



GUIDE TO MEMBERSHIP 2019-20

A Chamber of Commerce Welcome



Michael J. Miller
Chamber President

The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce is a vital part of the ongoing growth and foundation building here in the Florence County area. Your membership in the Chamber provides unparalleled opportunities to connect with peers, prospective clients and partners up and down the supply chain to keep communications open.

The programs and events we present provide extraordinary opportunities to grow needed networks and gain new insights for addressing the ever-changing challenges facing all of us in business today. By working together as Chamber members, we have a much stronger voice with our elected leaders as they contemplate policy revisions, new rules and regulations that will create greater certainty and an improved environment for business in the Pee Dee.

The Chamber's body of work ranges from the widely known Leadership Florence Program to the Washington Delegation Trip. We conduct many Small and Minority Business programs including PRISM (Promoting the Inclusion of Small and Minority Businesses,) the Spring Business Outlook Luncheon and the Shop Local Program. We also organize Quarterly Business Seminars and CEO Breakfasts. In total, there are more than sixty different Chamber programs covering education, leadership development, business growth and networking.

To make all the programs possible, the Florence Chamber actively recruits local member support at a variety of levels. While many local companies provide supplemental funding at the Capital Foundation and President's Foundation levels, others provide sponsorship funding for specific platforms. However, our largest supporters are our 600 business members, which are critical to fulfilling our purpose.

Our mission is clear: "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."

Our Chamber Staff



Susan Farver
Chief Operating Officer



Les Echols
**Director of Community
& Minority Enterprise**



Jay Lavrinc
**Director of Membership
Relations**



Mandy Howle
Office Manager



Kristin Nesmith
Director of Marketing & Sales



Bailey Avent
Administrative Assistant

Our Board of Directors for 2019-2020

Starlee Alexander
State Farm Insurance

Kyle Baxter
MUSC Health – Florence Medical Center

Ed Bethea
Florence Darlington Technical College

Keith Buckhouse
Synovus

Mark Buyck, III
Willcox, Buyck & Williams, PA

Jamie Carsten
South State Bank

Dr. Fred Carter
Francis Marion University

Scott Collins
Collins Architecture

Brian Fast
First Citizens Bank

Lucinda Fountain
Honda of South Carolina Mfg.

Kevin Gause
Wells Fargo

Annie Ham
McCall Farms

Vera Herbert
Carolina Bank

Robby Hill
Hillsouth

Ed Hoffman
Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School

Ken Jackson
Re/Max Professionals

Linda Mitchell Johnson
Senior Citizens Association

Tyron Jones
Florence Darlington Technical College

Joe King
Florence County Economic Dev. Partnership

Jill Lewis
Signature Wealth Strategies

Jeff McKay
NESA

Rev. Waymon Mumford, Chairman
Florence County Council

Chip Munn
Signature Wealth Strategies

Diana Murphy
Diversity Works Magazine

Brian Nunn
Encompass Health

Dr. Richard O'Malley
Florence 1 Schools

Chad Patterson
Raldex Hospitality Group

Ray Reich
City of Florence/Downtown Development

Mike Reichenbach
Mike Reichenbach Ford Lincoln Volvo

Marie Saleeby
McLeod Health

Paul Saunders
First Reliance Bank

Elaine Sealey
SAFE Federal Credit Union

Paul Seward
First Bank

Mike Skarupa
PGBA

Mindy Taylor
Duke Energy

Dr. Charlene Wages
Francis Marion University

Irby Wilson
Orr Company, Inc.

Stephen Wukela, Mayor
City of Florence

Top 10 reasons you should be a member of the Chamber of Commerce:

