

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – CARLOS BUQUERAS



With three decades of distinguished Florida port leadership, SeaPort Manatee Executive Director Carlos Buqueras is globally renowned for his visionary achievements in all facets of seaport business development and operations, including containerized, bulk and breakbulk cargos, as well as cruise and ferry industry prominence.

Since taking the helm at SeaPort Manatee in January 2012, Mr. Buqueras, under the foresighted direction of the Manatee County Port Authority, has collaborated with public- and private-sector partners in leading the diverse Central-Southwest Florida Gulf Coast port through a period of unprecedented accomplishment, highlighted by numerous records for total tonnage throughput and containerized and bulk cargo activity.

Under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Buqueras, SeaPort Manatee has, in addition to shattering a host of cargo activity records:

- Attracted additional ocean carrier services, including direct weekly services of World Direct Shipping between Mexico and SeaPort Manatee, while continuing to be the Southeast gateway for longtime tenant Del Monte Fresh Produce;
- Emerged as a preferred hub for shipment of liquid bulk cargos, including through movement of 370 million gallons a year of gasoline and addition of marine fuel supply operations of World Fuel Services;
- Established itself as a project cargo trendsetter, with the opening of the \$60 million Air Products LNG heat exchanger fabrication facility immediately across U.S. 41 from port property;
- Advanced the International Trade Hub at Port Manatee as a productive link for global commerce, including through opening of promotional offices in Latin America and Europe;
- Significantly augmented port infrastructure, including development of all-new Berth 14 and adjacent intermodal container yard; fortification of Berth 9; and, with securing of multiple federal grants, enhancement of security-related infrastructure;

- Achieved certification as a member of the federal Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) homeland security program, facilitating expedited clearance of import shipments; and
- Consistently exceeded financial goals with restructured staff while initiating and implementing a long-range master plan, pointing to sustained successes as a regional economic engine.

Immediately prior to coming aboard at SeaPort Manatee, Mr. Buqueras served 22 years as director of business development at Port Everglades in South Florida's Broward County, responsible for \$100 million in annual port revenue. During this time, Port Everglades doubled its containerized cargo volume; advanced public-private-partnership development of a state-of-the-industry intermodal container transfer facility (ICTF) and major expansion of containerized cargo berth and terminal capabilities, while maintaining environmental stewardship as a priority; earned distinction as operator of the No. 1 U.S. export foreign-trade zone; and increased cruise business by 70 percent, including through long-term agreements with the world's largest cruise ship companies.

Mr. Buqueras is an active member of the boards of directors of such organizations as the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, Manatee Economic Development Council and Gulf Coast Latin Chamber of Commerce and has served a four-year term on the Florida District Export Council, under appointment by U.S. Secretary of Commerce John Bryson.

In addition, Mr. Buqueras is currently serving as the Chairman of the Florida Ports Council, which functions as the professional association for Florida's fifteen public seaports.

Carlos Buqueras previously was chairman of the Broward Alliance's International Marketing Committee, vice president of Greater Fort Lauderdale Sister Cities International and board member of such bodies as the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau's Marketing Advisory Committee, Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Hollywood (Fla.) Office of Tourism and Florida Atlantic University's International Advisory Board.

Mr. Buqueras was recognized as one of the 2022 Power 100 by the Tampa Bay Business Journal's guide to the region's most influential business leaders.

Prior to coming to Florida in 1990, Mr. Buqueras spent 10 years with Corning, N.Y.-based Corning Inc. and its predecessor entity, Corning Glass Works, responsible for managing international distribution functions at importing and exporting facilities, developing business and distribution strategies, and enhancing profitability.

Mr. Buqueras is fluent in five languages – English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Catalán– and holds a master's in business administration degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University of Madison, N.J.