



Ambassador Visits Florida to Promote Innovation

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From April 25 to 26, Ambassador François Delattre traveled to Northern Florida in a dynamic visit that was marked by a series of events honoring French-American partnership in the field of innovation.

Ambassador Delattre toured the Jacksonville offices of the French-owned wind instrument manufacturer **Buffet Crampon** on April 25, before visiting the \$200-million manufacturing plant of the French battery producer **Saft**.

Opened in 2011, the plant currently employs over 300 workers in the production of lithium-ion batteries common in electronics of all kinds.

In a visit on Thursday to **Fort Caroline**, the first French settlement in North America, established in 1564. Amb. Delattre paid tribute to the longstanding ties connecting the two countries.

He later honored those connections again in a **ceremony in Tallahassee**, where he recognized the sacrifices made by six American veterans who served on French soil during World War II. The men were awarded the Legion of Honor, France's highest award.

The Ambassador also attended the launch of the Floridian French Caucus, a program led by state senator Anitere Flores and state representative Lake Ray. Modeled after the Congressional French Caucus based in Washington, DC, the group will work to enhance ties between France and Florida.

The following day, Amb. Delattre traveled to the **University of Florida in Gainesville**, where he was invited by the Provost Joe Glover to give a luncheon speech about France's history of and commitment to innovation, especially through cooperation with American companies and institutions.

He toured the University of Florida's Nanoscale Research Facility, part of the **Nanoscience Institute for Medical & Engineering Technology**, as well as the **France-Florida Research Institute**, dedicated to promoting cultural exchanges and academic partnerships between French and Florida institutions. UF has very active collaborations with France, in particular in Engineering, supported by the **Partner University Fund**, **Chateaubriand-STEM fellowships**, and a **NSF PIRE** project with Japan. Several students have obtained or will obtain dual PhD degrees.

Amb. Delattre then delivered the commencement speech at the graduation ceremony for the University of Florida's Graduate Schools in which he not only congratulated the students for their accomplishments, but invited them to reflect on how the knowledge they had acquired over the course of their studies could be applied to their future as citizens of our global community.

- Read the Ambassador's Speech from the University of Florida Doctoral Graduation: <http://www.franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4530>

- Read also <http://www.franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4528>