

Tampa Bay Times



WINNER OF 10 PULITZER PRIZES

Where are they now? Ten who put their mark on Tampa Bay economy



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Sometimes it helps to look back at who left their mark on Tampa Bay's business economy in order to look ahead. Below are 10 people who have touched this market — mostly for the good, but not always. Many have moved on, living elsewhere or involved in new pursuits. Others are still here. A few are in prison.

In every case, they have made a difference.

Bill Morean: He's the son of the co-founder of St. Petersburg's now-global electronics manufacturer Jabil, and ran it himself for years. Ten years ago or so he landed on the *Forbes* list of the 400 richest Americans, though those days are gone now that the wealth required to make that list has increased so dramatically. Now he's out in Montana as owner of a 7,000-acre property and another multithousand-acre place called Shooting Star Ranch northwest of Gardiner.

Lou Pearlman: When he wasn't launching popular boy bands in Orlando, he was living the high life based on an extensive \$300 million Ponzi scheme that scammed lots of folks across Florida and Tampa Bay. Now he's in his sixth year of serving a 25-year sentence in Texas at the low-security Federal Correctional Institution in Texarkana. His peers include former New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, behind bars for a bribery conviction during the Hurricane Katrina mess.

Antoinette Rodriguez: She has been gone for some time, but made her point more than a decade ago as a co-founder of what is today the Tampa Bay Technology Forum. I still recall the day she spoke from a Tampa podium, telling the area's chamber of commerce community to wake up to the digital technology revolution and to open the doors of power to others. She challenged: "Why do chambers continue to only populate their leadership positions with older white male bankers?" She moved back to New York and started a family. She might acknowledge some modest progress here in diversity since then — but I doubt it. Today, after a stint at Merrill Lynch, she's known as "ARod" and works for MarFi Advisors providing productivity training for financial advisers.

Kelly Miller: He arrived in January 2012 to great applause as the new hotshot head of Tampa Bay & Co., Tampa/Hillsborough's tourism agency that is now known as Visit Tampa Bay. Eleven months later, Miller suddenly quit, citing personal reasons. This market was left frustrated over what had been expected to be a long-term hire, and by Miller, who never bothered to explain himself to the larger business community. Off the radar, Miller resurfaced in mid 2013 in Southern California as CEO of the Huntington Beach Marketing and Visitors Bureau — now known as (surprise!) Visit Huntington Beach.

Jimmy Wales: Folks tend to forget that Wikipedia's co-founder spent six years in downtown St. Petersburg in the early 2000s running what would become the world's largest online encyclopedia. Wales then headed to digitally cooler California, developing the nonprofit and its neutral point of view that would become central to the site's success. This month, Wikipedia turns 15 and still survives as a nonprofit dependent on donations. But it's also an online resource that one newspaper estimates would take a normal reader more than 21 years to read the English-language pages alone. Wales is married and now lives in London.

Shelley Broader: We knew her back in the day when, as CEO of Tampa's Kash n' Karry, she tried to transform the tired, regional grocery chain into the rebranded Sweetbay Supermarket. It showed promise but not quickly enough. Sweetbay's owners sold it to Bi-Lo, which absorbed its stores into its Winn-Dixie chain. Broader was gone by then, off to run such intriguing retail businesses as hobby/craft chain Michaels Stores, then serving as Walmart Canada's chief merchandising officer and, later, its CEO. She recently left her job as CEO of Walmart's EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) region, in December becoming CEO of women's clothing chain Chico's FAS in Fort Myers. She still has a local tie, serving on the board of directors of St. Petersburg's Raymond James Financial.

Todd Farha: He was just 34, with a Harvard MBA and in his first CEO job as head of Tampa managed health insurance provider WellCare Health Plans when the FBI raided the company's headquarters. That investigation eventually resulted in medical fraud convictions of Farha and other WellCare executives in 2013. He received a reduced sentence of three years in prison in 2014.

Dick Korpan: In the late 1990s, he was the tough No. 2 guy notoriously known for downsizing Florida Progress, parent of the Florida Power utility, as the St. Petersburg power company struggled with a changing industry. Later as CEO, Korpan cut the deal selling the company to what would be known as Progress Energy, which in turn got scooped up in a messy acquisition by Duke Energy Florida. Before all that, Korpan had departed for retirement in Colorado. Several years ago, he found himself trying to recoup \$475,000 by suing a company gone bankrupt that had offered membership in destination-club living. Korpan is still listed as a director of a Christian-based organization called Alliance Defending Freedom, which provides legal and funding resources to defend what it calls religious freedom.

Heather Kenyon: She ran the Tampa Bay Technology Forum (see Antoinette Rodriguez, above) as CEO for several years before she was squeezed out in 2014 by what the advocacy group called a change in direction. After a short-term gig, she landed at tech giant Apple, where she oversees a team helping sell Apple's business-to-business services, frequently competing against the likes of Microsoft.

Richard Florida: The Carnegie-Mellon urban economist came to Tampa in 2003 to introduce the business community to the idea of the "creative class" and argue that metro areas that make themselves attractive to highly talented people will find that quality companies will follow in order to hire them. His message has resonated every day since, with a few tweaks over the many years, as area leaders strive to make Tampa and Tampa Bay a more compelling place. Richard Florida, now called a

"leading urbanist," still preaches his message as head of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. His ideas helped set the stage for the "live-work-play" theme driving downtown comebacks in Tampa and St. Petersburg.

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