



**Date: September 30, 2016**

Memo To: Town of Bluffton Town Council; Don Ryan Center for Innovation Board of Directors; Marc Orlando, Town Manager

From: David Nelems, Don Ryan Center for Innovation Executive Director

**RE: SEPTEMBER 2016 DON RYAN CENTER FOR INNOVATION REPORT**

### **CENTER OPERATIONS**

- **2016 Golf** event successfully held on September 26<sup>th</sup>. 98 golfers.
- **Updated DRCI Golf website.**
- **Updated DRCI website.**
- Awarded **AT&T check** for Girls Who Code Program.
- Submitted grant application for the **“Beaufort Fund”**.
- Submitted grant application for **MASC**.
- Met with finance regarding **grants** and DRCI budget items.
- Meeting with Town Manager Marc Orlando regarding **DRCI strategic planning**.
- Used the AT&T grant funds to purchase a 70” **presentation management system** for the GWC program and other educational sessions.
- Created new **DRCI performance literature** for use at the golf tournament and other DRCI functions.
- Participated in several webinars to look at alternatives to the Clemson REDC program.
- Meeting with **Karl Kelly** from Clemson.
- Interviewed a potential administrative staff member.
- **Planning meeting** with Chairman Matt Green and Vice Chair Michael Mathews.
- Meeting with Drew Peyronnin and Bob Newbert.

### **INNOVATORS**

- Currently there are **5 innovators** in the Center. We will stay at this level until mid/late Fall.
- All innovators are current with their monthly program fees.
- Met with **every innovator at least once** (some multiple times) during the month.
- Coordinating prototype development for Bluffton-based **Elongator**. Traveled to Liberty, SC with Steve DeSimone (innovator) to meet and discuss an agreement for this company to design and build five prototypes of the product. Multiple calls regarding this in the month of September.

- Meeting with one **potential innovator**.
- Meeting with a **DRCI graduate** about their plans going forward.

#### OUTREACH, STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

- Began “**Girls Who Code**” program. This program will run for 20 weeks from from 7-9pm on Wednesdays. 17 girls are in the program
- Continued conversations with the City of Beaufort about a **DRCI satellite location**. The DRCI submitted a new, streamlined partnership proposal based on feedback from that meeting. Proposed the partnership to the Beaufort Regional Development Committee. Plans are now to begin formal negotiations to turn the proposal into a contract.
- Spoke to a group of **SCAD business instructors about the DRCI program** and our ongoing involvement with SCAD. Brought two DRCI graduates who also gave small talks on entrepreneurship as well.
- Spoke with **Rock Hill Incubator** Director about their program and how they are utilizing the Clemson relationship.
- Met with a large local organization about a **sponsorship** with DRCI. We have given them a proposal for a few sponsorship options.
- Set up all hardware and software needed for **Girls Who Code** program.
- Spoke at the **Principal’s luncheon** on September 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Meeting with Dr. Lynn McGee from **USCB** about forming a DRCI/USCB entrepreneurship partnership.
- Spoke on the “Lean Canvas” business planning method for the monthly DRCI educational session.
- Meeting with **two potential mentors**.
- **Spoke at the Bluffton/HHI leadership** program.
- Hosted our first “**Salt Marsh Angel**” meeting. This will be a monthly meeting of accredited investors who are interested in investing in early stage and start-up companies. They are not necessarily DRCI companies but ones from the southeast. This is an excellent way to be a part of the seed money ecosystem and it as a part of the puzzle that we have been missing (but working on) for some time. This is an independent, professionally managed fund.
- Meet with interested parties about building an **augmented/virtual reality** application.
- Participated in the latest **Aquaculture**- Port Royal Sound Shrimp Plan meeting.
- Spoke at the **Greater Island Council** meeting in conjunction with Mayor Sulka.

#### TOWN OF BLUFFTON OPERATIONS

- Attended **Senior Staff** meetings.
- Attended **Town Council** meeting.
- Completed Annual report information.