

ART LINARES, Sr.



Art Linares Sr., vice chairman, director and partner of Greenskies Renewable Energy in Middletown, Conn., was the first person to recognize, encourage and actively support the plan to launch an integrated solar photovoltaic development company being developed by his son, Art Linares Jr., a 2011 University of Tampa graduate, and future son-in-law.

Linares actively mentored the two young entrepreneurs, sharing the knowledge and experience he had gained through his own long business career while also providing Greenskies with the financial support it needed to get off the ground. He also provided the company, which was launched in 2008, with its first base of operations, the basement of his Westbrook, Conn., home.

Linares was born in Havana, Cuba in 1959, the same year Fidel Castro seized political and military power. Five years later, Linares, his parents and his four brothers settled in Montclair, N.J., after having first flown from Cuba to Spain where the family lived for six months.

Linares launched his business career when he became a real estate agent in the early 1980s. He remains heavily involved in commercial real estate, with a portfolio that includes commercial real estate holdings throughout the United States and abroad.

From there, he would go on to own a successful roofing company in Florida.

In the early 1990s, he joined a partnership that acquired the Party City store in Orange, Conn., launching the retail phase of his business career. Over the next 18 years, Linares would open six Party City outlets throughout the Northeast as well as about a dozen temporary, seasonal stores.

Today, aside from his duties at Greenskies, Linares continues to be involved in commercial real estate and is also involved in the restaurant business and as an investor/advisor with a number of small start-up companies. For the past five years, he has been a member of the board of directors of the Westbrook, Conn., YMCA and the advisory board of the John P. Lowth Entrepreneurship Center of the Sykes College of Business at the University of Tampa.