

SOUTH CAROLINA BUSINESS

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STRATEGIES FOR A NEW SOUTH

2015 Competitiveness Agenda

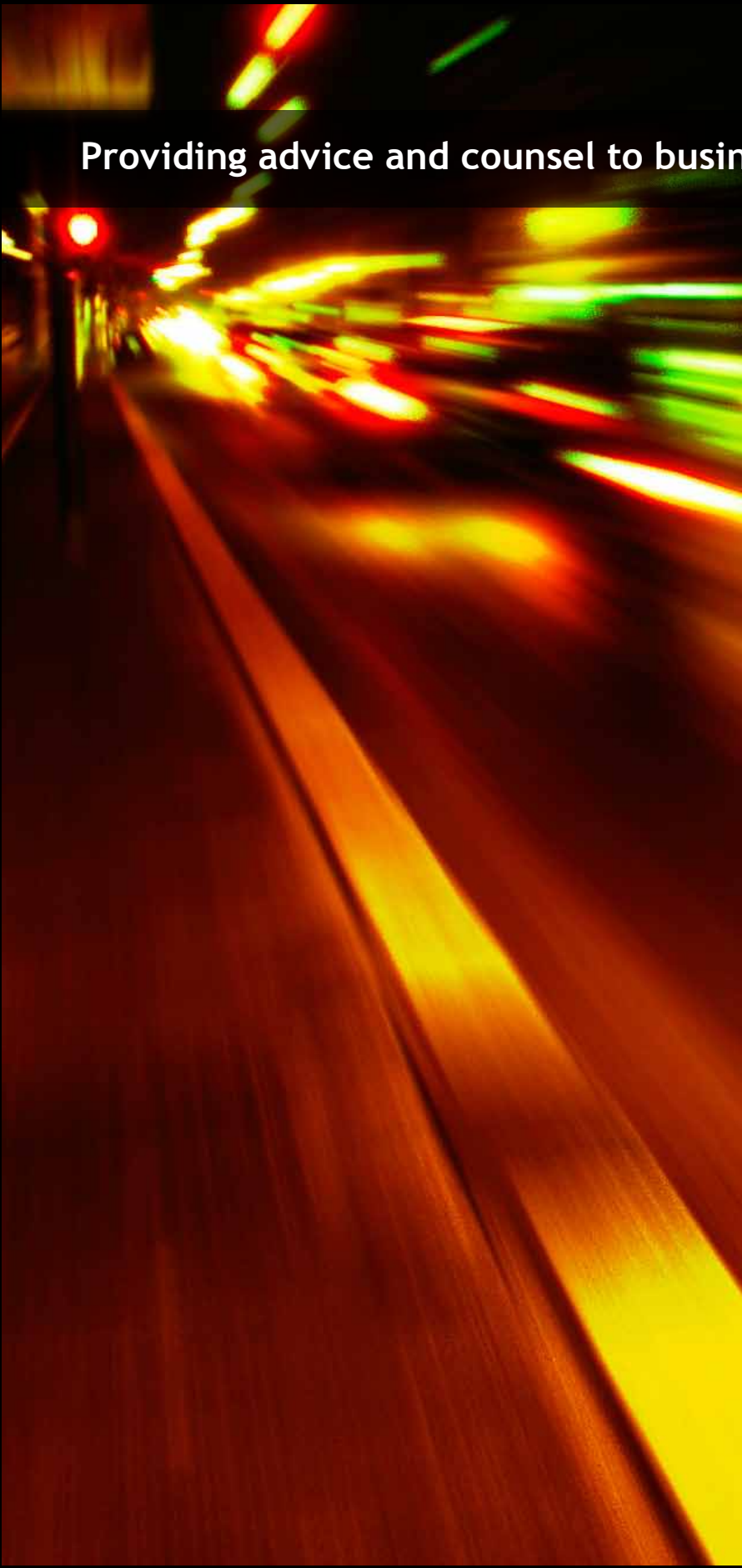
Recent Economic Developments

SC Just Right

Workforce Development Plans

**Domestic Violence in the
Workplace**

Honda of South Carolina



Providing advice and counsel to businesses in the fast lane

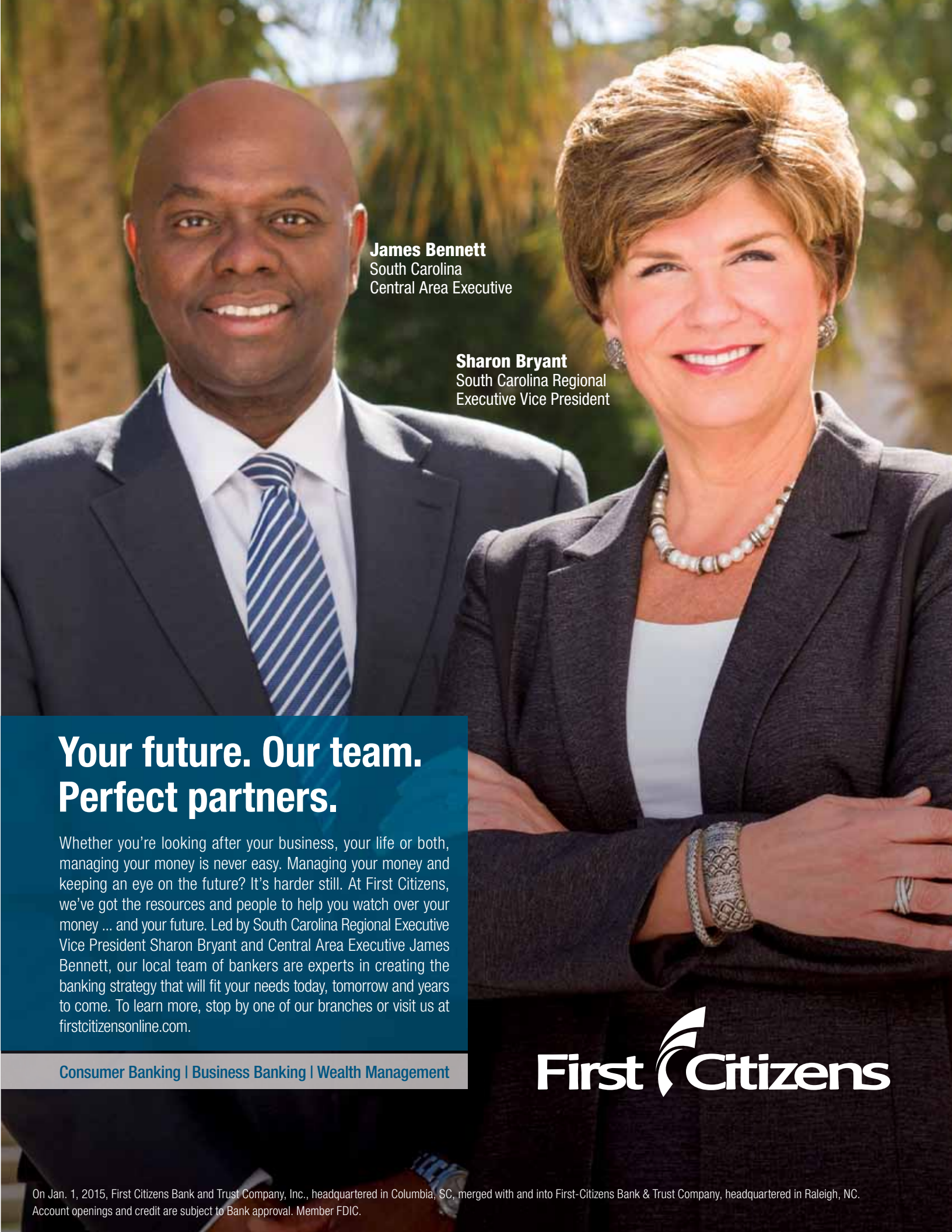
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A photograph of two professionals, James Bennett and Sharon Bryant, standing outdoors in front of trees. James is on the left, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a blue and white striped tie. Sharon is on the right, wearing a dark blazer over a white top, a pearl necklace, and a wide bracelet. Both are smiling at the camera.

James Bennett
South Carolina
Central Area Executive

Sharon Bryant
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Workforce and Infrastructure dominate business landscape

BY MIKEE JOHNSON

Workforce and Infrastructure: I find these two words dominating the business landscape of South Carolina. Around every corner, all members of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce are impacted by the issues behind these two broadly sweeping terms. Both will require a great amount of effort to assure they are success stories, but as South Carolina Chamber members, we will play different roles in these two areas.

The workforce story results from Governor Nikki Haley and the South Carolina Department of Commerce actively and successfully recruiting great companies to South Carolina. As members, our role will be to support the efforts of the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce as they assist our state in developing an overarching workforce plan to lead us into the second half of this decade. There are numerous entities, agencies and private sector efforts that need alignment to optimize our state's success. In addition to our advocacy role as Chamber members, we must also actively fulfill our duty to utilize the programs already in place. The success of our state will shine brightest as we develop and refine a comprehensive workforce plan seeking optimal employment for the roughly 2.2 million South Carolinians producing great products and services every day.

As for infrastructure, clearly, South Carolina's business community has spoken and encouraged our state government to focus on a long-term solution to maintenance and further development of our state's roads, highways and bridges. We must be realistic in our expectations and mindful of the causal effect of hasty judgment. The current condition of our system is a reflection of decades of decisions largely reflecting a short-term outcome. This is not to criticize anyone, but merely to challenge all of us to think differently as we seek solutions. There are many quick fix answers which

will seem appealing in sound bites, but do not necessarily reflect the comprehensive needs of our system or the long-term ramifications of limited thinking. I am confident our support of both the legislative and executive branches of government will result in a plan to deliver the best possible roads, highways and bridges our state needs to thrive.

As we actively align our workforce efforts and advocate for a comprehensive infrastructure plan, we must all work together to make these efforts ones we can celebrate, not fear.

Growing up in a family business with its core still firmly rooted in the heart of South Carolina, I am joined by a passionate board, all of whom are honored and excited to work with the team at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. One of our board members suggested the following tag line for our 2015 success:

Together we lead. Together we succeed.

I sincerely thank you for your support of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the state's unified voice of business. Together, we can move this state forward, but it will take all of our strong voices.

Mikee Johnson is president and CEO of Cox Industries and the 2014-15 chairman of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.



Looking Ahead to 2015

BY TED PITTS

About 18 months ago, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce president and CEO Otis Rawl, in a conversation over dinner, mentioned to me a possible opportunity at the Chamber as he considered his next steps in succession planning for the state's largest broad-based business organization. That initial conversation was followed 12 months later with conversations with Chamber board chair Pamela Lackey and incoming board chair Mikee Johnson about my interest in coming to work at the Chamber. Needless to say, I was very interested for two reasons: I strongly believe in the mission of this organization, and I look forward to the opportunity to work with the great industry leaders who are committed to moving the Palmetto State forward. Otis leaves big shoes to fill, and maybe even a tougher challenge is to match his style with the funky patterned socks.

I am very excited about this opportunity. As a businessman, I understand what each of our members face every day, and I look forward to working on those issues that impact businesses - from taxes to health care costs, to tort liabilities, to infrastructure, to finding skilled workers. I've seen the issues from all sides, first in business as a commercial real estate broker for 11 years, next as a member of the General Assembly for eight years, and most recently as chief of staff for Governor Nikki Haley. Each of those roles ultimately prepared me for my role today.

