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GRADUATE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CO-HOSTS FIRST USFSP, USF JOINT EVENT

For a first time, the [Graduate Business Association](#) (GBA) at USF St. Petersburg and USF Tampa combined their energies and collaborated on a social event. The inaugural joint social event piggybacked on the June First Friday celebration in downtown St. Petersburg, with nearly 50 members and local business professionals attending the event at World of Beer.

GBA, the official body representing the graduate students in business programs within the USF System, is dedicated to helping students excel in and outside the classroom.

"The biggest asset GBA has to offer is this pool of highly educated individuals who will be tomorrow's leaders and executives," said Marcos Holanda, 24, a Finance and Management graduate student in the Kate Tiedemann College of Business. Holanda serves as the first president of the USFSP GBA, which is affiliated with but separate from the USF Tampa chapter. "We want to connect people in the St. Petersburg and Tampa business community with our students, and being integrated with GBA at USF Tampa helps to make that easier."

The USFSP group started during the spring semester after Holanda visited the USF Tampa chapter. Instead of merely serving as a liaison between students, he said he wanted to start gathering his own members at USFSP. The group is developing a leadership team and has begun planning events for the fall semester.

"This was our inaugural event to put the word out that we are here now, and graduate students should expect events to happen in the future – professional, social, and some academic workshops," Holanda said, adding that graduate students in all majors at USFSP are invited to join, including those for the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education.

"One of the hallmarks of graduate business education is the valuable networking that happens outside of the classroom," said Eric Douthirt, interim director of Graduate and Certificate Programs in the Kate Tiedemann College of Business. "To that end, the GBA facilitates lasting connections that turn classmates into colleagues and friends."



From left: Gary Patterson, interim dean, Kate Tiedemann College of Business; Megan Krieger, president, USF Tampa GBA; Lauren Thomas, director of operations, USF Tampa GBA; Erica Hausman, president, USFSP GBA, and Marcos Holanda, president, USFSP GBA.

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