

Nurturing Sectors of Community

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I hope that Central Florida can become an “efficient” world-class region where the three sectors of our community are nurtured, offering economic, political and social benefits to all members of our diverse community.

First and foremost, our business sector must be known as a profitable and responsible place to do business. Central Florida’s government sector must continue its reputation for accountability and leadership. And it is our social sector, comprised of our community and faith-based organizations, that must have a heartfelt mission, but be better governed, managed, and led.

Our social sector is often taken for granted, much like our world-class weather. One only has to recall the hurricanes of last year to remember the heroic efforts of the Second Harvest Food Bank, Hands On Orlando, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and our faith-based organizations in meeting the physical, emotional, and social needs of a battered but not beaten people of our region.

The Urban Institute recently ranked our social sector as one of the fastest growing in 50 large metropolitan areas. Is this a positive indicator for our community or is it a harbinger of storm clouds on the horizon?

The Rollins College Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center has created a focal point for our social sector. The Center is quietly carving out a niche, examining the economic impact of the social sector, as well as producing collaborations benefiting the community and providing an extensive nonprofit executive education curriculum.

If we are to become an “efficient” world-class community we will need to more fully examine and focus our efforts on our social sector.

Businesses can create wealth, government can provide opportunity, but only nonprofit organizations can change a community, one person at a time.