



**Partnership Grand Strand Bulletin**  
**DECEMBER, 2023**  
**Series 1, Issue 7**

**An Update from Your Director, Peggy Masterson**



We hope you and your family had an amazing Thanksgiving!

Next month marks the one-year anniversary of Partnership Grand Strand's transition from the planning stage to implementation. Whew, it has been a busy 12 months!

November has been all about execution. We are excited to report that we have 25 companies currently enrolled in our Career Readiness Program with Horry County High Schools and we toured with over 200 students through Tideland and McLeod Hospitals via our Start Something Amazing Program. We are getting amazing feedback from all parties involved and will use all of it to continue to refine, expand and improve these initiatives.

We continue to keep the momentum going on our Business Retention and Expansion interviews and we are building plans for a business accelerator program. It will take entrepreneurs and small businesses from idea to success with the ease and support they have been looking for.

Since our last newsletter update, our team has uncovered new opportunities through partnerships like The CoBe Initiative at CCU, a new training platform called Microburst, and a potential AI tool to power small business and start-ups. We are also keeping a watchful eye on the policy initiatives affecting the Grand Strand such as the proposed transportation tax, accessible housing, insurance reforms and much more.

**PILLAR UPDATE - PROSPERITY**

***Mark Shaaber, Entrepreneur Retention Manager***

**Partnership Grand Strand Seeks Your Input!**

We are meeting with small businesses and entrepreneurial businesses to hear their story. Our intent is to gather case studies that can help identify areas of improvement that lead to a more business friendly environment across the Grand Strand, create opportunity for new industries to do business here, and gather data so we may follow trends and measure progress.

If you or someone you know is a small business owner or an entrepreneur, please take the time to connect with us by reaching out directly to [mark.shaaber@partnershipgrandstrand.com](mailto:mark.shaaber@partnershipgrandstrand.com) or by [clicking here to complete the survey](#).

If you complete a survey, we will reach out to you to discuss your answers and share what we've learned with you in a 1:1 discussion. If you prefer not to meet with us, that is perfectly fine; the data you provide will be added to our database anonymously. Thank you!



## PILLAR UPDATE - TALENT

*BJ Beaver, Workforce Talent Manager*

### What's the difference between an Apprenticeship and an Internship?

The words apprenticeship and internship are commonly used interchangeably when discussing workforce development. Although there are some similarities, there are vast differences between an apprenticeship and an internship.

[Click here](#) to learn more and see how these workforce tools can fuel your business.



## PILLAR UPDATE - INFRASTRUCTURE

*James Toy, Public Policy Manager*

### H-2B Visa Expansion: Addressing Labor Shortages and Fueling Economic Growth

The Department of Homeland Security has significantly expanded the H-2B visa program for Fiscal Year 2024, making an additional 64,716 visas available to businesses across the country. This substantial increase is well above the 66,000 visas mandated by Congress and is a clear acknowledgment of the growing need for temporary workers in various sectors of the U.S. economy. The H-2B visa program is designed to enable U.S. businesses to temporarily hire noncitizens to fill nonagricultural labor positions. With the expansion of the H-2B visa program, businesses will now have greater access to qualified temporary workers, helping them to address labor shortages, maintain productivity, and meet the demands of their customers.

### White House to Tackle Housing Crisis with Commercial Building Conversion

On Friday, October 27, the White House announced new incentives to help local and state governments bolster affordable housing supplies. The incentives focus on converting commercial office spaces into affordable housing by directly financing or subsidizing the cost of conversion.

[READ MORE](#)



# WILL YOU BE FEATURED IN OUR NEXT INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT?

We have featured some of our investor businesses in past issues of the PGS newsletter. We are now publishing the newsletter monthly instead of every other month, so more opportunities have opened up to feature YOUR business in an upcoming issue.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Marianne Joy at 843-916-7213 or [marianne.joy@partnershipgrandstrand.com](mailto:marianne.joy@partnershipgrandstrand.com). We will publish them on a first come, first served basis.

## SAVE THE DATE



## FOR THE NEXT TOWN HALL MEETING!

FEB. 21, 2024

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## OUR TOP INVESTORS

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### DIAMOND LEVEL



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