1. **Membership brings credibility to your business.** You can increase positive perception among consumers and business owners when your business is identified as a member of the Chamber of Commerce.
2. **Increase your visibility in the community.** As a new member of the Chamber of Commerce, you will be listed in the Chamber newsletter, Website listings, on Facebook and have the opportunity to be highlighted in other Chamber publications. You also can grow your business by advertising with the Chamber and sponsoring events. The Chamber may also promote your grand opening/ ribbon-cutting ceremony and assist with any public relations efforts.
3. **Create networking opportunities.** Chambers have numerous committees and serving on one of them provides numerous networking opportunities as well as professional leadership development. You can build your business while promoting developments of keen interest to local businesses and the community at large.
4. **Gain a voice in government.** The local Chamber takes on the tough issues and opposes new regulations, taxes, fees, assessments and costs that can be detrimental to operating a business. It also helps protect the principles of free enterprise and aids businesses in being treated fairly.
5. **Make business contacts.** The Chamber's most fundamental mission is to generate more business activity for the community. The Chamber initiates more business-to-business commerce and more opportunities for networking and connecting local professionals than is available through most other local organizations.
6. **Receive ChamberLink newsletters.** Newsletters provide new member information, interesting information about operating a local business, articles about the local community, a community calendar and details about up-and-coming chamber events, among other things.
7. **Acquire customer referrals.** Every day, your local chamber receives calls from individuals and businesses looking for potential vendors, and chamber members typically recommend chamber members.
8. **Chamber events and programs.** Chamber events and programs provide members with great opportunities to get to know new people and expand their prospect base. Chamber events are innovative and fun ways to help members meet potential customers, clients and vendors— and generate new business leads.
9. **Promotion and publicity.** With a Chamber membership, you can reach potential clients through member exclusive advertising and opportunities for business-to-business advertising and publicity.
10. **Access to members-only discounts and services.** You have great opportunities to save with Office Depot and Blue Cross-Blue Shield programs.

Understanding the real value in Chamber Membership



When you're looking for ways to get more exposure for your small business, you should consider joining the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce. We've been helping local businesses network and become more successful for many years. It's time that you join so you can take advantage of all that membership can offer.

Not only does belonging to the Chamber of Commerce help with networking, exchanging ideas with other business owners and managers, and increasing your community exposure, but it also helps elevate consumers' perceptions of your business.

A recent study indicates that consumers are 40% more likely to eat at a restaurant franchise if they know the restaurant is a Chamber of Commerce member. Similarly, consumers are 43% more likely to consider buying insurance from a company who is a Chamber member, and they are 63% more likely to purchase goods and services from a small business when they know that business is a member.

There is no other way to boost your business just simply by joining a group, than when deciding to become a member of the Florence Chamber of Commerce. Results of the study also indicate that consumers believe a company uses good business practices when it is actively involved in the community as a Chamber member.

Joining the Chamber of Commerce means consumers are more inclined to believe that your business not only cares about its customers, but also the community. In addition to believing that members use good business practices, consumers are also more inclined to believe that your company is reputable.

Everything from automobile dealers, to insurance companies, to franchise restaurants, to small businesses of any kind, have always benefited from a Chamber of Commerce membership. If you have not taken this smart business step, consider doing it now.

What *IS* the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce?

The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce is a group of dedicated men and women who not only live in Florence, but they live and breathe Florence. It's a group of individuals who work together to promote the efforts of local businesses through leadership in economic, social and political development.

The Chamber is a strong voice for the business community, a tie that binds everyone from entrepreneurs and small business owners to major distributors and big box retailers. Our goal is simple - to encourage the growth of the local business community and economy in the place that we all call home.



Who Can Join?

Whether you're a small business owner, part of a large national or international company, an entrepreneur, a member of a non-profit group or any other type of business that calls the Florence area home, the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce has the kind of tools and resources that will give your business a competitive edge.

The Chamber is an organization that's open to individuals and businesses of every shape and size and we provide valuable resources that will help you establish or reestablish a firm foundation in your community and a strong business presence among your peers.

Chamber Membership Investment Levels

Individual or Personal Membership: \$100 Annually *

This level is for the Personal Memberships/Retirees.

- Provides access to all Chamber programs and events.
- Includes ChamberLink newsletter and representation in Chamber directory and online membership catalog.

Small Business Membership: \$225 Annually *

This level is for the business that employs less than 5 full time equivalents (FTE's).

- Provides access to all Chamber programs and events.
- Includes ChamberLink newsletter and representation in Chamber directory and online membership catalog.
- Access to health insurance and office supply discounts.

Standard Business Membership: \$400 Annual base plus \$4 for each FTE above 5 *
Semi Annual or Quarterly Billing is Available

This is the base level membership for businesses with 5 or more full time equivalents (FTE's).

- Business featured in advertisement in the local newspaper.
- Provides access to all Chamber programs and events.
- Includes ChamberLink newsletter and representation in Chamber directory and online membership catalog.
- Access to health insurance, meeting and event space, and office supply discounts.

