



Paul A. Sohl, Rear Adm. USN (Ret)
CEO, Florida High Tech Corridor Council

Paul Sohl is CEO of the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, an economic development initiative of the University of Central Florida, the University of South Florida and the University of Florida, to attract, retain and grow high tech industry and innovation – and the workforce to support it – in a 23-county region.

As CEO, Sohl facilitates collaboration between the three universities and their partners in economic development, including more than 25 local and regional economic development organizations, 14 state colleges and 12 workforce development boards.

He also oversees The Corridor Council’s portfolio of programs supporting research, marketing, workforce and entrepreneurship. This includes its cornerstone Matching Grants Research Program, which since inception in 1996 has generated over \$1 billion in verified downstream impacts, and stemCONNECT, a program that inspires K-12 students to pursue high tech, high-wage careers.

Sohl joined The Corridor Council in June 2020, following more than three decades of service in the U.S. Navy. In his last command, Sohl led over 500 civilian and military personnel at the Navy’s Operational Test & Evaluation Force in Norfolk, Virginia, where he directed the operational testing and evaluation of Navy warfighting systems and capabilities, and reported directly to the vice chief of naval operations.

He has also commanded the Naval Aviation Fleet Readiness Center enterprise headquartered in Patuxent River, Maryland, where he was responsible for a workforce of over 16,000 and an operating budget of \$2.9 billion; the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division and Naval Test Wing Pacific in China Lake and Point Mugu, California; and, the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast in Jacksonville, Florida. Sohl has extensive experience in simulation and training as a program director and test pilot, and has served two tours overseas for Operation Desert Shield and Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2019, Sohl founded the BackFin Partners consultancy to support leadership and innovation at defense firms contracted by the U.S. government. He has also guest lectured at UCF on the topic of industrial engineering and on engineering leadership and innovation.

Sohl holds a bachelor’s degree in aeronautical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a master’s degree in aeronautical and astronautical engineering from Stanford University. Additionally, he is a graduate and former Commanding Officer of the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, Patuxent River, Maryland.

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