities that foster growth and quality of life while preserving the historical values of the West Tampa community, and it supports businesses, nonprofit organizations, and members, and it encourages growth while preserving its important and significantly rich past; and

WHEREAS, the West Tampa Chamber of Commerce hosts signature events that bring together the entire Tampa Bay region for celebrations, awareness campaigns, and promotion of West Tampa's unique culture and its citizens, and on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, the organization is hosting its **West Tampa Awards Gala** at Higgins Hall and will celebrate its establishment 106 years ago, its **100th Annexation Anniversary**, honor the West Tampa Woman and Man of the year, and will present the **George Guida Legacy Award** to individuals who have displayed a lifetime of outstanding community service in the West Tampa area; and

WHEREAS, this year's recipient of the **George Guida Legacy Award** is **Robert "Bob" Garcia, Sr.**, who served as the West Tampa Chamber's Executive Director for twelve years and is credited with its growth and success, and he is well-known for his continual promotion of the West Tampa community, and his involvement in many additional organizations; and

WHEREAS, the West Tampa Chamber of Commerce's **2024 Woman of the Year** is **Sandra de Diego Sanchez**, chosen for her leadership and strong dedication in preserving the quality of life and the history of West Tampa and other heritage neighborhoods, and for her leadership in initiatives including the transformation of the Vila Brothers Park and Armory Gardens Civic Association; and

WHEREAS, the West Tampa Chamber of Commerce's **2024 Man of the Year** is **Leo Alvarez**, well-known for his decades of leadership in the community such as upgrading West Tampa Little League, and his commitment in many other areas including coordinating assistance for those impacted by recent hurricanes.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, November 12, 2024, as

"WEST TAMPA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GALA DAY"

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and encourage all citizens to join with the West Tampa Chamber of Commerce in this celebration and thank them for its commitment and leadership for over a century that has contributed to the accomplishments and growth of our community, and congratulate the deserving individuals being honored.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 12th day of November, 2024.



Jane Castor
Mayor