



Tampa Bay

2024 Annual Report

TiE Tampa Bay
Established 2012

Letter from the Chapter President



As we publish the 2024 Annual Report, I am pleased to share that we are on a strong trajectory toward an outstanding 2025. At the end of 2023, our former President, [Travis Jennings](#), articulated a vision of Growth and Innovation that led to a more engaged and committed membership base, which has been instrumental in our ongoing success.

In 2024, we maintained strong momentum across several key areas. We ushered in [Mehak Arora](#) as our Executive Director who helped in anchoring our operations. Our paid membership expanded to **65 members** statewide, enabling us to deliver a diverse range of programs. Collectively, our members contributed over **250 hours of mentoring**. Our LinkedIn following more than doubled, enhancing our visibility and attracting additional sponsorship. I would like to highlight some notable achievements from the past year.

[TiE Global](#) became a member of the [United Nations Global Compact](#), an organization dedicated to implementing Universal Sustainability Principles. This milestone reaffirms our deep commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are integral to TiE's mission and vision. We have thoughtfully embedded these principles into all our programs and initiatives, locally, ensuring that our impact consistently aligns with the SDGs and delivers meaningful value to our members and the broader ecosystem.

The TiE Women initiative was a standout success, receiving **60** applications from five states. Our winner, [Alex Edquist](#), CEO of Good Agriculture, represented us at the Global Event in Bengaluru, India. Good Agriculture, since then, has successfully secured funding to sustain its near term operations.

Our initiatives with students made a significant impact. The TiE Young Entrepreneurs (TYE) program had us sending **Aayu+**, a team from Middleton High School to the Global Competition in San Jose, California. At the university level, we expanded our applicant pool from one to three Universities. The winner, **Lope** from USF, also represented us at the Global event in San Jose. Participation at these global events exposes students to diverse and innovative ventures from across the globe while engaging with industry experts who are available on hand to give advice.

Our commitment to investing in startups was reinforced by member involvement in two companies — [MedZoomer](#) and [Wevo](#). Additionally, through our TiEFAN program, we onboarded several promising startups via our rigorous vetting process, contributing to a growing deal pipeline.

2024 also marked the re-establishment of TiEcon Tampa, an event that successfully overcame the challenges posed by Hurricane Helene. Thanks primarily to the dedication of our team and the resilience of our panelists and attendees, we hosted **150+ participants** on the day. We are grateful for the community's support and look forward to TiEcon Tampa scheduled for October 8th, 2025.

Our social events, including outings to a New York Yankees game, J.C. Newman Cigar Factory, and Cigar City Brewing, provided valuable networking opportunities and strengthened our community bonds. Our monthly *Show and Tell* sessions provided a platform for members to showcase their companies and share their expertise, often in collaboration with our ecosystem partners. These monthly events also created opportunities for our members to network.

Recognizing that fostering entrepreneurship in the Tampa Bay area requires collaboration, we expanded our partnerships. Alongside the Indo-US Chamber of Commerce, we formalized agreements with Embarc, Tampa Bay Wave, and TBIC. We also continued to strengthen our relationships with USF and EDI2. In 2025, we plan to engage additional organizations aligned with our mission.

In accordance with our bylaws, the President serves a one-year term. By Q4 of 2024, our general body had elected [Chitra Kanagaraj](#) to lead us in 2025. Under her leadership, our programming has become more dynamic, and our reach is expanding beyond the Greater Tampa Bay area.

Finally, I extend my sincere gratitude to all TiE members for their efforts in mentoring and nurturing startups, the TiE Tampa Bay Board for their continued support to guide and define our goals, and our sponsors who truly believe in giving back to the community. Fittingly, I close with a message from our Mayor, Jane Castor, who recently [highlighted](#) TiE Tampa Bay's relevance in the local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Saligame".

Ramesh Saligamé
Chapter President 2024

TiE Tampa Bay 2024 Sponsors



Platinum



Gold



Community Partners



TiE Tampa Bay 2024 Charter Members



SRIDHAR AKULA
NICK ALMAN
SUHAS APTE
SURESH ATTAL
SURAJ BADLANI
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JOHN SMYTH
KANNAN SREEDHAR
NAWAL TANEJA
KARTHIK VISWANATHAN

**When you join TiE Tampa Bay, you're part of a global
network and mission to foster entrepreneurship**



2024 Staff & Board Members



Dr. Kiran Patel
Chairman Emeritus

Board of Directors



Mehak Arora
Executive Director



Dr. Michael Cross
Election Chair



Chitra Kanagaraj
Treasurer



Sara Hand
Board Member



Travis Jennings
Immediate Past President



Zahira Lehri
TIE Women Co-Chair



Valerie McDevitt
Board Member



Shilen Patel
Board Member



Vatsal Patel
Board Member



Donovan Pyle
Onboarding Chair



Ramesh Saligamé
President 2024



Saru Seshadhri
TIE Angels Chair

- Through practical learning, boot camps, workshops, and pitch competitions, TiE U equips university student startups to successfully launch and grow their businesses, creating a dynamic ecosystem that transforms campus ideas into viable enterprises
- From 20 applications, 8 teams from 3 Universities participated in the TiE Tampa Bay Pitch Competition
- TiE mission, centered around the role of mentoring, offers relationship building
- TiE Tampa Bay's winner, Lope, was one of 36 chapters participated in finals in San Jose, CA



TiE Young Entrepreneur (TYE)



- ♦ The TiE Young Entrepreneurs (TYE), established in 2005
- ♦ Global Program for high school students (grades 9 – 12) to learn entrepreneurship, invention, and innovation
- ♦ Started with an initial pool of **1,100 initial applications** globally. **97% of the participants** reported increased ability to lead and confidence to work effectively in teams
- ♦ Pitch competitions and winners identified in each chapter
- ♦ There were **30 teams** globally that participated in 2024 Global Pitch Competition in San Jose, CA included *Makers' Faire*, bootcamps, access to legal, business and market consultants