We will hit the ground running in 2015 focusing on two main priorities with the South Carolina General Assembly: workforce development and infrastructure. In late 2014, the Chamber's board of directors wisely chose to highlight these top two issues

in the annual *Competitiveness Agenda*. This laser focus not only speaks to the need for us to address these critical areas now, but also to a larger, long-term strategy for South Carolina. Narrowing the scope each year to achieve focused priorities makes sense. Of course, we will always be working on a variety of other legislative initiatives, but in 2015 we are unified in the need for a long-term recurring infrastructure funding plan and forward movement on workforce development priorities.

Over the next several months, I will be traveling the state to talk to business leaders about the Chamber's mission and how we can best serve you. This organization has a stellar reputation, and I look forward to only strengthening that bipartisan appeal.

It is my honor to serve, and I look forward to getting to know each of you.

Ted Pitts was named president and CEO of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce effective January 1, 2015.



Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport improvements impact Upstate's economy

In 2012, the Greenville-Spartanburg (GSP) International Airport began a \$125 million terminal improvement program, WINGSPAN, which will be executed over 48 months. Eighty percent of the program will be funded using airport revenues with the remaining 20 percent coming from a combination of grants by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). This program is a series of renovations aimed at increasing capacity and efficiency, incorporating safety processes and integrating sustainable practices.

Another primary goal of this program is to positively impact the economic landscape and continue to cultivate economic growth in the region. WINGSPAN's direct economic impact through 2016 will support a total of 1,397 local jobs, increase local income by \$59.6 million, raise local output by \$164.1 million and boost tax revenue by \$16 million.

An immediate impact is being seen through the airport's use of many local vendors and contractors for planning, construction and implementation.



Michelin's TWEEL removes air from commercial grade tires

November 2014 marked the opening of Michelin's newest plant in North America, which will produce the innovative MICHELIN® X® TWEEL® Airless Radial Tire™ for commercial applications in Piedmont, S.C. The TWEEL is a revolutionary non-pneumatic tire that changed the configuration of a conventional tire, bringing together the tire and the wheel assembly into one solid unit.



Unlike conventional tires, the TWEEL has no air, thereby solving the challenge of chronic flat tires that plagues the landscape, construction, contracting, refuse/recycling and agricultural industries.

"The TWEEL being built here in South Carolina is yet another dramatic example of Michelin's long-standing commitment to breakthrough innovation," said Pete Selleck, Michelin North America's chairman and president. "The TWEEL concept was born at Michelin Americas Research Company in Greenville, S.C., one of Michelin's three global technology centers, and now the TWEEL will be manufactured right here in the Greenville area to satisfy a growing commercial market."

Merger creates Elliott Davis Decosimo

Elliott Davis and Decosimo, two of the leading accounting firms headquartered in the Southeast, merged together on January 1, 2015. The combined firm, now known as Elliott Davis Decosimo, created the region's fifth largest accounting firm with total annual revenues of \$108 million and more than 800 professionals and specialists in 17 offices across seven states – Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia – and the Cayman Islands. Shareholders of both firms approved the merger in a unanimous vote. The combined firm will maintain all current office locations while making strategic investments in key practice areas and expanding its professional staff over the coming years. Rick Davis, managing shareholder of Elliott Davis, will lead the combined firm.



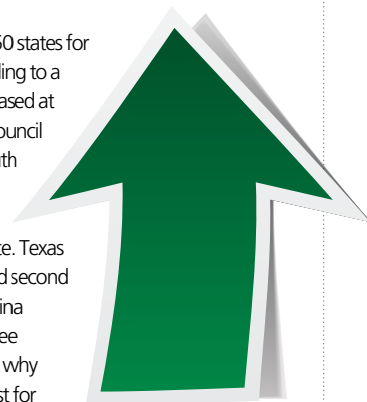
Sonoco acquires Weidenhammer Packaging Group

Hartsville's Sonoco, one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, announced it has completed the acquisition of Weidenhammer Packaging Group (WPG), Europe's leading provider of composite cans along with composite drums and rigid plastic containers, for approximately \$360 million. Jack Sanders, Sonoco president and chief executive officer, said, "The acquisition creates a global leader in rigid paper packaging and is expected to increase Sonoco's combined global consumer-related packaging and services business to approximately \$2.8 billion in annual sales or approximately 53 percent of the company's combined revenue of approximately \$5.4 billion."



SC ranks fourth for business climate

South Carolina ranks fourth among the 50 states for having the best business climate, according to a new survey of U.S. corporate executives released at the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Annual Conference last October. South Carolina was identified by 12.6 percent of the 356 respondents to the 2014 survey as having the most favorable business climate. Texas ranked first with 49.7 percent, Florida ranked second with 18.1 percent, Georgia and North Carolina tied for third with 17.6 percent and Tennessee ranked fifth with 11.6 percent. When asked why they selected the states they did as being best for business, the corporate executives frequently cited tax climate, pro-business environment, incentives/financial assistance and workforce quality/availability. The South Carolina Department of Commerce ranked No. 3 as "best in class" state economic development organization, with 19 percent of site selection consultants who participated in the survey identifying it as a top economic development organization.



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Broadband essential for global competitiveness

Connect South Carolina

BY JIM STRITZINGER

History is a wonderful teacher. In 1829, Boston's Tremont House became the first public building in the United States to feature indoor running water. In the 1920's, only one percent of US households featured both electricity and water; however, nearly 30 percent had access to telephones. It wasn't until 1933 that electricity came to rural America due to President Roosevelt's Tennessee Valley Authority. Interestingly, electricity was necessary before fresh water because electric pumps were required to move the water.

With that as background, can you imagine growing up in a house that featured electricity, running water and a telephone versus a home that was completely disconnected? Can you imagine the opportunity gap of that era?

Now, fast forward more than 80 years to today and ask the same questions regarding broadband Internet!

Can you imagine growing up in a house that features broadband versus a home that is disconnected? Can you imagine the opportunity gap of this era?

Connect South Carolina is a public-private partnership that is focused on increasing high-speed Internet access, adoption and use. The primary partners of Connect South Carolina are Connected Nation, IT-o-Logy, the State of South Carolina and all of South Carolina's 45 broadband

providers. Connect South Carolina works with communities statewide to assess broadband landscapes to create strategic broadband plans. In addition, with the voluntary participation of providers, Connect South Carolina has completed comprehensive interactive maps providing detailed service capabilities in every county.

To date, Connect South Carolina has supported 35 communities in technology assessment and planning. Those exhibiting outstanding broadband access, adoption and use are designated Certified Connected Communities. This work serves as a foundation for addressing remaining service gaps while also engaging state, regional and local leaders in workforce development activities. The counties of Abbeville, Anderson and Lexington as well as the Town of Hilton Head Island have achieved this designation. Several additional communities, including Berkeley, Greenwood and Richland Counties, as well as the City of Hartsville, are finalizing their assessments and planning certification events in early 2015.

Research of broadband access, adoption and use is another vital component of Connect South

DOWNLOAD

Residential broadband adoption has increased dramatically in South Carolina and now surpasses the national average with 76% of households subscribing.

Carolina. Seventy-one percent of businesses in South Carolina's rural communities are online. This connectivity is central to activating entrepreneurship, delivering jobs and creating economic opportunity for small communities across the state.

Recent survey results reveal that residential broadband adoption has increased dramatically in South

Carolina over the last four years and now surpasses the national average with 76 percent of households subscribing. This reflects an increase of 14 percentage points, up from 62 percent just four years ago. Additionally, 78 percent of South Carolina businesses use broadband every day, and online sales represent over \$30 billion dollars in revenue.

Connect South Carolina will continue to work throughout the state to ensure that all residents—including those in rural communities—have opportunities to compete and grow in the connected global economy.

Jim Stritzinger is executive director of Connect South Carolina.

Success shows why S.C. is 'Just Right for Business'

BY MIKE BRENNAN

Universally recognized for our incredible beaches and golf courses, paired with our gracious hospitality and relaxed lifestyle, South Carolina has long been hailed one of the top travel destinations in the South. In recent years though, the Palmetto State has been making its mark on the map for business recruitment endeavors.

The past few years have seen record levels of investment, shrinking unemployment and big announcements from some of the world's marquee brands. With an amazing business climate, an extensive transportation network and a talented workforce, we have a lot to be proud of.

Consider these points:

- Our state is the nation's top producer and exporter of tires.
- We're ranked 2nd in the nation for high-tech employment growth.
- The Port of Charleston is the most productive port in North America.
- The state's aerospace employment has grown more

than 600 percent over the past five years.

- South Carolina is the world's largest ATV producer.

companies, elevating economic development, recruiting and fostering better talent and increasing profitability. When we all unite to sing the praises of living and working here, we will continue to do remarkable things.

A great state deserves passionate supporters, and we invite you to join the 'Just right' movement and share your love of the Palmetto State – why it's the best place to live, work and play. To tell your 'Just right' story, post photos or videos, visit scjustright.com. You can also join the social media momentum by liking 'Just right' on Facebook

(SCJustRight) and following on Twitter (@scjustright) and Instagram (scjustright).

By sharing your stories, you will help promote what we already know to be true – that South Carolina is an attractive place to work and to live - where the tea is always sweet, the people are always tenaciously charming and the cost of doing business is just right.

Mike Brennan is the president of BB&T South Carolina and a past chairman of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.



While we're proud to tout these accomplishments, perhaps our greatest asset and our greatest source of pride is our people. In fact, the one thing that sets us apart from other states is the way our people and companies come together to tell others about what's right in South Carolina. That's the idea behind the 'Just right' effort, led by a coalition of private businesses, local organizations and government agencies engaged in boosting the business community across the state.

The goals of the 'Just right' campaign are to further elevate South Carolina's business climate by attracting more

Keeping South Carolina's economy on the move

BY BOBBY HITT

There is a universal truth to success in business: there is no such thing as standing still. To prosper, you must move at the speed of business, be flexible and capitalize on opportunities as they come along. It's with those qualities in play that Team South Carolina has continued to sell the benefits of doing business here and build on the economic development momentum gained over the last few years.

RECRUITMENT TRENDS OF 2014

The past year brought major announcements from some of the world's top companies and made history with the most jobs ever announced in a single day in the state. But the past 12 months were not just about breaking records; several notable trends have emerged that are having a positive effect on the state's overall economy.

For example, we have been seeing an influx of new companies committing to put down roots in South Carolina. While a traditional recruitment mix includes around 70 percent expansions of existing businesses and 30 percent new projects, today we're seeing a mix that is nearly balanced. In active projects, around 55 percent are expansions and 45 percent are new companies looking to locate to the state for the first time. This influx of "new money" is an important part of growing the state's economy and is the key to wealth creation.

Additionally, there has been a shift in the kinds of companies that are setting up shop in our state. While manufacturing continues its stronghold in South Carolina – affirming our reputation as the "Beast of the Southeast" – a diverse mix of agribusiness, service-related firms and life science companies are flocking to the Palmetto State in greater numbers.

We are increasingly being sought out as a location for corporate headquarters. This is especially true along the growing I-77/south Charlotte area, with noteworthy announcements this summer from LPL Financial and The Lash Group to bring a combined 5,400 jobs to the state.

