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## **Director's Report – DRCI**

**March 2023**

**Entrepreneur Program Update** - There are currently 12 *Program Companies* in the Don Ryan Center with several others in the pipeline

- STARTUP companies
  1. Hull & Husk
  2. Hilton Head Coffee Roasters
  3. Wheeler Trucking (Hardeeville)
  4. Capital Chiropractic (Hardeeville)
  5. Prime IV Hydration
- HEROES companies
  1. OPFOB (STARTUP)
  2. Elite Support Americas (STARTUP)
- GROWTH
  1. MXM Productions
  2. Barbers of the Lowcountry
  3. CrossFlight
  4. Universal Bookkeeper
  5. LoCone
- Standing meetings with every company at least 2 times per month
- Multiple screening calls with leads that are interested in learning about our Programs
- Due Diligence Meetings with Porch Outfitters, Beach Side Tires and Mom Hub of the Lowcountry for the GROWTH Program

## **Operations**

- Launched "How I Built It" series with Greg Parker from Parker's
- Attended several GBCC and HHI Chamber events and ribbon cuttings

## **Mentor Program**

- 70 Mentors

## **Partnerships**

### **Hardeeville**

- Working with City of Hardeeville to cross-pollinate social media sites DRCI/HDV
- HDV Newsletter
- Kickoff Meeting with Capital Chiropractic
- Planning Business 301 Event for April. The focus will be on finances and funding

### **BlacQuity**

- 2023 Classes began on 3/21

### **Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation**

- Working with them on multiple projects

### **Jasper Chamber**

- Planning weekly office hours for Hardeeville/Jasper County at Jasper Chamber
- Cross-pollinating DRCI/Jasper social media

### **SCORE**

- Working with SCORE to find additional mentors for DRCI

### **Greater Bluffton Chamber**

- Lunch and Learn at The HUB on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Presenter was DRCI mentor Stu Haney
- Planning another Lunch and Learn at The HUB on April 6<sup>th</sup>
- Attended Coffee and Connection

### **Beaufort Digital Corridor**

- Judged TechStars Event on March 26<sup>th</sup>

### **HHCA**

- Taught Entrepreneur Class on 3/22. Prepared them for Shark Tank happening in May
- Sponsored Robotics team headed to championship in Dallas, TX

### **River Ridge Academy**

- Presented at Career Day (2-day event)
- Sponsored Robotics team headed to championship in Dallas, TX

### **HHI Chamber of Commerce**

- Networking at Conversations & Cocktail event
- Attending ribbon cuttings

### **BusinessATTRACT**

- Attended BusinessAttract monthly meeting

## **Marketing**

- Working with Town of Bluffton to cross-pollinate social media sites DRCI/TOB
- Social Media
- Newsletter
- Promoting How I Built It – Greg Parker all month

## **Planning 2023 repeating scheduled events**

- **"How I Built It"**
  - A monthly event where successful businesspeople tell their story about how they started and grew their company. Launching in March 2023 with Greg Parker
- **"Business Health Check Up"**
  - Complete online business health checkup questionnaire and schedule a meeting to go over the health of your business, discuss strategies.
  - Feeder to one of our STARTUP or GROWTH Programs
  - Phase one of the program starts January 2023
  - This program was based off a suggestion from Councilwoman Frazier at DRCI's update to Council, October 2022.
- **"Pre-START"**
  - A quarterly event where we go explain things to consider when starting your business

## **Board of Directors Meeting**

- Communication with all Board members who have not met the required level of meeting attendance to gauge their desire to continue to serve
- Recruiting a new board member to replace Bill Fugue who resigned due to time commitments
- Recruiting two new ex officio member to replace Ray Deal and Nate Van Epp who resigned due to time commitments
- Reviewing ex-officio members and possible reshuffle based on more flexibility after recent By-Law modifications

## March Story

Once upon a time, there was a beloved animated television show called "The Jetsons." The show was set in a futuristic world where people traveled in flying cars, had robots for maids, and enjoyed all sorts of technological wonders that seemed beyond imagination.

Years passed, and as technology advanced, the world began to resemble more and more like the Jetsons' world. And at the forefront of this technological revolution was the Don Ryan Center for Innovation, a cutting-edge business incubator that was making strides in fields such as artificial intelligence and flying cars.

The Don Ryan Center was named for a visionary entrepreneur named Don Ryan, who believed that technology could be used to solve some of the world's most pressing problems. Today, a team of the brightest minds from around the town of Bluffton work together tirelessly to create The HUB of entrepreneurship of the Lowcountry.

One day, a group of visitors arrived at the Don Ryan Center, including the creators of the Jetsons show. They were amazed by what they saw, and couldn't believe that the world they had imagined on screen was becoming a reality.

As they toured the facility, they saw The Fab where they could do rapid prototyping, the conference rooms where their program companies and partners were working on things like F-35 fighter jet pilot training, Drones and even working on flying cars to the Lowcountry that looked like they had come straight out of their show.

The creators of the Jetsons were thrilled to see their vision of the future becoming a reality, and they were even more excited to see that the Don Ryan Center was leading the charge. They realized that the future was no longer just a dream, but a tangible reality that was within reach. And so, the story of the Jetsons and the Don Ryan Center for Innovation became a symbol of hope for a better future. As the world continued to evolve and change, people looked to the Don Ryan Center as a beacon of progress, a place where anything was possible. And who knows? Maybe someday, we'll all be living in a world just like the Jetsons.