AUXILIUM

TiE SV

AAYU+

TiE Tampa Bay

SOUNDWAVE

TiE Seattle

AQUATICO

TiE Delhi-NCR

KAAGAZ

TiE Chennai

V-SIGN

TiE Kerala

REST CUSTOMER VALIDATION

- TiE is working to close the \$1.7 Trillion financing gap for women led businesses. From 2022 to 2023, women-led businesses saw a drop from 14% to 9% in VC funding
- Access to funding and mentorship is crucial in the early stages of the business while networking and financing become crucial in later stages
- At TiE Tampa Bay, 60 women-led startups applied to participate in the pitch competition, with 8 advancing to the final event
- To prepare, 22 dedicated mentors each invested ~10 hours with their assigned teams
- The winner, Good Ag, went on to represent TiE Tampa Bay at the global finals in Bengaluru, India, showcasing their innovation and connecting with a worldwide network of women entrepreneurs and investors.



TiECON Tampa 2024



Despite the challenges posed by a hurricane warning, TiECON Tampa 2024 was a resounding success, living up to its theme—Power of Possibility. Held at the Shanna & Bryan Glazer JCC, the event brought together over 20 inspiring speakers and welcomed more than 150 attendees. This year's TiECON demonstrated the power of collective effort and resilience, aligning strongly with our mission to increase TiE Tampa Bay's visibility, leadership presence, and community integration—underscored by robust sponsor and in-kind partner engagement.



ENGAGEMENT with Board, CMs & AMS



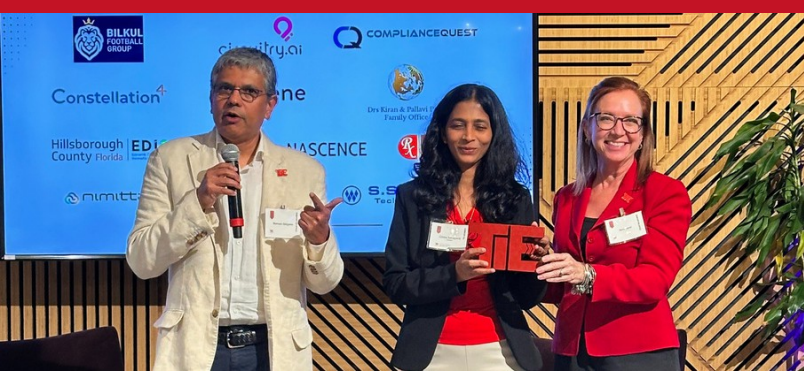


Looking Ahead in 2025!

TiE

Tampa Bay

- Each November, TiE Tampa Bay's Annual General Body Meeting brings our community together to celebrate accomplishments and welcome new leadership. The Board elections, held from July through September, mark a key transition point, as outgoing members step down and new leaders step in.
- In 2024, we thanked Saru Seshadri, Michael Cross, and Travis Jennings for their dedicated service as they completed their two-year Board terms.
- We also welcomed Dr. Bill Goodman, Priya Balasundaram, and Aditya Kulkarni to the Board, each bringing fresh energy and insights.
- Chitra Kanagaraj was elected as President, and Sara Hand was named President-Elect for 2026. The election process was administered by Dr. Michael Cross, to whom we're especially grateful.
- We're excited for this new chapter and confident that our incoming leadership will continue to drive TiE Tampa Bay forward with intent and heart.



About TiE Tampa Bay



TiE Global is the world's largest nonprofit organization for entrepreneurs, with 60+ chapters across 16+ countries and 15,000+ members. TiE's global mission is to foster entrepreneurship through mentoring, networking, education, funding, and incubation. Tampa Bay has one of the fastest growing chapters of TiE Global, working with our ecosystem partners and global network to advance the practice of entrepreneurship in Tampa Bay and around the world.

Our Chapter

We champion and invest in **the next generation** of entrepreneurship.

Inspired by the grit and long-term vision of our founders, we are a service organization dedicated to the next generation of entrepreneurship—one that is more multicultural, more female, and more global. It understands that technology is at the center of innovation and evolution. And it means investing in young people and young ideas. Our members strive to educate, develop and inspire the community and each other, and to advance the practice of entrepreneurship in Tampa Bay and around the world.

Our Focus



Access

Every entrepreneur should have the same opportunities, regardless of age, race, gender or background. So we elevate underrepresented entrepreneurs with the education and access to succeed.



Investment

Investing in early stage companies is essential to the health and wealth of the community. So we connect rising entrepreneurs and accredited investors through funding and mentorship programs.



Engagement

An entrepreneur's journey never ends, and their success is limitless. So we provide continued engagement and global connections to celebrate and advance their success.

Our Roots

TiE was founded in 1992 by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs who immigrated from the Indus region of South Asia. TiE's origins as "The Indus Entrepreneur" formed the foundation of a community built on the vision and values of its Indian-American pioneers. Since its founding, TiE has evolved to include people of all backgrounds as a truly diverse, global network and advocate for inclusion.

Our Values



Collectivism

Sharing resources and working for the collective good of the community.



Hospitality

Approaching relationships with a service mindset and committing to helping others.



Education

Continually investing in mentorship and scholarship and celebrating achievement.

World's Largest Volunteer Led Non Profit For Entrepreneurs



16

COUNTRIES

60+

CHAPTERS

3,000+

CHARTER MEMBERS

15,000+

MEMBERS



Tampa Bay

The next generation of entrepreneurship