The South Carolina Department of Commerce's partnership with the State Department of Agriculture to target agribusiness is bearing fruit (and peanuts!) as food processors and distributors choose South Carolina. As one example, Florence County netted a big win earlier this year as Ruiz Foods announced that it will invest \$55 million and create 500 jobs. The company produces the top-selling frozen Mexican food brand in the U.S., and the Florence facility is their first on the East Coast.

Along with overall industry diversity, there is additional diversity within the manufacturing sector as well. South Carolina is increasing its competency in advanced materials, with the \$1 billion announcement by Japan's Toray Industries to build its first consolidated carbon fiber facility in North America in Spartanburg County. And the biopharmaceutical industry is also growing in

the state, as The Ritedose Corp. announced a major expansion of its Richland County facility.

These trends signal a healthy, growing economy and set the stage for South Carolina to continue its upward trajectory in economic development.

WORKFORCE FRONT AND CENTER

Walt Disney once said, "You can design and create, and build the most wonderful place in the world. But it takes people to make the dream a reality." There's nothing truer in economic development in South Carolina than that: our people are what makes the difference.

That's why it was a big step this past legislative session when the General Assembly passed a bill, supported by the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, to locate the state's 12 Regional Education Centers (RECs) to the Department of Commerce. As the conduits between our schools and the business community, the RECs work to connect students to the in-demand career paths in their own backyards.

By inspiring students to consider various careers and the skills they require before entering high school, students and their parents can make informed decisions on what training path would best prepare them to enter the working world. This element of workforce development

is vital to our continued success as it leads to a healthy workforce pipeline – one that can fill the jobs we haven't yet recruited.

We are excited to be working with each of the coordinators across the state to build on their successful efforts and ensure that early-stage workforce development continues to be top of mind. For more about the state's RECs, visit scpathways.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

It's an exciting time to be in economic development in South Carolina. Since 2011 and under Governor Nikki Haley's leadership, Team South Carolina has focused on recruiting quality companies and jobs to our borders. While those wins are being felt in all corners of the state, we aren't resting on our laurels. With several big wins announced in 2014, and with increased emphasis on early-stage workforce development, South Carolina is poised to continue to see great success in growing our business community and keeping our state's economy on the move.

Bobby Hitt has served as South Carolina's Secretary of Commerce since January 2011.

TOP 10 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY INVESTMENT – Through Dec. 1, 2014

Date	Company	County	Investment	Jobs
3/28/2014	BMW Manufacturing Co	Spartanburg	\$1,000,000,000	800
2/18/2014	Toray Carbon Fibers America, Inc (CFA)	Spartanburg	\$1,000,000,000	500
6/16/2014	Giti Tire Holdings (USA) Ltd.	Chester	\$560,000,000	1,700
6/10/2014	GE (Greenville) Power & Water	Greenville	\$400,000,000	80
6/16/2014	LPL Financial Holdings	York	\$150,000,000	3,000
9/17/2014	The Ritedose Corp.	Richland	\$110,000,000	65
6/16/2014	The Lash Group, Inc.	York	\$90,000,000	2,400
6/23/2014	Proctor & Gamble - Duracell	Lancaster	\$69,000,000	*
6/3/2014	Ruiz Food Products, Inc.	Florence	\$55,000,000	500
5/6/2014	Trelleborg Wheels Systems America Inc.	Spartanburg	\$50,000,000	150

* Not announced

TOP 10 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY JOBS – Through Dec. 1, 2014

Date	Company	County	Investment	Jobs
6/16/2014	LPL Financial Holdings	York	\$150,000,000	3,000
6/16/2014	The Lash Group	York	\$90,000,000	2,400
6/16/2014	Giti Tire Holdings (USA) Ltd.	Chester	\$560,000,000	1,700
3/28/2014	BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC	Spartanburg	\$1,000,000,000	800
4/24/2014	Medac Inc.	Aiken	\$12,000,000	615
2/18/2014	Toray Carbon Fibers America, Inc. (CFA)	Spartanburg	\$1,000,000,000	500
6/3/2014	Ruiz Food Products, Inc.	Florence	\$55,000,000	500
2/20/2014	Allstate Insurance Company (Esurance)	Greenville	\$2,100,000	450
10/14/2014	Wyman-Gordon	Dillon	*	400
6/19/2014	iQor US Inc.	Dorchester	\$391,500	320

* Not announced

2015 Competitiveness Agenda Laser Focused

INFRASTRUCTURE, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TOP BUSINESS COMMUNITY CONCERNS

BY JULIE SCOTT

After a series of grassroots meetings held across South Carolina in conjunction with local chambers of commerce, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce released its *Competitiveness Agenda*, the business community's annual list of legislative priorities.

"While there are many legislative items we will address in the coming session, this year we are heavily focused on working with our members to coalesce support around the policies of our state related to the funding and maintenance of our infrastructure and more importantly, to the long-term development of our state's most important asset—our workforce and its future development," said Mikee Johnson, president and CEO of Cox Industries and 2014-15 chair of the South Carolina Chamber. "The idea of 'cradle to career' encompasses education at all levels for optimal employment for all of our

citizens. We believe the optimization of our workforce will not only be a core component of improving our infrastructure, but also the quality of life for all facets of South Carolina."

IMPROVING SOUTH CAROLINA'S INFRASTRUCTURE

South Carolina public policy leaders must develop a comprehensive, sustainable and recurring funding plan for infrastructure. With the strong link between infrastructure, safety, job creation and economic development, funding must be a top priority in 2015. Investing in infrastructure is a core function of government. Building for the future will drive economic growth and job creation.

The South Carolina Chamber supports a comprehensive, sustainable and recurring funding solution, developed together and supported by the executive and legislative branches, for the state's roads and bridges, using the priority system in place under the South Carolina Department of Transportation for interstate expansion and improvement, secondary road maintenance and bridge repair.

IMPROVING THE SKILLED WORKFORCE PIPELINE

As South Carolina continues to recover from the economic downturn, a manufacturing renaissance has led the way for new job announcements. Couple that with many experienced workers on the verge of retirement, and South Carolina is faced with a shortage of critical needs workers. Critical needs jobs are those that require more education than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree. These post-secondary education or training requirements can include associate's degrees, vocational certificates, significant on-the-job training, previous work experience and/or some college. According



Investing in infrastructure is a core function of government. Building for the future will drive economic growth and job creation.



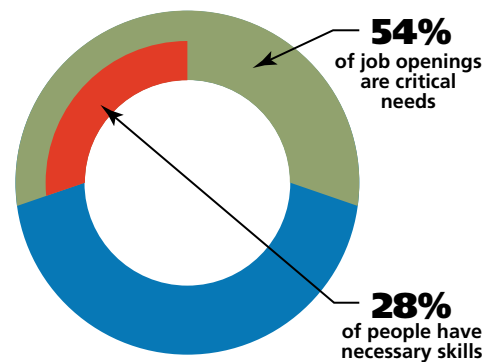
Critical needs jobs are those that require more education than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree.

to the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, critical needs jobs account for 54% of the workforce while only 28% of people have the necessary skills to fill these jobs, creating a shortage of workers.

The South Carolina Chamber supports an increased focus on programs to develop a skilled workforce to support existing and new business in South Carolina.

"The No. 1 workforce issue facing business is to have a talent pipeline that ensures the company remains globally competitive," said Al Reid, plant manager of PPG Industries, SC and chairman of the Chamber's Manufacturers Steering Committee. "Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find workers to fill critical needs or middle-skilled jobs. These are well-paying jobs

South Carolina Workforce Needs



that require some education and training beyond high school but less than a bachelor's degree. South Carolina's continued economic success is dependent on solving this issue."

IMPROVING SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina must continue to improve its business climate to create a competitive global environment. Tax reform, education, health care costs, energy and environmental issues, federal matters and other key issues must be addressed to encourage expanded economic development opportunities.

For more on the 2015 Competitiveness Agenda, visit scchamber.net. Stay up-to-date on the latest legislative happenings by following @scchamber.

Julie Scott is associate vice president of communications at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.

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All roads lead to collaboration

How do other states fund infrastructure?

BY PENNY DELANEY COTHRAN AND JULIE SCOTT

The need for investment over many, many years is showing on South Carolina's infrastructure. Right now, more than 830 South Carolina bridges are considered deficient. Nearly one-third of South Carolina's primary and interstate highways are in poor or mediocre condition, and sadly, South Carolina has one of the highest highway fatality rates in the nation.

With the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce leading the charge on answering the business community's plea for a long overdue funding plan for the state's crumbling roads and bridges, a clear dialogue must ensue that brings together the various branches of government along with the private sector. South Carolina public policy leaders must develop a comprehensive, sustainable and recurring funding plan for infrastructure.

With significant growth at the Port of Charleston ultimately resulting in the deepening of the harbor to 52 feet in what its leaders call a "game changer," keeping up with its supporting infrastructure is serious business. Last fall, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released the long anticipated *Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement* for the Post-45 Harbor Deepening project, which will make the Charleston Harbor the deepest port on the East Coast. Simply put, the growth of South Carolina's commerce, and especially its manufacturing sector, has necessitated a deeper harbor and a stronger port system. Expanded infrastructure is a necessary part of that.

The Palmetto State has not seen the necessary substantial, recurring funding for roads and bridges in more than 27 years. For the first time in 2013, the South Carolina General Assembly did allocate \$600 million to roads and bridges, with \$50 million in recurring funds allocated to the State Infrastructure Bank and \$50 million in a one-time allocation for bridge repairs. It was a good first step, and those dollars have been put to work. But, finding a long-term solution to adequately fund roads and bridges must be the ultimate goal.

HOW DOES SC FUND ROADS?

Fees paid by South Carolinians are among the lowest in the U.S., and South Carolina invests fewer state dollars per mile than any other state. Nearly all other states substantially augment their highway programs with other dedicated non-fuel tax revenues. South

Carolina also has the fourth largest state maintained highway system in the nation. The 16-cent per gallon gasoline tax (or motor fuel user fee) in South Carolina has not been increased or adjusted for inflation since 1987. Couple South Carolina's heavy reliance on the gas tax with the fact that the State Highway Fund is over 90 percent dependent on this revenue, while the national average is 35 percent, and you have a serious problem. The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce seeks a sustainable, diversified recurring revenue stream.

When companies consider expanding in South Carolina, especially in job-hungry rural areas, the first thing they consider is the shape of the infrastructure. If South Carolina is serious about job creation and economic development, taking care of infrastructure must be a top priority. Isn't it time that South Carolina's state policy makers worked together?

STATE FUNDING MODELS RANGE FROM SIMPLE TO DIVERSIFIED

In 2012, **Georgia**, which is currently ranked by *CNBC* as the top state for doing business, voted on a statewide 10-year one percent local option sales tax to fund transportation projects. The referendum passed in three regions. The state also relies

on its 28-cent per gallon gasoline tax to fund roads and bridges. The Georgia Department of Transportation maintains only 16 percent of the roads in the state. The other 84 percent are the responsibility of the counties and cities.

North Carolina's 37.5-cent per gallon gasoline tax and highway use tax aid in funding its roads. Our northern neighbor also collects a highway use tax (3 percent) on vehicles at the time they are titled. However, North Carolina is second only to Texas in terms of the number of state-maintained lane miles.