Example Investment Levels for Standard Membership

FTE *	Base	Size	Total
10	400	20	420
20	400	60	460
30	400	100	500
50	400	180	580
100	400	380	780
150	400	580	980
200	400	780	1,180
250	400	980	1,380
300	400	1,180	1,580
350	400	1,380	1,780

*Note: Credit Card payments for membership dues may incur additional bank transaction fees.

Chamber Sponsorship and Foundation Support Levels

Special support levels are in addition to membership dues.

Chamber Trustee / Division Sponsor: \$10,000 Annually (Quarterly or semi-annual payment available) *

This level of sponsorship is billed above general membership rates. It shows major commitment to the Chamber by helping to support the many business programs and events that our community values. This level of commitment includes the following benefits:

- *Spring & Fall Luncheons - Reserved table for eight at each and recognition in event programs.*
- *Fall & Spring Golf Tournaments - A foursome in each event.*
- *Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon - Reserved tickets for two at the spring event.*
- *Building Bridges Program - Two scholarships to attend the event*
- *A Chamber Appreciation Plaque- A large plaque engraved with your business name, celebrating your active involvement in our community efforts.*
- *Digital Leader Board Promotion- Company name and logo will be displayed in the lobby of the Chamber office in appreciation of the commitment.*
- *Advertisement in each ChamberLink newsletter publications at the half page level.*
- *Recognition of the support level on the home page of the Chamber Website.*

Capital Foundation Sponsor: \$6,975 Annually (Quarterly or semi-annual payment available) *

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- *Spring & Fall Luncheons - Reserved table for eight at each and recognition in event programs.*
- *Fall & Spring Golf Tournaments - A foursome in each event.*
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- *Building Bridges Program - Two scholarships to attend the event.*
- *A Chamber Appreciation Plaque- A large plaque engraved with your business name, celebrating your active involvement in our community efforts.*
- *Digital Leader Board Promotion- Company name and logo will be displayed in the lobby of the Chamber office in appreciation of the commitment.*
- *Recognition of the support level on the home page of the Chamber Website.*

President's Foundation: \$3,975 Annually (Quarterly or semi-annual payment schedule available) *

This level of sponsorship is billed above general membership rates. It shows major commitment to the Chamber by helping to support the many business programs and events that our community values. This level of commitment includes the following benefits:

- *Spring & Fall Luncheons - Reserved table for eight at each and recognition in event programs.*
- *Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon - Reserved tickets for two at the spring event.*
- *Building Bridges Program - Two scholarships to attend.*

*Note: Credit Card payments for membership dues may incur additional bank transaction fees.

MEMBER SERVICES

Our goal is to provide informative, quality member-guest programs and to conduct activities that maximize networking opportunities and enhance member value.

Annual Membership Luncheon (October 10, 2019)

The Chamber hosts an annual meeting to report accomplishments of the organization as well as future plans, recognize the Chamber's volunteer leadership and acknowledge the Outstanding Business Person of the Year.



Outlook Luncheon (March 18, 2020)

Includes an overview of area business trends. The Small Business Person of the Year is recognized. Typically, we would expect the Mayor of Florence and a Florence County representative to provide the updates.

Business After Hours

Throughout the year, BAH programs provide informative networking opportunities in an informal social setting, averaging one a month.



Chamber Fall Golf Classic (October 3, 2019)

We will continue efforts to improve our golf outing events into more attractive and enjoyable networking opportunities.



Chamber Spring Golf Classic (May 2020)

We look to continue the tradition of our excellent golf outing event, rotating our use of local courses. Again, our events provide a wonderful and enjoyable networking opportunity.

Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon (April 22, 2020)

A terrific opportunity for member businesses to recognize and reward their administrative staff by attending a luncheon celebration that provides sponsor booths and free gifts and prizes.



A key part of the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce's mission is to promote and enhance a favorable business climate and to make Florence the best community in which to live and operate a business. To that end, we will use our Government Affairs Council to be a voice in the halls of local and state government. This would include working to impact policy issues, regulations and ordinances at all levels of government.

This program will offer Chamber members and community leaders an opportunity to find out what is happening in the Pee Dee Region with regards to our healthcare services. We will have speakers from McLeod, MUSC of Florence and HopeHealth address each of their efforts in future medical service for our area.



This event serves as an invitation to our legislators to meet Chamber members and community leaders in a less formal, more social setting. The sessions can help educate our local businesses on issues and efforts to eliminate the operational hurdles for the small and minority business operators.



