



**Date: May 31, 2016**

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

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

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

### **CENTER OPERATIONS**

- Multiple calls/meetings with **Chairman Matt Green** about various **growth opportunities**.
- **2016 Golf** meetings. Starting to sign up sponsors and golfers
- Revised **billing procedures** so that innovators are automatically charged their monthly payment at the first of the month. Consequently innovators are now always current with their payments.
- **Updated DRCI Golf website.**
- **Updated DRCI website.**
- Began **filming and posting various DRCI Board member and graduate videos** to build awareness of the DRCI among potential innovators and general membership
- Created a **one minute promotional video** about the DRCI
- Completed the annual DRCI survey of companies to get latest performance numbers. Latest results show **DRCI companies employ 88 people with an annual payroll of \$4.5 million.**

### **INNOVATORS**

- Currently there are **7 innovators** in the Center.
- **CERAS and Taylor Offshore will graduate on June 16.**
- Met with **every innovator at least once** (some multiple times) during the month.
- Coordinating prototype development for Bluffton based **Elongator.**
- Launched new **Elongator website.**
- Launched new **TipToepia website.**
- Met with **one potential innovator.**

### **OUTREACH, STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS**

- Internal strategy meeting with Jay Martinez, **Waddell Director Al Stokes**, DRCI Board members Michael Mathews and Larry Hughes about possible **Mariculture - Economic Development opportunities.**

- Held **6<sup>th</sup>** and final **SCAD educational** session in Savannah. New program to start up in September.
- Continuing work with USCB and Celebrate Bluffton to launch the **“Celebrate Bluffton” app. The app will launch on schedule in July**
- **Featured speaker at HHI/BlufftonChamber “Prime of Life” event.**
- Applied to the **“Girls Who Code”** program for a Fall 2016 program slot.
- Attended **angel investor’s lunch** with representatives from the UCAN network who are trying to start a **“Salt Marsh Angel”** Network in the region.
- Met with **Geoff Grout** regarding aquaculture/mari-culture initiative
- **Skype call with representatives of Clemson** and other university about possible expansion of the Clemson Technology Village program to states outside South Carolina.
- Attended **Founders Ball in Charleston**. This is an event hosted by The Harbor incubator and brings together all types of people from the SC entrepreneurship and start-up ecosystem. Invited to the event by **Amy Love from the SC Dept. of Innovation.**
- Interviewed for a talk show segment on WHHI’s **“Talk of the Town”**
- Completed a **30-minute radio interview** on 106.9 for their **“In Focus”** program.

#### **TOWN OF BLUFFTON OPERATIONS**

- Attended **Senior Staff** meetings.
- Attended **TOB Budget Workshop**
- Attended **Oyster Factory Park** ribbon cutting ceremony

*NOTE: David Nelems was on vacation May 2<sup>nd</sup> -May 6<sup>th</sup>*