In 2013, **Virginia** enacted a multimodal plan to create \$3.5 billion over five years for infrastructure, utilizing sales taxes, local taxes, gas taxes, vehicle fees and other fees. The plan directs 175 percent of existing sales tax revenues directly to transportation. Then, the state raised its sales tax from 5 percent to 5.3 percent.



SINCE 2012, TWELVE STATES HAVE APPROVED PLANS TO RAISE THEIR OWN ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION REVENUES.

Courtesy of Transportation for America

Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia adjust for inflation on the wholesale price of gasoline. The Palmetto State's neighbors also collect higher vehicle registration fees compared with South Carolina's \$12. For comparison, North Carolina's registration fee is \$28, Virginia's is \$40.75, Georgia's is \$20, and Tennessee's is \$26.

Around the nation's capital, Washington D.C., local taxes were imposed to include a sales tax bump (.7 percent), a real estate transfer tax and an increased hotel tax. The cents per gallon gas tax was eliminated while creating a 3.5 percent wholesale tax on gasoline and a 6 percent tax on diesel. The nation's capitol also added a \$64 fee on hybrid vehicles and raised the motor vehicle sales and use tax by 1.15 percent. Lastly, the District of Columbia closed a loophole and directed a portion of internet sales tax receipts to transportation if a congressional ban is lifted, which would in turn raise \$1.13 billion over five years.

THE TIME IS NOW

According to Transportation for America, in at least five states where legislators recognized the need for new revenue and raised gas taxes or other fees in the last few years, voters have responded by sending almost all of the supportive members of both parties back to their state houses. Since 2012, 12 states have approved plans to raise their own additional transportation revenue.

With gasoline levels at their lowest in four years, its time to get real on how South Carolina plans to address the future of infrastructure. Will it be user fees, elimination of caps, taxes, General Fund revenues or a combination of sources? It is up to the executive and legislative branches of government to work together to achieve a long-term solution. The business community is watching.

Julie Scott is associate vice president of communications and Penny Delaney Cothran is multimedia manager at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.



With gasoline levels at their lowest in four years, its time to get real on how South Carolina plans to address the future of infrastructure.

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LESSONS FROM HUGO:

Best practices for businesses

BY JOE FARMER

The South Carolina Emergency Management Division of the Adjutant General's office coordinates resources during disasters, and it is embarking on a new program to build stronger and enduring relationships with business and industry.

Emergency management is a broad field, encompassing a wide range of individuals, agencies and businesses. Private-sector organizations actively contribute to the emergency management lifecycle from mitigation to recovery. The ability to rapidly recover from a major disaster cannot rest on local, state and federal governments alone. The private sector will inevitably shoulder much of this effort, so establishing trust, confidence and partnerships early will foster seamless integration of efforts when disasters happen.

"We believe partnerships between the private sector and government can create a unity of effort that will help save lives, protect property, speed services and help protect the environment," says Kim Stenson, director of the Division, which coordinates state assets when major disasters occur anywhere in the state. "We think these partnerships are absolutely imperative," he says, "because government cannot handle the challenges of a disaster alone - in isolation - without involving the whole team: government, businesses, volunteer organizations, and citizens."

The concept of increasing private-sector involvement in disaster preparation, response, recovery and mitigation was recognized after Hurricane Hugo slammed into the state 25 years ago, but more recently has gained new momentum.

"Who knows a community better than private-sector service providers? They work in the community and know how to deliver services quickly and effectively,"

Stenson says. "We recognize the value in that, and the opportunity those partnerships might provide for seamless and timely operations."

It's widely known that businesses should plan and prepare for disasters that could affect normal operations and employees. Furthermore, businesses located along the South Carolina coast are not the only ones that could be affected by a hurricane or any other event for that matter. Businesses statewide could be affected by all manner of natural and human-caused events: earthquakes, flooding, chemical spills, tornadoes and cyber attacks, just to name a few.

Recognizing that business resilience is in large part based on preparedness, the Division has developed a list of best practices that businesses should implement.

Increasing private-sector involvement in disaster preparation, response, recovery and mitigation was recognized after Hurricane Hugo slammed into the state 25 years ago.

- **Include emergency preparedness information in company newsletters, company intranet, employee emails or other company communication tools.**

- **Consider a telephone calling tree or a voice recording to communicate with employees during an emergency.**

- **Designate an out-of-town number where employees can leave an "I'm okay" message during a catastrophic disaster.**

- **If you have employees with disabilities or functional needs, talk with them about what their needs may be during a disaster.**

- **Plan for payroll continuity.**

- **Review and practice what you and your employees intend to do during and after an emergency.**

- **Establish facility-shutdown procedures.**

- **Establish warning and evacuation procedures.**

- **Make plans for assisting employees who may need transportation.**

- **Make plans for communicating with employee families before and after a hurricane.**

- **Purchase a National Weather Service weather radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup.**



- Survey your facility. Make plans to protect outside equipment and structures.

- Check if your phone system will work without electricity. If not, have at least one phone line that can operate without electricity.



- Make plans to protect windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection.

Covering windows with plywood is a second option.

- Consider the need for backup systems such as portable pumps to remove floodwater and generators to provide emergency power.

- Prepare to move records, computers and other items within your facility or to another location.

- Consider how to recover any digital data if there is a significant power outage or if computers and servers are damaged. Keep tax and payroll records, records of inventory and essential information at an alternate site.



- Establish an alternate operating location and back-up suppliers.

- Maintain three to five days of inventory. If a disaster occurs, the loss isn't as great.

While these are a few of the actions businesses can take to help prepare themselves and their employees, you may have other ideas and insights that can help. If you would like to integrate your business into emergency planning and exercises and collaborate with emergency managers to build public-private partnerships, contact Scott Brown, recovery programs manager at SCEMD, or Dottie Landry, small business assistant manager at the South Carolina Department of Commerce. For more information, visit scemd.org.

Joe Farmer, SCEM is the public information director at the South Carolina Emergency Management Division in West Columbia.

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when domestic **VIOLENCE** enters the workplace

BY SHARON L. SELLERS

Tashera Fields reported to work at the Kerr Drugs on Durant Avenue in North Charleston as usual on that Friday morning in October, 2004. Around 7 p.m., her estranged boyfriend, Antonio Wright, entered the store and brandished a gun. He went to the back of the store and found Tashera and her mother, also an employee. All other customers and employees were able to run out of the building. The police were called and a standoff ensued. By 8:30, Wright had fatally shot Tashera and then took his own life. Her mother witnessed it all, but was not physically harmed. Subsequent investigations found that there had been a history of disputes between Fields and Wright.

As a human resources professional who worked not far from the site of the shooting, I was deeply impacted by this entire event. I called the human resources director of Kerr Drugs and we discussed how such a travesty could have been prevented. Her answer: "It couldn't." In the years that have followed, I haven't been satisfied with the concept of just throwing up my hands and not being proactive when it comes to domestic violence as it affects employees. Could the Fields case have been prevented? We will never know, but many forward-thinking employers have found that there are steps that can be taken to protect domestic violence victims AND their co-workers.

The following are recommendations in establishing a Domestic Violence Procedure in your facility. In most scenarios the feminine pronouns are used when referring to the victims. While the actual numbers vary from survey to survey regarding the genders in domestic violence cases, all show that in the majority of cases the victims are women abused by men. Employers are cautioned, however, to understand that victims can also be men or people in same-sex relationships.

1. ENCOURAGE VICTIMS TO SPEAK UP

On two separate occasions, I have been approached by clients who are aware of domestic violence issues and have asked me if it was okay for them to just terminate the employee who was having the problems. One case involved an ex-boyfriend who waited on an employee in the parking lot until the end of her shift. She made it into her car and locked the doors. Unable to extract her from her car, the boyfriend kicked in the doors until she was able to drive away. The second incident was a different employer whose female employee approached their human resources (HR) manager and explained that she had been a victim of domestic violence and had left her husband the night before. She asked for help in case someone saw his white Ford truck in the parking lot.

The managers who wanted to terminate these employees may not be as cold hearted as they may seem. These employers didn't want the drama. They didn't want the focus to be away from their products and services. And, legitimately, they didn't want to endanger their other employees if this "crazy guy" came onto

South Carolina currently ranks second nationwide for its rate of men killing women, usually their intimate partners. Last year, South Carolina ranked No. 1.

company property. However, by punishing or terminating the victims, they would have sent a strong message to the rest of the workforce: "You come forward with your personal problems, and we will get rid of you." The result would be that the employer would not hear about domestic dispute issues and may one day be blind-sided when a boyfriend or girlfriend takes action on the worksite.

Instead of discouraging victims to come forward, ENCOURAGE them. Let employees know that your company cares about their welfare. You will work with the victims in ways outlined below to assist them in avoiding their harasser. At least by having the knowledge that there could be a problem, the employer can take the appropriate action to be prepared.

2. REALIZE THAT THE WORKPLACE IS THE KEY TO FREEDOM – AND DISCOVERY

Victims of domestic violence often stay in the relationship because they are made to feel unworthy, helpless and unable to make it on their own. Having a job often provides the victims with the self-esteem needed to realize that they can survive without the abuser. If they manage to leave the relationship, employment will also allow them to be financially independent.

Unfortunately, the workplace is also a constant in the victim's life. While she may be able to hide where she lives, the abuser will know that she is still going to report for work. Employers can discuss with victims alternatives to their normal work schedule, such as:

- Can the employee take a temporary leave of absence (paid or unpaid) right after leaving the abuser so he will not be able to find her?
- Can the employee be transferred to another location, perhaps nearer to supportive family members?
- Can the employee work another shift for a period of time?

3. PROVIDE RESOURCES TO HELP THE EMPLOYEE LEAVE

Most managers try not to pry into our employees' personal affairs. Instead of unwelcomed interfering, employers should provide a good communication system to let employees know that if the victim will come forward, the employer can provide resources to help employees leave an abusive situation. Such resources could include:

- Providing a lockable closet or locker for the employee to gradually bring in money, clothing, children's toys and other items that she would like to take with her when she leaves home.
- Providing an inexpensive cell phone to allow the victim to speak with family members to arrange safe passage. (Verizon Wireless, through their Hopeline, provides women's shelters and domestic violence centers with free refurbished phones for just this purpose. For information about their program, go to: www.verizonwireless.com/aboutus/hopeline)
- Provide a list of resources available in the community such as shelters, counseling centers and Employee Assistance Plan numbers to help the victims find help in your area. Important national contact may include the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE).

4. PERFORM A RISK ASSESSMENT OF YOUR FACILITY

Many companies have established Emergency Preparedness Plans which address actions the employees should take in the event of acts of terrorism, fire, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. If your company does not yet have such a plan, you should work with a consulting firm or local law enforcement to develop one. Even if your company does have a plan, review it to ensure that it allows for a Threat Assessment Task Force (TATF). This group, often comprised of key managers, safety personnel and even area law enforcement is established IN ADVANCE, long before there is a threat to the organization. The group establishes procedures regarding what actions should be taken if they are made aware of a potential threat to the workplace. Such threats would not only be for looking out for the abuser of an employee, but also such situations as bomb threats, a recently terminated employee who made threatening remarks while leaving, or a notice of criminals on the loose in the nearby community. Once notified of a potential threat to the employees, the TATF could be assembled to determine:

- Is the risk a real threat to the employees?
- What actions should be taken? Should security be brought in? Should existing security guards or managers be given a description of the person's vehicle or should a picture be disseminated?
- Should routine entrances into the facility be changed to avoid a non-employee from entering the building undiscovered? (Be careful not to lock or otherwise block exits that would prohibit your employees from exiting in the event of a fire or other emergency)
- Should local law enforcement be contacted? A key issue with creating a TATF in advance is inviting law enforcement into your facility so they will understand the layout of your facility and will establish a relationship with you. If a threat does occur, the TATF can work closely with law enforcement to determine what actions should be taken.

