
Director's Report – DRCI

February 2024

Entrepreneur Program Update

- STARTUP companies
 1. Hardee Greens
 2. ChangePoint
 3. Petitek
 4. ESA
 5. Pro Series Golf Irons
 6. OPFOB
- GROWTH
 1. Beachside Tire
 2. Bluffton Electric
 3. LaSource
 4. Delta Roofing

Key efforts in February

- Multiple screening calls with leads that are interested in learning about our Programs
- Kickoff Meeting with new GROWTH customer, Delta Roofing
- Kickoff Meeting with new STARTUP customer, Pro Series Golf Iron
- OPFOB is back at the DRCI as a HEROES company
- Diligence meeting with Anna Crisp, Pole Fitness
- Met with Sonya Harmas and her mother about their literary and music business -gave marketing advice
- Walk-in meeting with George Russo - STARTUP candidate

Economic Development Update

Overview

Following the enactment of the Economic Development Ordinance, the DRCI is increasingly engaged in more traditional economic development activities. Our current primary focus encompasses two critical elements:

1. The implementation of a comprehensive marketing strategy aimed at enhancing awareness of the EDO program. A meticulously crafted marketing plan has been developed, encompassing a range of activities designed to generate leads and facilitate communication. This plan includes targeted messaging, digital media initiatives, social media engagement, and other strategies to effectively disseminate information and streamline the application process for potential participants. The month of February has seen initial creation of the draft plan and assets with the help of various AI software.
2. The ongoing development of the Buckwalter Place Project, situated in proximity to the LEC, is another key undertaking. DRCI is slated to occupy a portion of Building A, and various aspects of this project are now entering a phase requiring detailed review and oversight.

In addition to these projects, we maintain regular interactions with Assistant Town Manager Chris Forster and the BCEDC. These meetings are instrumental in ensuring that all parties are consistently informed about emerging opportunities and collaborative endeavors that may benefit any or all of the involved organizations. Our goal is to foster a synergistic approach to economic development, leveraging the strengths and resources of each entity to maximize impact and efficiency.

Key efforts in February

- A deeper dive into EDIP marketing plan; begin creation of key assets
- Second meeting with Rick Maggin of the Bluffton Pickleball Club and Chris Forster, TOB
- Review of second set of architectural renderings for Buckwalter Place development
- Attended BCEDC Board Meeting

Operations and Marketing

- Nominated for 2023 Golden Oyster Award – Member of the Year
- Met with Paul Vincent from BJWSA - potential lunch and learn about their new small business funding programs

- David Nelems spoke to 150+ people at the recent HHI/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce event on AI
- Reviewed DRCI budget
- SBAC Board meeting
- Hosted the Professional Women's Network of the Lowcountry at The HUB
- Continued work on AI event that begins in April
- Working with HHCA to teach 3 entrepreneurship classes in March to prep students for Shark Tank at The HUB
- Met with Robin Bienemann from Integrated Growth Advisors who ran an incubator at University of Connecticut

Mentor Program

- 70 Mentors
- Planning DRCI Mingle for March 7th
- Signed up new Mentor Eric Legeikis

Partnerships

Hardeeville

- Hosted Hardeeville Business Bites Lunch & Learn at the Hardeeville Rec Center
- Working on AI Educational Series
- Working with City of Hardeeville on social media sites DRCI/HDV

BlacQuity

- Next cohort starts in March

Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation

- Working with them on multiple projects
- Attended Board Meeting
- Blasch Precision Ceramics rented conference room. Worked with them & BCEDC to keep them in Beaufort County

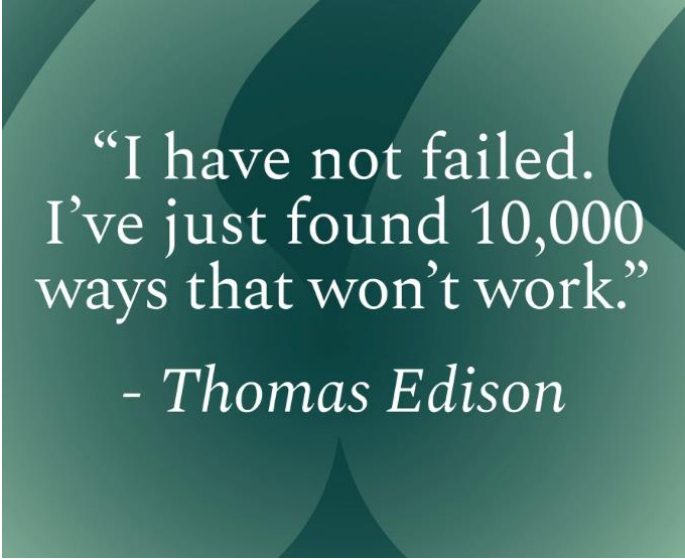
Greater Bluffton Chamber

- Nominated for a Golden Oyster Award – Member of the Year
- Attended Greater Bluffton Business After Hours event

Hilton Head – Bluffton Chamber

- Presented at the HHI/Bluffton Chamber event on AI

Entrepreneurial Thought of the Month



“I have not failed.
I’ve just found 10,000
ways that won’t work.”

- *Thomas Edison*