



SMALL BUSINESS RESILIENCE

COURAGE TO ADAPT. STRENGTH TO SUCCEED.

According to the Office of Advocacy, US SBA, small businesses constitute 99.4% of South Carolina businesses profile (2021 data). Appropriate education and support for business owners, 43.9% of which are women, are essential for the stability and growth of small businesses. On January 3, 2022, the *Florence Chamber of Commerce* (SC), the *Grand Strand SCORE* (Myrtle Beach, SC), and *Kelley Center for Economic Development* at Francis Marion University (Florence, SC) entered a collaborative venture to provide high quality education for small business owners. There is a clear synergy between these three organizations based on their history of dedicated services for local small businesses. *Kelley Center for Economic Development* has been dedicated to the economic growth of the Pee Dee Region through small business support/incubation and various regional economic development initiatives since 2016. *The Florence Chamber of Commerce* is driven by the mission to "promote and enhance a favorable business climate and improve the quality of life to make Florence the best community in which to live and operate a business." The *SCORE Grand Strand* chapter, founded in 1984, provides education and mentoring to over 11,000 businesses with over 400 clients per year in the Myrtle Beach Area. Last year *Grand Strand SCORE* opened a branch office in Florence, SC, and expanded its services to nine counties in South Carolina: Horry, Georgetown, Marion, Williamsburg, Dillon, Chesterfield, Darlington, Marlboro, and Florence. In 2022, the *Grand Strand SCORE*, *Kelley Center for Economic Development* and *Florence Chamber of Commerce* will offer a strong curriculum of business education for businesses in all stages of developmental growth.



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