In September, an informal poll at the S.C. Society of Human Resource Management annual conference was conducted to determine how many of the 230 South Carolina employers represented had a domestic violence policy. Less than five percent stated they had one. The *Charleston Post and Courier* reported that South Carolina currently ranks second nationwide for its rate of "men killing women, usually their intimate partners. Last year, South Carolina ranked No. 1." Most working Americans spend at least eight hours a day at work, or roughly one half of their waking hours. It would stand to reason that statistically this violence could spillover from home to work. Employers should be proactive and establish policies and procedures in advance to determine what actions they should take when they are made aware of a potential threat of domestic violence coming into their workplace.



Sharon L. Sellers, SPHR, GPHR is the 2014-15 State Director for the South Carolina Society of Human Resource Management (SC SHRM). She owns SLS Consulting, LLC.

2015 January ~ February Profile

BRIAN NEWMAN

Honda of South Carolina Manufacturing, Inc.





BY PENNY DELANEY COTHRAN, APR

Side by side

Some might say he's the Honda brand's No. 1 fan, which is a good thing when you are the world's largest exporter of the product you make. Honda of South Carolina Manufacturing Inc. in Timmonsville has grown almost as quickly as Brian Newman's meteoric career trajectory from a teenager who started working in a Honda plant in Ohio to the South Carolina president known for giving a big "thumbs up" to his teammates. Newman started working at the newly-opened Honda plant that came to his hometown because he had experienced Honda products and liked them. "I have owned Honda products all my life," he says.

2015 January~February Profile

BRIAN NEWMAN

Honda of South Carolina Manufacturing, Inc.

“The first product I rode was a Honda motorcycle,” begins superfan Newman. “I loved that motorcycle so much that when I turned 18 and had the opportunity to buy a car, I bought a Honda Civic. When Honda said they were going to build a plant in Marysville, Ohio, I went out and put an application in and started working with them around 1980.”

EARLY LIFE

Born and raised in Bellefontaine, Ohio, Newman’s first job was assembling saddle bags for Honda motorcycles. “I started in tech school, and when Honda came to town (to Marysville, which was 18 miles from Newman’s hometown), I decided to leave school.” His career took him from there to the nearby automobile plant, where he was hand selected and trained in Japan to do the sub-assembly of the instrument panel of the brand new 1982 Honda Accords rolling off the line there. He then was selected to make engines. He grew from an associate to team leader, coordinator, assistant manager, manager and then senior manager. His South Carolina employees love that he’s been in their shoes, rising through the ranks at Honda. “I know what they go through, and I think it makes me a stronger leader.”

“I went to Honda University,” smiles Newman when asked about his education.

Brian Newman is one of the more approachable manufacturing presidents you will meet in South Carolina. His down-to-earth, warm nature is rooted in his personal philosophy and his history with the company. “I started with Honda because I believe in the product. I learned the hard way; I had to grow up through the ranks. But I wouldn’t change it for anything. I have had real good mentors, both U.S. and Japanese.”

He was transferred in 2001 by the senior vice president of Honda America to Honda

of South Carolina Manufacturing, Inc. to serve as the new plant manager and vice president. “I did visit this facility once in 1998 when it first opened,” laughs Newman. He was invigorated by the newness of the ATV plant in South Carolina and has kept that joy for 13 years. “It’s an honor to represent this company now as president.”

MERGING LEADERSHIP STYLES

Newman is one of only two North American presidents. Having trained in Japan on numerous occasions, Newman’s leadership style is very egalitarian, borrowing the best from both U.S. and Japanese customs. “I try hard to gain the respect of every



associate. I know the challenges they face.” He devotes a portion of each day, which begins at 6:30 each morning when production starts, to helping others. “I want to be on the floor. I want to talk to the team leaders. I do mentoring throughout the day. I think that’s the most important aspect of any management member’s day.”

Honda has many deep traditions and philosophies, one of which (equality) is demonstrated in the white coverall-style uniforms worn by each and every employee day in and day out, from the president on down the line. “I think young people today should take initiative to understand what makes their company tick. Once I learned the Honda philosophy, I wanted to teach it.” He tells young associates that they should do more than what’s asked of them. “I know it’s hard to believe today that people stay with jobs 34 years, but I think that’s where young people need to bite in.”

Newman jokes that the only time he wears a suit is when he comes to South Carolina Chamber of Commerce events. “The Honda philosophy is a global philosophy, and we all live by it. Having the relationship with the associates is really important with Honda. We’re associate based. We have the best technology to build the products. But it’s the people that run all those [tools]. It’s our associates that I’m so proud of. They have the patience to produce the highest quality product at reasonable prices for worldwide customer satisfaction.”

HONDA IN SOUTH CAROLINA

“One of the Honda philosophies is ‘Produce the product where the product is sold,’” explains Newman. Honda has been producing all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in South Carolina near the intersection of I-20 and I-95 since 1998. Over time, they’ve responded to their customer base by creating and adding new models to their line (nine models total), gaining their No. 1 market share title (34 percent market share). In the multi-use category of ATVs, for every two sold worldwide, one is a Honda. Overall, Honda produces 100,000 to 110,000 ATVs, including the brand new Pioneer 700 and 500 “side by side” MUVs, which carry up to four passengers. This is a new and exciting area of growth (35 percent) for Honda as single rider ATVs sales numbers plateau.

Newman’s goal is to have 200,000 high-quality products leaving his facility every



year (which is the rate he saw before the economic downturn) which would require a workforce of 2,000 associates. "My dream is to be Honda Motor's best power sports plant in the world. We can't do that just with four-wheel ATVs and side by sides. My goal for this company before I retire is to bring in two-wheel [sports bikes]. I want to bring everything off-road that Honda has to offer to Timmonsville, South Carolina. I think we can be competitive. I think our workforce is ready. That's my job as president. I have to go to Japan... to let them know that we're ready."

When Newman lays out the geography of Honda's plant locations, Timmonsville's site selection becomes clear. "The supply base is coming down south. The Port is so important for us. All of our parts come in through Charleston. We're all about making it deeper."

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY



Brian Newman and his wife Tangie enjoy frequent trips to Ohio to cheer on their beloved Cleveland Browns.

Newman might not be a South Carolina native, but when it comes to his passion for Honda, he says, "I grew up here." He enjoys the hospitality of the people of South Carolina. "The willingness to help is so different than in the Mid-West." Upon his arrival in 2001, Newman was quickly pulled into the Florence area business community. "Our company is very engaged

with the community, which I love!" Brian is not above getting a little silly to help those in need. He raised over \$62,000 for charity during a recent "Dancing with the Stars" fundraiser.

His community investments extend to workforce development, which Newman understands serves Honda in the end. "It was my honor to give a check of \$50,000 to help start the industrial engineering center at Francis Marion University. We are so proud to be partnered with [Florence-Darlington Technical College and Francis Marion University.]"

Newman has two parents, four children and six

grandchildren that he tries to visit often in Ohio. To his grandchildren, he's known as "Silly Grandpa." He kept his beloved Cleveland Browns season tickets even after moving to South Carolina so he and his wife had an excuse to go to as many games as they can, using the time up North to check in with his elderly parents. During the hot and sticky summer months in South Carolina, he tells his friends back home, "[At least] I don't have to shovel heat."

Penny Delaney Cothran is the multimedia manager at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and editor of South Carolina Business.

GET TO KNOW BRIAN NEWMAN:

What's your favorite place in SC? Hilton Head Island

What's your favorite book? The biography of Andy Griffith. I love that show. Grew up with that show. Raised my children with that show. I love the morals of that show.

Favorite App? Cleveland Browns App

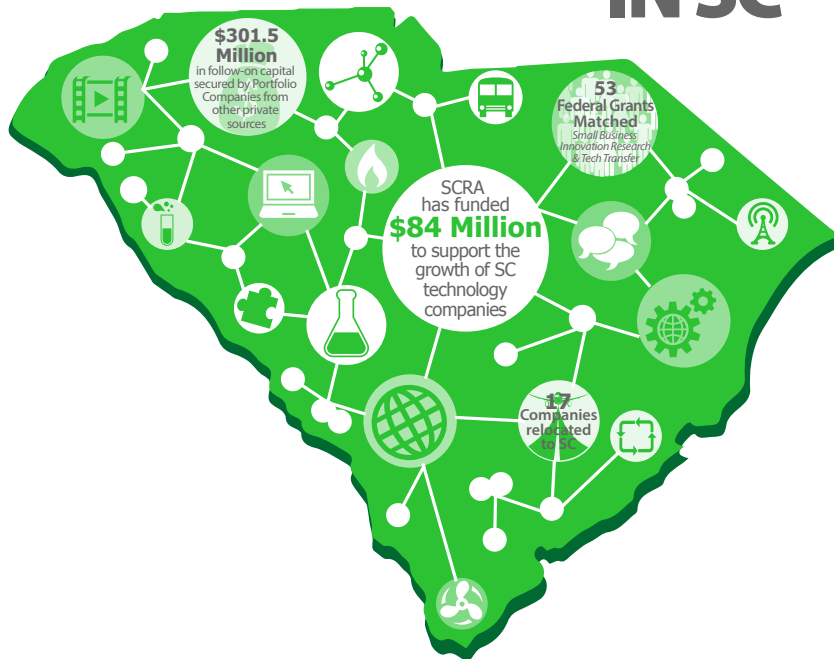
Thing you can't live without... my family, and Honda. It's been in my blood since I was 16.

If you could have a dinner party with anyone, living or deceased, who would it be? Mr. Honda, Andy Griffith (the sheriff, not the actor), and Shania Twain

What's your proudest achievement?

Representing the company as president after being an associate. Anything is possible.

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NLRB DECLINES TO REVISIT EMPLOYEE USE OF COMPANY E-MAIL SYSTEMS ... FOR NOW

BY DONALD D. GAMBURG & JAMES H. FOWLES, III

Under current National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) law, employees do not have a statutory right to use their employers' e-mail systems for union. E-mail systems remain employer property for now after a recent decision in *Purple Communications, Inc.*, 361 NLRB No. 43 (2014), a case that many labor lawyers thought would overturn an earlier NLRB decision, *Register Guard*, 351 NLRB 1110 (2007), that upheld employer property rights in e-mail systems. But, on a separate issue, and continuing a troubling trend, the Board in *Purple Communications* found yet another employer work rule—a “no disruption” rule—to be unlawful, resulting in an employer’s election victory being overturned and a new union election being ordered.

BACKGROUND

On November 28, 2012, elections were held at seven interpreter call centers for *Purple Communications*, resulting in victories for the employer. Following the elections, the union filed objections to the outcome of the election along with unfair labor practice charges against *Purple Communications*. On October 24, 2013, an NLRB administrative law judge (ALJ) ruled that *Purple Communications* had committed unfair labor practices and ordered that the employer’s election win be set aside. On April 30, 2014, the NLRB, as part of its review of *Purple Communications’* appeal, asked for input from the parties themselves and any other interested parties on the *Register Guard* precedent involving company e-mail systems.