This is our area's annual business showcase conducted in the state capital. This joint effort of The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce and the Florence County Economic Development Partnership includes a luncheon with Florence County leaders and the current year Leadership Florence group. It also includes an evening reception hosting our state and local elected officials.



A joint award made possible by the Chamber of Commerce and City of Florence. The award is presented quarterly to a local business recognizing their efforts to redevelop downtown Florence.



COMMUNITY& BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The activities of this division encompass community and local business outreach. It has, at its core, programs that focus on community betterment and local business opportunities for companies, small businesses and minority business operators.

PRISM—Promoting the Inclusion of Small and Minority Businesses

A committee focused on developing action plans, events and programs focused on the inclusion of small and minority businesses.



Programs Include:

- Small Business Forum
- Small Business Spotlight
- Business Expo/Showcase
- BMW Procurement session
- Sessions for doing business with:
 - Local Government
 - ABB Local Manufacturing
 - Honda Local Manufacturing
 - Department of Transportation
- Leadership and Empowerment Summit
- Business of the Quarter

Kickin' Chicken & Chili Wing Fest (October 18, 2019)

An opportunity for the Chamber to provide a community, family-friendly event that promotes the Chamber, its members and Florence.



Small Business Expo (June 2020)

This event provides local professionals with the opportunity to display their business among other Chamber members and the local community. The venture allows small and minority businesses to highlight their goods and services.

CEO Roundtable (Mar. June, Sept. Dec.)

Held quarterly and hosted by Willcox, Buyck & Williams Law Firm. This breakfast is an informational exchange for senior business executives.



Shop Local Program (November 2019)

A program conducted in conjunction with a local media outlet that promotes shopping with local businesses to the public. This program usually starts during the holiday shopping season, but we would like to expand to a year-round program.



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Walk (January 2020)

A joint collaboration with Francis Marion University to highlight Dr. King's impact during the civil rights era.



EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP

The Chamber believes strong educational opportunity is a key factor in the development of our local economy. Excellence in schools, colleges and universities is critical to building a modern and durable economy. The Florence Chamber will be focused on expanding learning programs, which will enhance the regional education processes.

Leadership Florence (September 2019 - May 2020)

This program helps develop effective leaders who will strengthen and transform our community. The class of approximately 30 participants reflects the diversity of our community-at-large. It's a hands-on program that includes team-building experiences and allows interaction with local business, media, government and education.



Leadership Florence Alumni Association

A continuation program that fosters relationships among graduates of the Leadership Florence Program while staying abreast on current issues in community service. This includes quarterly meetings, networking socials and informative conferences.

Emerging Leaders Summer Institute (June - August 2019)

A five-week program designed to enhance leadership skills within the small and minority business community of professionals. This program will help share effective leadership opportunities at a very cost-effective level.

Young Professionals of Florence

Last year the Chamber put together a plan to reorganize the area Young Professionals Group. Since January of 2019, the group has established a new board and membership and is again part of the social and business networking community in the area. Expect great things in the balance of 2019 and the coming years.

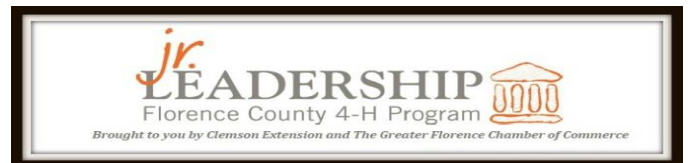
Building Bridges: Diversity & Leadership Summit (March 2020)

This program engages our community by addressing racial and cultural diversity in a structured process. It helps to change attitudes and minds through educational and consciousness-raising sessions with emphasis focused on the workplace environment.



Junior Leadership Florence County (August 2019 - May 2020)

The JLFC Program is an opportunity for our county's high school sophomores and juniors who desire to become engaged citizens. Each year, 24-26 students will be selected to participate in the program from all of the counties' high schools, which include rural, urban, public, private, home and virtual-schooled students. These students will spend 10 months going through a curriculum designed to broaden their leadership horizons.



Fellows in Education (September 2019)

The Fellows program is designed to give local leaders a unique, behind-the-scenes look into several schools within Florence One Schools. Over the course of eight months, leaders see firsthand some of the daily struggle's that educators face in the classroom.



