

ECHO

***Please note this meeting will be at the FSU Alumni Center**

Thursday, May 16th

Lunch Buffet	11:30 AM
Program Begins	12:00 PM
Introductions	12:10 PM
Presentation Begins	12:15 PM
Q&A	12:50 PM
Meeting Adjourned	1:00 PM

Onsite & Virtual Program

FSU Alumni Center
1030 W Tennessee St
Tallahassee, FL 32304

To RSVP, please email
mail@economic-club.com
or
Call: (850) 224-0711

PLEASE RSVP BY Noon on Wednesday, May 15th

Thank you to our May Luncheon Sponsor



The Opportunity Capital in Florida's Rocket Ship Economy

A Miami entrepreneur and business advisor to some of the most intriguing technology founders and investors in the world joins us this month to offer a glimpse of what Florida could become in the future. **Saif Ishoof** is Founder and Managing Partner of Lab22c, a business development firm whose clients include a flying boat builder and an artificial intelligence software developer. Florida has the fourth-largest economy in the U.S., the 16th-largest in the world, and is currently leading all other states with GDP growth of 6.1% annually. Nowhere has that growth been more evident than in Miami and the greater Miami-Dade County area.

"Florida is a global economy, sitting at number 16 in the world, with a clear path to get to number 10 within the next decade or so. But really to get there, it's not just the technology and the capital, it's human potential," Mr. Ishoof told Club Officers in a recent conference call. "But if we don't take the time to lean in and accelerate human potential, we will lose our competitive advantage as a region, as a state, and really as a G20 economy."

Prior to starting his firm, Mr. Ishoof served as Vice President of Engagement at Florida International University (FIU), building partnerships that generated more than \$70 million in institutional impact for students, alumni, community members, and key stakeholders. At the same time, he served as Senior Fellow to FIU's School of International & Public Affairs to increase its global reach with diplomats and international business and philanthropic leaders. He parlayed both experiences as part of a novel partnership between FIU and the City of Miami, serving as Senior Advisor of Innovation and Technology to Mayor Francis Suarez and founding the VentureMiami Initiative. His previous roles include founding Executive Director for City Year Miami, an AmeriCorps national service program for young adults.

Mr. Ishoof developed the entrepreneurial bug right after law school in 2000 when he founded AgriVerde, a software and Internet Service



Saif Ishoof
Founder and Managing Partner of Lab22c

Provider focused on vendor and supply-chain management for agri-business. He later served as CEO of FCT Technologies. Mr. Ishoof earned his bachelor's degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and his law degree from the University of Miami School of Law. He will be introduced by Club Board Chair Marion Hoffman, Vice President of Business Solutions, at Indelible Business Solutions.

Recent New Members

Charles H. Wingo, MD

Robert de Cardenas, NTT
[Data America](#)

Marcia Roitberg, Commu-
[nications LLC](#)

Amy Zubaly, FI Municipal
[Electric Association](#)

Trè Warren, First Franklin
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Chris Hart, Florida Court
[Clerks & Comptrollers](#)

Sara Bremer, Florida
[Court Clerks & Comptrol-](#)
[lers](#)

Towards Precision Medicine Therapies and Biomarkers for Neurodegenerative Diseases

The April Club meeting featured **Dr. Nilüfer Ertekin-Taner**, Professor and Enterprise Chair of Mayo Clinic's Department of Neuroscience. She provided a fascinating look at the very latest research and treatments for Alzheimer's disease and Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), a disease that progresses faster and at a younger age than Alzheimer's.



Left to right: Karen Moore, Robert de Cardenas, Dr. Taner, Katrina Rolle, and John Ferguson.

Her team of 200 investigators at Mayo Clinic's Jacksonville campus use genetics to get information about possible risk factors, but it does not give specific information. "Basically, think of it like the general address. There is a fire so the firefighters are called, and we say there's a fire in this general region. That's the kind of information that these kinds of studies give us. But they don't tell us exactly which house is on fire. And they don't tell us what caused the fire."

While diagnosis has gotten better, there are still few cures for neurodegenerative diseases, due to economics. "The cost of putting a single drug on the market is on average over a billion dollars," Dr. Ertekin-Taner told Club members. "So pharmaceutical companies cannot commit unless those drug targets are de-risked for them. And the groups that are going to really identify those drug targets and de-risk it for big pharmaceutical companies are academic groups. Places like Mayo Clinic and other places."

Researchers look at genes and also environmental factors that may impact genes. "This combination either puts you at risk for diseases like Alzheimer's disease, or may protect you against it." Because of Florida's ethnically-diverse population, a great deal of new research is being done here. A grant from the Florida Department of Health enabled Mayo to conduct research on biomarkers – particularly in African-Americans.

The research has produced some results. New types of biomarkers have increased the diagnostic accuracy of Alzheimer's disease by up to 8%. "We also have a new drug that targets the amyloid in the brain. It's not a silver bullet but a start of more to come." (You can read more and listen to the Club's podcast with Dr. Nilüfer Ertekin-Taner on our [Podcasts and Summaries webpage](#).)

Name Badges



We have newly designed name badges. If you have an old name badge and would like one with the new design, the cost is \$15.

If interested, you can purchase a new name badge at the [Club's website](#) or call the office at 850-224-0711.

Membership Installment Payments Due

If you have elected to pay your dues in two payments, statements were sent via email on Monday, May 13. If you have not received your statement, please let us know. We may not have your current contact information. All members that have not paid were removed from membership and will need to submit a new application for membership that includes the initiation fee of \$100. **Credit card payment is available through our website, or send in your check so that we can count you as a continuing member in good standing.**

Contact Lisette Mariner, Economic Club of Florida Executive Director at mail@economic-club.com or (850) 224-0711 to update your information.. **Note the Club address is 325 John Knox Rd, L103, Tallahassee, FL 32303**

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Onsite/Virtual Programs

June 25, 2024



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President

Institute of Makers
Explosives

FSU Alumni

July 23, 2024



Michael Heekin
CEO

Kreuzberg Partners

FSU Alumni

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Member Spotlight

The Honorable William Dawson "Bill" Gunter, Jr., age 89, died peacefully at his home in Tallahassee, FL, surrounded by family on April 8, 2024. He was part of a group of Florida public officials in the nineteen seventies and eighties, including Governors Reubin Askew, Lawton Chiles and Bob Graham, following the tradition of Governor LeRoy Collins in their commitment to the principles of good government and social justice. Bill served in the Florida Senate, the U.S. Congress, and on the Florida Cabinet as Insurance Commissioner, State Treasurer and Fire Marshall for 12 years.

In 1989 Bill joined what became Rogers Gunter Vaughn Insurance in Tallahassee as a partner, working with son Bart, and longtime friends, Sam Rogers, Sr., and Sam Rogers, Jr., serving intermittently as president, CEO and Chairman of the Board until his retirement in 2018. In 2003, he joined the Board of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents which he chaired in 2010. In 2013, Gunter was designated as a "Great Floridian" by the Governor and Florida Cabinet in recognition of his lifetime of public service to the people of his beloved "Sunshine State". In 2021, the Club honored Bill with the Stan Tait Memorial Award.

Bill loved to travel with his wife, Kathy and son Joel and other family members, including 12 trips to 14 countries in Africa, climbing the side of a Rwandan volcano in his 70's to visit the mountain gorillas. He was also the first to volunteer to go down in a steel cage to see great white sharks off the coast of South Africa.

Bill was known for devotion to his family, compassion for those in need, love of adventure and willingness to mentor the young. The grandson of a minister who served churches in north and central Florida, he served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher and was a faithful member of the Trinity United Methodist Church at the time of his passing.



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