ANALYSIS

What was expected to be the Board’s reversal of position on employer property rights concerning employee use of e-mail systems drew national attention. However, the Board, in its *Purple Communication* decision issued on September 24, 2014, decided to punt on the issue of whether the employer’s electronic communications policy, which prohibited employee use for non-business reasons, violated Section 8(a)(1) of the National Labor Relations Act. The Board decided to “sever and hold for further consideration the question whether *Purple Communications’* communications policy was unlawful.” So, for now, the Board’s precedent in *Register Guard*, under which employers have a property right in their e-mail systems and may lawfully prohibit employees’ use of the systems for non-business reasons, remains controlling law.

Even though employers dodged a bullet with respect to their e-mail systems, employers did not fare as well with the rest of the Board’s decision in *Purple Communications* as the Board continues to squeeze employers on the maintenance of allegedly “ambiguous” work rules. Over the past several years, the Board has, with increased frequency, found the maintenance of a variety of work rules and policies in nonunion workplaces to be unlawful, requiring employers to rescind rules and policies that in some cases have been in place for decades.

In *Purple Communications*, the Board once again found that an employer’s work rules violated Section 8(a)(1), resulting in the Board’s overturning of an election and

ordering a new election. More specifically, the company maintained a rule prohibiting employees from “[c]ausing, creating or participating in a disruption of any kind during working hours on Company property.” As a general rule, an employer violates the Act through the maintenance of a work rule if that rule would “reasonably tend to chill employees in the exercise of their Section 7 rights.”

The Board has developed a two-step inquiry to determine if a work rule would have such an effect. First, a rule is unlawful if it explicitly restricts activities protected by Section 7 (the right to organize, the right to engage in concerted activity, etc.). If the rule does not explicitly restrict protected activities, it will violate the Act only upon a showing that: (i) employees would reasonably construe the language to prohibit Section 7 activity; (ii) the rule was promulgated in response to union activity; or (iii) the rule has been applied to restrict the exercise of Section 7 rights. In determining whether employees would reasonably construe language to prohibit protected activity, the Board asserts that it gives a rule a reasonable reading, refrains from reading particular phrases in isolation, and does not presume improper interference with employee rights.

Applying these standards, in *Purple Communications*, the Board adopted the ALJ’s findings concerning the “no disruption” rule.

The Board found that *Purple Communications’* no disruption rule would reasonably be interpreted by employees to prohibit participation in a protected strike, solicitation on nonworking time, or participation in meetings or other Section 7 activities “that take place during non-work time and away from the workplace if those activities are causally linked to a disruption at the facility.” This finding, coupled with a finding that the president and CEO of *Purple Communications* made unlawful threats and promises to employees, led the Board to find that *Purple Communications* violated the Act. The Board ordered *Purple Communications* to rescind the “no disruption” rule and also set aside the company’s election victories, ordering rerun elections.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Electronic communications policies prohibiting employee use of company e-mail systems for nonbusiness purposes remain lawful, but for how long? The Board will revisit the *Register Guard* issue. For now, employers must continue to review and evaluate their other work rules and policies to withstand NLRB scrutiny. In conducting this review, employers may want to remove general and ambiguous language or modify it to provide context and examples to avoid being construed as interfering with activities protected under the National Labor Relations Act.

Donald D. Gamburg is a shareholder in Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.’s Philadelphia, Pennsylvania office. James H. Fowles, III is a shareholder in the firm’s Columbia, South Carolina office.





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DARLINGTON RACEWAY

BY PENNY DELANEY COTHAN, APR

Why is there a world famous race track in Darlington, South Carolina? It all started with the dream of a farmer named Harold Brasington. "In 1950, he had a crazy idea. He'd heard about stock car racing, and he wanted to build a track that he could host NASCAR events at," says Chip Wile, the new president at Darlington Raceway. "So he went to the Ramsey family, who owned a bunch of land in Darlington County, and said 'I want to build a race track!' Of course, the Ramseys thought he was nuts, but agreed to give him some of their farmland. So he built what we now know as Darlington Raceway."

HISTORY OF THE TRACK

"Darlington is one of the most special places within our sport," begins Wile. "It's the Wrigley Field of NASCAR." The race track's history and allure is beloved the world over for almost 65 years. But why is Darlington's race track known as the track "too tough to tame?" The



nickname comes from its shape, which is not a uniform oval or D-shape track, but rather an egg shape. Turns 3 and 4 are different because of a fishing pond the Ramseys would not let Brasington fill in during construction. (They still fish on that pond to this day.) "Drivers have to work hard at both ends of the race track," explains Wile. "One of the toughest things for the crew chiefs [to do] is to set up the car so that it works at both ends of the race track. You have to pick your poison. You've got to get your car to work really well at one end of the track and give up the other side."

Chip Wile oversees a staff of 15 employees at the Darlington Raceway. Upon graduation from college, Wile immediately went to work for a race team. "I spent the first 12 years of my career traveling from track to track," says Wile. With a young family at home, he decided to give up traveling 38 weekends a year for an opportunity to go work for International Speedway Corporation (IFC), which owns the Darlington Raceway and is based out of

Daytona Beach, Florida. The corporation is owned in part by the France family, who also owns NASCAR proper. "Darlington was one of the first tracks that IFC acquired," says Wile. "They also built the Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama. We were [one of] the first three tracks that the company had, and since then, we've gone on to purchase nine more tracks around the country, from California to Miami Beach to Upstate New York."

ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PEE DEE AND BEYOND

"Every race car driver wants to win at Darlington. It's one of the four biggest races of the year," Wile muses. "The future of our sport and the future of our raceway is really, really strong." This is due in part to the fact that the Bojangles Southern 500® is one of the biggest events of the year. This past autumn, at the lobby of South Carolinians and NASCAR fans everywhere, the event was moved back to its original, historic date of Labor Day weekend. "I think it's going to be one of the best races of 2015. It's going to



Chip Wile

QUICK FACTS ABOUT DARLINGTON RACEWAY

Home of the Bojangles Southern 500 and the VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero Out 200

One of the state's largest event weekends of the year

Track was built in 1950 when NASCAR was a regional sport

The Raceway is also a beverage company and a campsite, among other things

Parking is always free at NASCAR races, and NASCAR is the only professional sport that allows coolers to be brought into the stadium



be hot and slick. The atmosphere is going to be exciting. [A] holiday weekend [means] people tend to let loose a little bit, which is always encouraged at a NASCAR race."

Why is this important to South Carolina's economy? "We drive a significant amount of revenue to not only to the Pee Dee [region] but to the state," says Wile. "It's a Super Bowl-type event. We spend our spring and summer gearing up for three days worth of activity at the race track," including parades and concerts. "Throughout the year, we have 6,200 people who live in the City of Darlington. On race weekend, that number goes to 106,000."

A recent study showcased a \$55-60 million economic impact to the community and surrounding area on any given race weekend. For comparison, the only other economic driver in the state that comes close to this is a Clemson University or University of South Carolina football weekend.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

"We're in the business of selling tickets. We're a venue. That's what we do." Before Chip Wile's arrival as president, he felt Darlington Raceway wasn't being

a good community leader. "We weren't doing what we needed to do." Since then, he's hosted a number of events that are free to the public, such as their recent Fourth of July festival in which 15,000 people attended. "Things like [free movie nights] don't drive revenue but create an affinity between ourselves and our community," says Wile.

Penny Delaney Cothran is the multimedia manager at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and editor of South Carolina Business.

HONDA

Honda of South Carolina Mfg., Inc.



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PROGRESS REPORT

2020 Education Goals Make Strides

In July 2009, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce's Excellence in Education Council (EEC) released its education goals. A plan was born, marrying the business community's needs with the education community's achievable deliverables. The EEC is pleased to present a progress report, dated December 11, 2014. The following is a list of 10 benchmarks and the statuses of each, showing significant strides in the education of all South Carolinians, from pre-K through adulthood. Still, there's more work to do.

GOAL 1

Ninety-nine percent of all South Carolina high school students will have electronic Individual Graduation Plans (eIGP).

STATUS: 2012-13 data indicates that 98 percent of high school students had eIGPs.

GOAL 2

Eighty-five percent of all South Carolina high school students will graduate on time as measured by the US Department of Education's Uniform Graduation Rate formula.

STATUS: 2014 on-time graduation rate was 77.5 percent.

GOAL 3

Eighty percent of South Carolina 4 year old at-risk youth (free and reduced lunch) will complete 4K.

STATUS: In 2006, the South Carolina legislature created the Child Development Education program to provide full-day 4K for high poverty districts. In 2014, as part of the Read to Succeed Act, they expanded the program into 10 additional districts and changed the name to South Carolina Child Early Reading Development and Education Program. Currently, 75 percent of all school districts are eligible to serve at-risk children in full-day 4K programs.

GOAL 4

South Carolina will be in the top five states in average 4th and 8th grade student National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) score improvement.

STATUS: The National Assessment of Educational Progress evaluates states every two years based on students' performance in math and reading. South Carolina saw no significant changes in these scores from 2011 to 2013 and ranked below the national average in every category. SC's national ranking in 2013 versus 2011 is as follows: 4th grade reading remained unchanged at 39th; 4th grade math dropped to 39th from 37th; 8th grade reading rose to 36th from 38th; and 8th grade math rose to 31st from 34th.

GOAL 5

Fifty percent reduction of the student achievement gap on PASS testing from 2009 results.

STATUS: An analysis of 2009 versus 2014 PASS data for grades 3 through 8 revealed the following general results for the white/black achievement gap: the writing gap has widened; the ELA gap has narrowed; the math gap has remained unchanged; the science gap has narrowed; and the social studies gap has narrowed.

GOAL 6

All South Carolina high school seniors will have a WorkKeys® (including soft skills) certificate.

STATUS: Beginning with the 2014-15 school year already in progress, South Carolina students in grade 11 must take the WorkKeys career readiness assessment.

GOAL 7

15,000 GED's (including WorkKeys certification) will be awarded annually in South Carolina.

STATUS: In 2013-14, adult education credentialing continued its impressive growth rate with the granting of 8,713 GED diplomas, 862 high school diplomas and 10,240 WorkKeys certificates.

GOAL 8

South Carolina will have 10 times more businesses offering registered apprenticeships than the 2009 baseline.

STATUS: In 2009, the state had less than 190 registered apprenticeship programs and about 1,500 active apprentices. Now, it has 678 apprenticeship programs and 5,446 active apprentices, with the total apprentices served exceeding 10,400.

GOAL 9

South Carolina will exceed the national average for adults holding 2- or 4-year degrees

STATUS: According to the US Census Bureau's 2011 data, 34.2 percent of South Carolina's adults, ages 25 and older, hold 2- or 4-year degrees, while the national average is 38.7 percent.

GOAL 10

South Carolina will have a clear, coherent standardized pathway for adults to further their education.