FELLOWS IN EDUCATION

A JOINT PROGRAM BETWEEN FLORENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE,
THE SCHOOL FOUNDATION AND
THE GREATER FLORENCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUDGET & FINANCE

This division oversees the administrative and financial planning, procedures and policies of the Chamber. It provides guidance in the administration of staff duties, manages facilities and equipment and manages the dues and retention efforts of our members.

Budgeting

This Chamber division develops budgets and ensures sound financial management practices for the Chamber programs and Pee Dee Visions 501-C3.

- Develops the annual budget and submits it to the Chamber Board for adoption during our May meeting.
- Reviews the financial status of the Chamber on a monthly basis, reviews the CPA firm's year-end financial audit and reviews the management letter in September to ensure implementation of approved recommendations.

Ambassadors Committee

To foster goodwill and better communication, the Chamber uses its' Chamber Ambassador program to welcome new members and celebrate business milestones. The Ambassador group is made up of approximately 55 area business individuals that represent the Chamber at a variety of local events as well as provide support for Chamber with new members and ribbon cuttings. The Ambassador of the Year is awarded in January of each year.



Board of Directors Meetings

The Board of Directors meetings will be held quarterly with meetings in August, November, February, May and June.

Chamber Affinity Programs

The companies that are listed as Chamber Affiliates are companies that have been chosen by the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce as excellent business partners who will guarantee our members special discounts on their products and services. Current programs involve the Florence Center, Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC, and Office Depot.



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

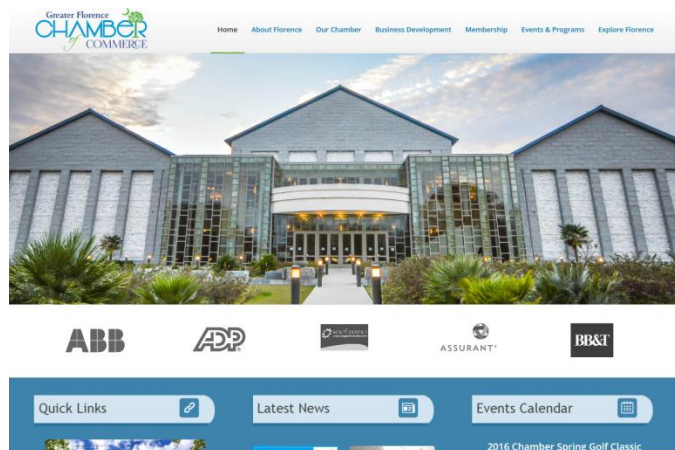
The Chamber continues its focus on enhancing the image and brand of the Chamber by providing top quality information to area newcomers, current residents, local businesses and our membership. We're committed to improving our member relations and ensuring better retention programs. We also remained focused on our member communication through our digital and printed products.

Membership Directory and Newcomer's Guide

We will continue to publish an updated Membership Directory and Newcomer's Guide that reflects a flourishing community and will make a great first impression on those who are new or relocating to the area. The publications will be replenished in the community throughout the year to gain exposure and to benefit the Chamber as well as the advertisers.

Enhanced Digital Presence

The high traffic of the Chamber's website produces has enabled greater advertiser recruitment. It also features strong navigation and detailed content for those researching or relocating to the Greater Florence region.



Regular Member Email Event Updates

The Chamber is committed to offering members the most networking opportunities available and will continue keeping the membership informed about events through email blasts and social media updates.

Social Media Member Updates

Social Media Member Updates

Over the course of the last four years, the Chamber has put significant efforts into growing its' social media presence. That has included daily engagement on sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, The Chamber's interaction on social media has helped the promotion of all local businesses and Chamber programs and events. With more than 7,000 followers, the Chamber's Facebook page is very healthy and has a greater following than most of the state's larger Chambers of Commerce.

Facebook 7,000 Followers

Twitter 1,700 Followers

Instagram 1,100 Followers



Monthly Digital Membership Newsletter

The ChamberLink newsletter is now published digitally each month. You will find features and stories about the month's Chamber events as well as key information about local business issues. Currently, there are 1,700 members and member associates in regional businesses that subscribe to this monthly newsletter.

Weekly Email Business & Event Updates

The Chamber also provides weekly email updates to our members and area business leaders. These updates offer local and regional business stories, opportunities and events of importance to area businesses.

Chamber Information:



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General Email: info@flochamber.com
Office Hours: M – Th. 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

www.flochamber.com
www.facebook.com/florencechamber



Memberships and Associations:



Our Mission

Our mission is clear: "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. "

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