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Top employers have plans to hire staff



SUSAN STOCKER/STAFF PHOTO

Scott Agran, president of Lang Realty, is one of this year's South Florida Top Workplaces winners. About a third of Top Workplace companies plan to hire in the next 12 months.

South Florida job creation has been strong

By PAUL OWERS
Staff writer

At least a third of the best employers in South Florida plan to add employees in the next 12 months.

The employers are part of the Sun Sentinel's first ranking of 45 Top Workplaces in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties, revealed Thursday after seven months of employee interviews.

Fourteen of the employers said they'll hire a combined 263 people this year. The other employers did not respond in the survey, but several revealed hiring plans when asked later.

Their plans reflect a broader trend in South Florida's economy. Palm Beach County added 20,600 jobs between March 2014 and March 2015, the state announced last week. Broward County added 28,900.

Leading the hiring plans in the Top Workplaces survey are Nipro Diagnostics Inc., of Fort Lauderdale, and Lang Realty, of Boca Raton, which plan to hire 50 each.

"We anticipate welcoming 30 to 40 additional agents with a special emphasis in the area north of Manalapan and increasing our support staff by 10 percent," said Joanne Polin, a spokeswoman for Lang.

Among other companies:

■ All Star Recruiting of Coconut Creek plans to hire 40 people, nearly doubling its current employment of 47 and four times the number hired in the past year.

■ Cruise Planners, an American Express Travel Representative, also said hiring will increase this year. "We have already hired 11 new team mem-

Top Workplaces

Read about the best places to work in today's special section.

For videos and additional stories, go to SunSentinel.com/topworkplaces2015

bers to the Cruise Planners family. There are definite plans to hire more," said spokeswoman Lisa Granata.

■ CompHealth, a health care staffing firm in Fort Lauderdale, and Sonny Enterprises, a manufacturer of car wash equipment in Tamarac, both expect 15 percent growth in 2015.

■ The city of Coral Springs said it will see a "slight increase" to fill new public safety and technology positions.

■ HGi Technologies, a business technology firm in Miami Gardens; HornerXpress, a Fort Lauderdale distributor of pool equipment; and Bankers Healthcare Group, a financial services company in Davie, all plan to increase hiring as well.

"Team Horner is seeing a lot of growth as the company is expanding," said Kelly Ribaudo. "In order to support the growth of the business and the services provided to our customers, Team Horner is expecting to increase its recruiting efforts both internally and externally."

Overall, the amount of hiring is down significantly from the past year, when the Top Workplaces said they hired 687 people. But that number included 143 at Ed Morse Automotive Group, of Delray Beach, 128 at Molina Healthcare of Florida, in Miami, and 106 at Vi, which operates

See **JOBS, 2D**

Conference to dazzle tech world

eMerge Americas pushes S. Florida as a tech hub

By MARCIA HEROUX POUNDS
Staff writer

The second eMerge Americas — a mega-conference promoting South Florida as a tech hub — will grow even bigger this year, with more South Florida sizzle.

The event, May 1-5 at the Miami Beach Convention Center, is designed to bring together tech professionals and companies with global players in Latin America and Europe.

"There's really no major event anywhere in the world that's focused on technology and innovation while also focusing on being able to connect North America with Latin America and Europe," said Xavier Gonzalez, executive director of eMerge. And this year, add in Asia and the Middle East, in terms of participants, he said.

For tech professionals, the event presents an opportunity to

make new contacts, forge partnerships and even find a new job.

Employers including Ultimate Software, Magic Leap, Brightstar and World Fuel will be at the event to attract talent to their companies. Those who want to primarily attend the job fair can buy a discounted "hiring pass" for \$55, which also lets them into the Startup Showcase and some other events.

In 2014, Boca Raton entrepreneur Dan Cane and his team at Modernizing Medicine won the Startup Showcase in competition with startups from around the world. Participating companies this year will make their presentations to judges to win an investment of up to \$175,000.

Cane will moderate a panel of South Florida university presidents on May 4, discussing higher

See **TECH, 2D**

SUN SENTINEL » GAS WATCH

Broward County's lowest regular gas prices

Exxon	4900 N Federal Hwy., Lighthouse Point	\$2.35
Marathon	1490 W. S.R. 84, Fort Lauderdale	\$2.38
Valero	1199 W. S.R. 84, Fort Lauderdale	\$2.38
7-Eleven	1500 W. S.R. 84, Fort Lauderdale	\$2.39
Costco	1800 W Sample Road, Pompano Beach	\$2.41

Palm Beach County's lowest regular gas prices

J&A	4703 S. Military Trail, Lake Worth	\$2.43
BJ's	1540 W. Boynton Beach Blvd., Boynton Beach	\$2.45
Valero	1001 S. Congress Ave., Delray Beach	\$2.53
Gas & Food Store	408 N. Dixie Highway, Lantana	\$2.59
BP	11269 U.S. 1, North Palm Beach	\$2.59

Source: miamigaspri.com
NOTE TO READERS: Prices do not include all gas stations in each county and are updated frequently. Prices shown may only apply to cash purchases. For the most up-to-date gas prices, visit SunSentinel.com/gasprices.

— Cindy Kent

Taking a break

Columnist Doreen Christensen is off. Doreen's Deal will resume Sunday.

Norwegian plans to pour free drinks

By ARLENE SATCHELL
Staff writer

In the battle to attract new cruisers, Norwegian Cruise Line will offer free drinks on some shorter cruises from Miami to the Bahamas.

Beginning with its first sailing next year, Norwegian Sky will provide a range of dining and entertainment options for free, as well as unlimited beer, wine and premium spirits (valued up to \$11) at no extra cost.

Cruisers also will be able to get unlimited premium beverages when visiting the line's private island in the Bahamas: Great Stirrup Cay.

The move to all-inclusive pricing will "strong-

See **CRUISE, 3D**

Movie theater set to open in 2016 at the Mall at Wellington Green

By MIRIAM VALVERDE
Staff writer

Shoppers will soon be able to catch more than bargains at The Mall at Wellington Green.

Deerfield Beach-based Paragon Entertainment Holdings announced Wednesday plans to open a movie theater at the Wellington mall by winter 2016.

The Paragon Wellington will have eight screens; 1,100 seats, including luxury leather electric, reclining seats with footrests; a bar and lounge offering craft beer, wine and cocktails; and a food menu that includes flatbreads and other small plates. Online seat selection also will be available.

The theater, which will also feature 3D movies, will have its own entrance and will also be accessible from inside the mall. The theater will occupy about 40,000 square feet of the

current Ashley Furniture store that's above City Furniture, according to the theater company. Paragon says Ashley is not leaving the premises, just reducing its size.

In Florida, Paragon has theaters in Davie, Daytona Beach and Naples. The company also has locations in Virginia, Minnesota and Maryland.

"We're thrilled to welcome Paragon Theaters to our mall," said Scott Wolstein, chief executive at Starwood Retail Partners, operators of The Mall at Wellington Green. "The new theater will be a great addition to local entertainment options and will create a first-class movie going experience in Wellington."

The Mall at Wellington Green is at 10300 W. Forest Hill Blvd. in Wellington.

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