

Business Development Committee Meeting - Meeting Minutes – November 14, 2023

Staff Present: Cindy Gettig, Amanda Bailey, Yaritza Carlson, Peggy Masterson.

Meeting called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Cindy Gettig.

Welcome & Introduction: Cindy Gettig

Wall Fellows Program: Erika DeLuca, Coastal Carolina University

Three Wall Fellow students spoke at the meeting and discussed the program with us. The program is two years and prepares students for their last job, not just their first job. This program helps students stand out through learning the core items that help you hold a position in a specific field. Each semester, students earn up to three credits. The application process runs from November through January and is open to all Coastal students that have two years left of their college degree. There's a variety of individuals in the program with various degree selections. There is an interview process and everyone that applies for the program receives an interview. The Wall Fellow students are the first to interview the prospective students and they pick twenty individuals to move forward in the interviewing process. In order to be in the program you have to have a 3.5 GPA or higher. There are twelve essay questions on the application. The next to interview the prospective students is the faculty and staff, then the Board of Directors. The final chosen number is ten students for the program. The fellows can be either an undergraduate or graduate, they can be in the program as long as they have two years left of their degree. There are a variety of teams within the Wall Fellows program that help organize the different events that happen during the year. The groups are marketing, travel and team building, alumni relations and finance. It's important to have experience outside of the classroom, each fellow is required to do two internships and the preferred time is during the summer. Staff are always looking for businesses to provide internships Wall Fellows. Eileen Soisson is the contact for internships and anything regarding the Wall Fellows Program. The junior class was able to go to Charlotte and Iceland, they will have a senior trip. The senior class chooses two cities within the United States to visit. During their visit, they tour two different businesses in the area.

Chamber Update: Cindy Gettig

The next signature event the chamber will host is our annual Member-to-Member Business Expo on January 30 at the Myrtle Beach Area Convention Center. This year's theme is boardgames. GSYP had their signature event, Subs for Santa last week on December 5. This is a charity that the young professionals raise money all year long to provide a Christmas to children that otherwise may not have one. The children get to

play at Fun Warehouse and then shop for their presents at Walmart. All year long, there are different fundraising events to raise money. The next event will be the Oyster Roast. The second Ignite Women's Conference was on October 31 and went very well. We are working on locking in next year's date now.

Partnership Grand Strand Update: Peggy Masterson

PGS is currently working with Myrtle Beach Downtown Alliance to support the downtown revitalization efforts. Supporting infrastructure growth goes hand in hand with legislative policies. We just got a new website that will be easier for visitors to interact with and find what they need, instead of having to go to multiple sources. The website includes articles and blog posts that discuss things that are happening in other communities, as well as things to think about when dealing with small businesses – helpful tips. PGS just launched a career readiness program. This program consists of going into different high schools in Horry County and getting a better understanding of their CTE programs. CTE programs are specialized courses that students can take to learn a specific trade. We are also partnering with Coastal Carolina RISE program; this is a first-time partnership. The program has been in Georgetown for a long time and now is moving to our area. They will work with twenty businesses to create internships throughout Horry County.

DEI Update: Cindy Gettig

The last EVOLVE series was held on Thursday, Nov. 16. Participants presented their DEI projects. The reason behind these presentations was to have the attendees look deeper into their organization to find changes that can be made to be more acceptable to all individuals. Danette is brainstorming next year's EVOLVE Series and potentially changing the location based off its popularity. Additional supplemental classes will be added next year. Danette is also working with police and business owners to create safe places that individuals can go if they are in any way feeling in danger. The businesses will have stickers that they will display in their windows for individuals to see to note they are a safe place.

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 a.m. by Cindy Gettig.