STATUS: Unfortunately, the funding for the SC Commission on Higher Education's New Front Door initiative ran out in late 2013 and they stopped work on the project. The goal was to create a stackable certificate pathway that would make it easier for adult learners to prepare themselves for career-relevant post-secondary education and training. The pilot program, conducted in 2011-12 with Cherokee County Adult Education Program, Spartanburg Community College, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and local participating industries, had some positive outcomes. Of the 73 participants, 47 earned a high school credential and 21 enrolled in Spartanburg Community College. The Council on Competiveness' Connect Adults Committee has been enlisted to help identify a new approach to fulfilling this goal.

For more information or to get involved, contact Robbie Barnett, associate vice president of workforce, education and manufacturing policy, at 803-255-2625 or robbie.barnett@scchamber.net.

Is your county certified Work Ready?

South Carolina leading the nation in certifications

BY CHERYL M. STANTON

In December, South Carolina recognized 18 counties that recently became certified as work ready through the South Carolina Work Ready Communities (SCWRC) initiative.

Under the leadership of Governor Haley, South Carolina became one of four pilot states in 2012 to launch the SCWRC initiative to use data to match potential workers with businesses in every county.

Today, this initiative is 22 counties strong with the determined and collaborative efforts of Abbeville, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Cherokee, Clarendon, Colleton, Dorchester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Florence, Greenwood, Laurens, Marlboro, McCormick, Newberry, Pickens, Saluda, Sumter and Williamsburg.

"Such momentum demonstrates how dedicated these local communities are to attracting businesses," Lt. Gov. Yancey McGill says at the recognition event held at the State House in December. "I want to congratulate all our new certified work ready counties and encourage others to keep working toward their certification goals."

Now that nearly half of South Carolina's counties are certified as work ready, the Palmetto State is outpacing the nation in showcasing itself as a highly-skilled workforce that businesses require in a globally competitive economy.

When looking at where to locate operations, businesses from around the world can look to the SCWRC initiative and know that South Carolina is open and ready to meet their needs.

The initiative doesn't happen in silos. Rather, it is a community-based tool that brings together partners from businesses, chambers of commerce, workforce and economic developers, educators, elected officials and technical colleges.

DAYCO Products, LLC of Colleton County recently

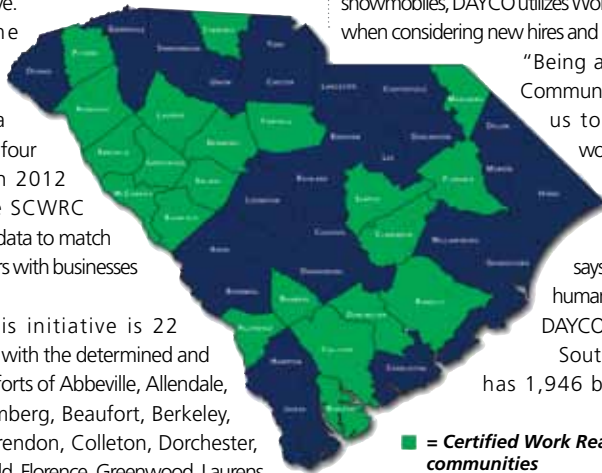
celebrated its 40th anniversary and is a business that finds extreme value in the SCWRC initiative. A manufacturer of drive belts and timing belts for automobiles, ATVs and snowmobiles, DAYCO utilizes WorkKeys® and job profiles when considering new hires and promotions.

"Being an ACT Work Ready Communities champion allows us to improve our own workforce as we also help other organizations understand the value of using this process," says Latrecia Hicks, assistant human resources manager for DAYCO Products, LLC.

South Carolina currently has 1,946 businesses formally supporting the initiative - but we need

more! Visit scworkready.org/faq/business/ to sign up your business today.

As we continue to lead the nation in certifications,



WHAT IS THE VALUE OF SOUTH CAROLINA WORK READY COMMUNITIES?

- Allowing **businesses** to pinpoint exactly what foundational skills are needed for a productive workforce, more easily communicate their needs and fill their jobs with certified candidates.
- Showing **individuals** what skills are required by employers and how to prepare for success by providing a certification process that proves they have the skills to do cutting edge, 21st century jobs.
- Allowing **policy makers** to consistently and efficiently measure the skill gaps at the state and local levels; allowing for more proactive policies and ultimately, a better economy.
- Allowing **educators** to better assess students' work readiness through WorkKeys® testing.
- Providing **economic developers** with an on-demand, workforce-skills reporting tool, to market the quality of their workforce and recruit new business.

South Carolina is committed to helping all 46 counties achieve certification. To date, through the SCWRC initiative, 66,261 individuals have received National Career Ready Certificates.

To find out how your county can become certified, visit scworkready.org.

Cheryl M. Stanton is the executive director of the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce which implements the SCWRC initiative.

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Governor Haley thanks workers of DAYCO Products for helping Colleton County receive its Work Ready certification.

Workforce Development Forum highlights solutions for skills gaps

The fourth and final forum in the 2014 Competitiveness Agenda Series was held October 14 and focused on workforce development and education. The one-day event featured various topics, including workforce development strides and needs, EEDA and CATE, apprenticeships and comments from the state superintendent of education candidates. The forum highlighted various initiatives in South Carolina from K-12 education to higher-ed and workforce development priorities.

Dates for the 2015 Competitiveness Agenda Series have been set, kicking off with the Infrastructure Forum on February 24; the Health Care Forum on April 23; the Environmental/Energy Forum on May 19; and the Workforce Development/Education Forum on August 18. Visit scchamber.net/events for additional information.



Mikee Johnson, 2014-15 chairman of the Chamber's board of directors and president of Cox Industries, Inc., welcomes attendees to the forum.



More than 100 attendees gathered to learn more about workforce development and education initiatives in South Carolina.



Dr. Jimmie Williamson discusses apprenticeships in South Carolina.



Ann Marie Stieritz updates business leaders regarding the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness Education and Workforce Taskforce.



Luncheon speaker Steve Burry of Michelin North America awards one lucky attendee, Bob Walker, with a set of new Michelin tires.

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2015

Infrastructure Forum
February 24, DoubleTree Hotel

Health Care Forum

April 23, DoubleTree Hotel

Environmental & Energy Forum

May 19, Embassy Suites

Education & Workforce Development Forum

August 18, Embassy Suites

**All Forums are held in Columbia.*

www.scchamber.net

2014 Annual Summit

Approximately 250 of the state's top business leaders gathered in the Lowcountry November 12-14, 2014 for the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce's 35th Annual Summit, presented by Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C. The following distinguished individuals were recognized at the event: Mike Brennan of BB&T South Carolina as the 2014 Business Leader of the Year; Jim Newsome of the South Carolina Ports Authority as the 2014 Public Servant of the Year; and Ike McLeese formerly of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce was posthumously awarded the Sgt. William Jasper Freedom Award. Two Business Week students, Wilfredo Anderson of Crestwood High School and Sarah-Ellen Floyd of Scholars Academy, were both honored with college scholarships.



Kim and Avery Wilkerson, John Garrison and Kitty Howell network during the reception.



Above, Business Week 2014 student Wilfredo Anderson is presented with the S. Hunter Howard, Jr. scholarship.

Right, Sarah-Ellen Floyd, 2014 Business Week attendee, is presented with the Ron McNair Leadership Award



Lee Bussell, Mike Brennan and Pamela Lackey enjoy the welcome reception.



Newly elected Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman discusses her vision for education during the symposium.



The Summit Symposium featured a variety of speakers and topics of interest for South Carolinians, including education and infrastructure.



2014 Public Servant of the Year, Jim Newsome, addresses the audience.



Sue McLeese accepts the 2014 Sgt. William Jasper Freedom Award on behalf of her late husband, Ike McLeese.



2014 Business Leader of the Year, Mike Brennan, thanks his peers.



The Three Waiters, a New York-based performing group, surprise and entertain at the Summit dinner.

Pamela Lackey of AT&T passes the gavel to Mikee Johnson of Cox Industries, Inc.



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The City of Columbia and Columbia Professional Baseball announced in December that the new, state-of-the-art multi-use sports and entertainment venue at Columbia Common in downtown Columbia will be known as "Spirit Communications Park." **Spirit Communications** is based in Columbia with its headquarters on Bull Street, just blocks from the Columbia Common development. "Spirit Communications is delighted to make this investment in what we are sure will be one of the most important and transformative projects our home town of Columbia has seen," said Bob Keane, president and chief executive officer of Spirit Communications.



Cheryl R. Holland of **Abacus Planning Group** was awarded the FFI GEN (Global Education Network) Certificate in Family Business Advising (CFBA) by the Family Firm Institute.

BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina and the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation helped to start the state's five-year obesity action plan, SCaledown.org, and are supporting healthy weight and weight-loss programs for members and the public. BlueCross President **Jim Deyling** and BlueCross Foundation Executive



MAR-MAC INC. unveiled a new logo and launched a new website as well as announcing a revised corporate name. Formerly Mar-Mac Wire, Inc., the company will now be known as **MAR-MAC INC.** Their new Website, marmacinc.com, reflects the diversity of MAR-MAC's products.



MEDcare University celebrated the graduation of its inaugural class of students with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. MEDcare University is a program for employees to pursue their medical education with the goal of national certification. The 17 graduates from MEDcare University come from MEDcare's urgent care clinics across South Carolina.

Director **Harvey Galloway** served on the task force establishing the program.

BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina employees and its foundation gave a total of \$17.4 million to nonprofits and other institutions serving the state last year. The BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation's approval last month of \$12.6 million in grant projects brings its total grants awarded to health care-related South Carolina nonprofits to \$14.7 million for 2014 and \$60.4 million since 2003.

In addition, BlueCross employees made monetary donations and raised funds to the tune of \$2.7 million for recipients including the South Carolina-based operations of the United Way, the March of Dimes, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the American Heart Association.

Roper St. Francis Physicians Partners initiated a new model in health care – a patient-centered medical home (PCMH) – for **BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina** and BlueChoice HealthPlan of South Carolina patients. The

program is available to BlueCross and BlueChoice patients who have diabetes, hypertension and/or heart failure which is more than 9,000 members, and is also available to State Health Plan employees. Twenty-four practices are participating in Charleston, Mount Pleasant, Goose Creek, North Charleston, Moncks Corner and Summerville. A key element of creating a medical home is ensuring that patients with chronic diseases are receiving preventive care as quickly as possible so they can avoid acute episodes.



LINNER



TRAUTH

BMW Manufacturing announced that **Franz Linner** was named vice president, supplier network, Americas. In this new role, Linner is responsible for supply chain partners throughout North and South America. **Johannes Trauth** was appointed to serve as the plant's vice president, human resources. Trauth arrived in South Carolina in early November to head up the plant's human resources function.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

All American Fence Services
Columbia

**Columbia Eye Surgery
Center Inc.**
Columbia

DesleeClama North America
Inman

FlashCo Manufacturing Inc.
Piedmont

**McLaughlin Body
Company, Inc.**
Anderson

MEDcare Urgent Care Center
Charleston

Saussy Burbank
Charlotte, NC

**South Carolina Society of
Plastic Surgeons**
Sumter

StarTek Health Myrtle Beach
Myrtle Beach

**The Center for Orthopaedic
Surgery**
Rock Hill



Serita Acker, the director of Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), has won *Women of Color* magazine's College-

Level Promotion of Education award as director of a **Clemson University** program that supports female engineering and science majors.



