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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CREATIVETAMPABAY SALONS TAKE FLIGHT  
BASED ON DR. FLORIDA'S "RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS"**

TAMPA, Fla. (April 20, 2004) – Have you ever seen a man walking down the street with tattoos, body piercings and bright blue hair? What were your first reactions? Did you think he was trouble? Or did it occur to you that he may be the greatest innovator of the today's technology? He is part of the creative class.

The creative class surrounds you everywhere. In fact, over 30 percent of the entire workforce is part of this group that is the driving force of economic growth. CreativeTampaBay, Inc. recently began an initiative to attract and maintain the creative class in the Tampa Bay area.

CreativeTampaBay, Inc. took flight after featured guest speaker Dr. Richard Florida challenged a room full of Tampa Bay area business members to build an economy that thrives on creativity. He presented his book, "The Rise of the Creative Class," which challenges cities to develop business principles that attract talented people who are innovators in the worlds of technology, research and education, architecture and design, and arts and entertainment.

The non-profit organization took its grassroots in 2003 when prominent Tampa Bay business members Michelle Bauer, Amie Devero, Karen Raihill, Deanne Roberts, Deborah Talbot and Sigrid Tidmore took Dr. Florida's challenge to create an organization that turns Tampa Bay into a creative community.

“Tampa’s economic competitiveness in the next decade will depend on the quality of talent we keep and attract, plus our ability to market ourselves as a place where innovations and new ideas are embraced,” said Deanne Roberts, the owner of Roberts Communications.

“CreativeTampaBay was formed to promote the rise of the creative class.”

CreativeTampaBay, Inc. meets every month in local points of thriving in creativity. The socials, which are called salons, give local community members an opportunity to engage in intellectual conversations while being surrounded by a stimulating environment.

The salons also serve as a driving force to following Dr. Florida’s principles. He pushes a people climate, versus a business climate. “The bottom line is that cities need a people climate more than they need a business climate. This means supporting creativity across the board—in all of its various facets and dimensions—and building a community that is attractive to creative people, not just to high-tech companies,” Florida said.

CreativeTampaBay, Inc. encourages business members attending the salons to have forums about the creative class. The salons invite people to talk about the challenges posed by the community’s rich diversity. One of their guiding principles is to embrace diversity and to invest in the infrastructure that fosters creativity.

CreativeTampaBay, Inc. invites the public to the free after hours social. “CreativeTampaBay, Inc. is everyone’s opportunity to get together and find ways to work as a team to cultivate the creative class in Tampa Bay,” Roberts said. “This is a game we have to play as a team.”

For more information about CreativeTampaBay, Inc. monthly salons, log on to:  
[www.creativetampabay.com](http://www.creativetampabay.com).

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