Clemson University's Robert J. Rutland Institute for Ethics has named its annual award in honor of the university's 14th

president **James F. Barker**, who stepped down last year after 14 years to return to the architecture faculty. The Institute's advisory board decided to name the award 'The James F. Barker Ethics in Action Award' and decided it should go to the president emeritus this year in addition to the perpetual naming honor.



Clemson University promoted **Brian Callahan** to associate director of Extension, which provides

technology transfer to residents of all 46 counties in the state. Callahan has served as assistant director of Extension field operations since 2009. Before that, he was lead agent for Clemson Extension in Pickens County, providing educational programming in agriculture and natural resources.



Clemson University president **James P. Clements** was presented the gavel as chairman of the board of directors for the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.



DesignIntelligence magazine has ranked **Clemson's** graduate architecture programs seventh among public institutions and 18th overall nationally in the annual publication "America's Best Architecture and Design Schools." Clemson has been ranked in this highest tier of architecture programs in eight of the most recent 10 years. In related news, Clemson University's School of Architecture appointed **Anjali Joseph** as the first endowed chair in Architecture + Health Design and Research.

Antonis Katsiyannis, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Special Education in **Clemson University's** Eugene T. Moore School of Education, was named president-elect of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the largest international professional organization dedicated to special and gifted education.

Collins & Lacy, P.C. welcomed **Christopher Huber** to the firm's Columbia office. Huber is an associate practicing in the areas of insurance coverage litigation and professional liability.



Collins & Lacy's Andrew Cole was named vice chairman of the Home Builders Association of Greater Columbia's Remodelers Council.

Colonial Life awarded \$25,000 in grants to 35 teachers in Richland County School District One through its Strong Schools Grant program. The program supports teachers who have innovative ideas for increasing student engagement. Teachers received grants of up to \$1,000 to purchase equipment and technology for science, technology, engineering, arts and math courses.



Mark Crocker, CPA, partner at **Dixon Hughes Goodman**, was elected chairman of the South Carolina Board

of Accountancy. Board members are appointed by Governor Nikki Haley to be the regulatory authority that issues licenses to over 6,000 Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) in the state of South Carolina.



Susan McCracken of **Dixon Hughes Goodman**, was honored at the 2014 Women in Leadership Conference

in Columbia, S.C. Out of the 6,500+ Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) in the state of South Carolina, only four were named Women to Watch by the South Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants (SCACPA) and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).



Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd Greenville shareholder **J. Derrick Quattlebaum** was elected to membership in

the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) and the South Carolina Chapter of ABOTA.

Ishpi Information Technologies, Inc. acquired Advanced Information Services Inc. (AIS) in November 2014.



Hugh McAngus, founding member of **McAngus Goudelock & Courie**, was the recipient of the South Carolina

Defense Trial Attorneys' Association's (SCDTAA) Hemphill Award. The Hemphill Award is given to a member or former member of the SCDTAA who has shown distinguished and meritorious conduct or service to the legal profession and/or the public.



NBSC, a division of Synovus Bank, announced the appointment of **Dr. Nayef H. Samhat** to its SC board of directors.



"DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar" elected **John Kuppens**, a partner in **Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough**

LLP's Columbia office, as second vice president. Kuppens previously served the organization as a national director and has chaired both its Product Liability Committee and Young Lawyers Committee. "DRI – The Voice of the

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Defense Bar" is a 22,000-member international organization of lawyers and corporate counsel who defend the interests of businesses and individuals in civil litigation.



COWAN



LEWIS

Nexsen Pruet welcomed four new Columbia associates. They are **Erin Cowan** (Real Estate), **Will Lewis** (Business



MARTIN



SVEDBERG

Litigation), **Chandler Martin** (Health Care) and **Sara Svedberg** (Employment & Labor). In addition, the firm has added **Mark Moore** (Business Litigation-Columbia), **Devon Riley** (Business Litigation-Charleston), **Scott Hultstrand** (Health Care-Columbia), **Nicole Ewing** (Real Estate-Charleston) and **Ron Jones** (Bankruptcy-Charleston).



Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C. welcomed **Michael Eckard** as a shareholder in the firm's Charleston

office. Eckard joined Ogletree Deakins' Charleston office from the firm's office in Atlanta.

O'Neal Inc., a Greenville-based integrated design and construction firm, hired **Jeff Putnam** as PDMS piping design specialist and **Patrick Griswold** as senior project manager.



Phillips Staffing named **Shonna Peppers** as human resources specialist. Prior to moving into her new role, she served as an

on-site supervisor for Phillips at a major customer facility in Easley. She previously worked for Clemson University in a variety of positions.



HALKOWITZ



GOESSEL

Scott and Company LLC promoted **Chris Halkowitz**, **Charles A. "Chuck" Goessel**, **Kelly Damiano**,



DAMIANO



SHOOLBRED

Chelsea Shoolbred and **Sam Wheeler** to the firm's assurance and advisory services team.



WHEELER

Three of **Smith Moore Leatherwood's** South Carolina attorneys were named to the 2014 Super Lawyers Business Edition. They were **Michael Bowers** in Charleston, **Seven Farrar** and **Michael Giese** in Greenville. Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters business, is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement.

Sonoco is producing plant-based plastic bottles for Ecover's new home care line. After joining forces with Method in 2012 to become the world's largest green cleaning company, Ecover® has launched its popular green brand in North America with a fresh new look. Ecover's new look hit store shelves across the U.S. in August 2014 in Sonoco's extrusion blow-molded bottles made from Plantplastic, Ecover's proprietary blend of bio-sourced high-density polyethylene (HDPE) and post-consumer recycled (PCR) resin. The bio-resin, which is produced using plant-based feedstock and recycled resin collected from municipal curbside programs across the U.S., uses up to 90 percent less energy and emits 75 percent less greenhouse gases compared to petroleum-based virgin resin, and is recyclable in most curbside recycling programs.

Sonoco was named Supplier of the Year by Madico in their "Supplies and Services" category. The Supplier of the Year Award criteria is based on exceptional performance in quality, service, delivery and innovation. This recent award was driven primarily by Sonoco's innovative approach to challenging packaging issues related to Madico's tinted window films used in the automotive market. Not only did Sonoco provide high quality packaging, but they also reduced shipping costs and waste that would have ended up in a landfill.

Southeastern Freight Lines' Fritz Missel was presented with the 2014 Plunkett-Stoioff Award at the 41st Annual South Carolina International Trade Conference (SCITC) for his professionalism and character.

Spartanburg Water promoted four individuals including **Kevin Brown** to the position of director of information technology, **Kelly Heatherly** to the position of customer systems and services manager, **Remsen Parrish** to the position of purchasing manager and **David Ledbetter** to the position of collection system department manager.

The Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies announced that **Spartanburg Water** is among the nation's best managed public drinking water systems. It received that AMWA's 'Sustainable Water Utility Management Award' for excellence in economic, social and environmental practices.

Spirit Communications and Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative (PRTC) are pleased to bring super-high-speed Internet access to six schools in the most rural areas of Charleston's School District (Hollywood, McClellanville, and Ravenel). This highly complex project entailed 34 miles of advanced fiber construction and intricate drilling under the Edisto River and three different CSX railroad crossings. The expansion in bandwidth will enable the schools to take their curriculums to new levels by incorporating high-definition video, eLearning applications and other virtual education programs only available via the Internet.

The South Carolina Department of Agriculture announced the appointment of South Carolina farmer, **Chalmers Carr III**, to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board. Carr is the owner and operator of **Titan Farms**, a diverse family farm operation that focuses on growing peaches and southern vegetables.

The American Bar Association has named a blog by **University of South Carolina** law professor **Colin Miller** among the top 100 legal blogs in the United States. Editors of the *ABA Journal* selected Miller's "EvidenceProf Blog" for its annual "Blawg 100" list, citing his savvy on the latest rulings regarding the admissibility of evidence in criminal cases, what lines in questioning should be permitted at criminal trials or differences between federal and state rules of evidence.

Shambi Broome of Webgyrlz Code won the \$5,000 Ideas Contest, sponsored by **Wells Fargo**, at Ignite! 2014, EngenuitySC's annual celebration of economic competitiveness. Webgyrlz Code, founded by Broome, is a training program that teaches young girls how to hand-code websites. The program, designed to encourage female interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields and foster lasting life skills, will teach girls in third through fifth grades how to build websites using HTML5 and other programming languages. Ignite!

is EngenuitySC's annual celebration of economic competitiveness, entrepreneurship and innovation in the Midlands, bringing together new media, technology and business leaders, innovators, students and entrepreneurs to celebrate forward-thinking economic development in the Midlands.

Melinda Davis Lux, a shareholder of **Wyche, P.A.**, was elected chair of the private equity subcommittee of the American Bar Association (ABA) Business Law Committee on Taxation where she is responsible for leading the subcommittee's projects and programs focusing on tax issues that arise in private equity transactions.

Additionally, **Wyche** was honored by the **Greenville Chamber** with the ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award® for 2014. The award recognizes organizations with initiatives dedicated to creating cultures that encourage women employees to achieve their full leadership potential, and that give back to the larger community of women.

Submit your Member News and publicity photos to penny.cothran@scchamber.net.

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I am S.C. Business

Name: John Uprichard

Hometown: Tampa, Florida, but I've been in Greenville since 2000. I came to South Carolina as a trailing spouse.

Education/College: MBA from Brenau University and bachelor's degree in foreign language and literatures from Auburn University

Occupation: President & CEO, FGP International, Inc.
(Find Great People)

"Before coming to South Carolina, I was an officer in the Navy and had decided to resign my commission because I wanted to spend more time with family. My wife is a children's dentist. We had just built a house a block off the beach on Amelia Island at Fernandina Beach, Fla. I thought, 'life's great!' She said 'I want us to go visit Greenville, South Carolina. I hate it here. The nearest Target is an hour away.' Being in the military, you get to experience a lot of different communities. The people in Greenville are very authentic and willing to help. We love South Carolina."

How has your industry changed?

"LinkedIn. I can remember five years ago, people were like 'What's LinkedIn?' You look at LinkedIn today, it's huge. The secret sauce for us is not the technology. For us, it's our people. Other folks can copy our tools, our website, but they can't copy 'us.'"

What are you known for?

People would say I'm caring, empathetic and balanced. My wife works full time. I've got incredible respect for what she does. I also have four kids. I really get it. How do you grow a business, and be a community leader, but then also grow your family? At times, it is not easy. For me, we grew (FGP) from '04 to '08 from under a million in revenue to \$14 million in revenue. At the time, my son was four or five years old. My twin girls were one. And then I had a baby. I was so focused on growing this business and taking this to \$100 million in ten different locations that what happened was I hit a real reflection point at the same time that the economy was going in the wrong direction. I was way out of balance. I wasn't being present at home. I got to a very healthy, good place for myself. Sixty-five percent of our workforce is female. We've got a lot of working moms. I get it."

What's your secret to success?

"I wish I could tell you I had this incredible vision and strategy. Sometimes what happens is opportunity comes to you. The opportunity to come to South Carolina. The opportunity to get into staffing. When people ask me what I do, I always tell them I'm in the people business. I love what I do. I also love the people that I do it with. And I love the people that I do it for."

I am S.C. Business because... "We get to go out and find people nationwide and bring them to South Carolina. We can speak to them first hand with conviction about South Carolina. I'm really passionate about getting great people to South Carolina."



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