

**Business & Economic Development Division**  
*Audrey King (Georgia Power Company), Vice Chairman*

**2018 Business Plan**

**SEEDS Business Resource Center**

**Mission:**

*To foster and assist entrepreneur development in Lowndes County, and to create the most pro-business environment in Georgia for new and existing businesses.*

**2018 Goals:**

**Client Service**

- Provide service to 500 clients (497 clients served in 2017)
- Assist 15 entrepreneurs successfully start a new business (14 assisted in 2017)
- Host or co-host 25 Business University events with an average of 20 at each (Co-hosted 29 events with an average of 18 at each in 2017)
- Business University events with an average attendance of 18 attendees in 2017)
- Continue to improve SEEDS Website market to attract 250 monthly visitors (202 average monthly visitors in 2017)

**Young Entrepreneurship**

- Oversee Directors of the second year of YEA! with 20 students for the 2018-19 school year
- (Kick off August 30) (13 students participated in the inaugural year of YEA! Valdosta
- 2017-18 School Year)
- Coordinate the first Astor's Children Business Fair with 30 participating children (May 19)

**Southwest Georgia Bank Business Plan Competition**

- Recruit 16 qualified contestants and retain 10 qualified finalists (16 qualified contestants and 13 semi-finalists in 2017)
- Secure 20 Angel Prize Pack Sponsors and hold four Lunch & Learns for contestants to meet Angels (4 Lunch & Learns in 2017)
- Coordinate a Pitch Contest for competition contestants

**Business Outlook Breakfast**

- Coordinate 2018 Southeastern Credit Union Business Outlook Breakfast (January 30) with 225 attendees (180 in 2017)

### **M-3 Conference**

- Coordinate a new 2018 “M-3 Conference” (Maker. Micro. Mentors.) in partnership with SBDC with 75 attendees (April 18)

### **Small Business Week**

- Coordinate Google Workshop during Small Business week (April 29-May 5)

### **Innovate!2018**

- Coordinate “Innovate!2018” with partner David Peterson (June 14) with 125 attendees (40 attended Innovation Summit in 2017)

### **2018 Economic Summit**

- Coordinate 2018 Annual Economic Summit (September 20) with 125 attendees (90 attended in 2017)

### **Shop Small Saturday**

- Coordinate event date for businesses (November 24)

### **Incubator Development**

- Obtain EDA and other grant funding for the incubator (early 2018)
- Secure a minimum of \$500,000 in private investment for the incubator (throughout the year)
- Acquire the selected facility and complete renovation (late 2018)
- Ribbon cutting for small business incubator (by December)

### **Valdosta Business & University Alliance – Russ Henry, Chairman**

- ADVOCATE for VSU/higher education with local and State leaders
- BUILD a “cool community” where students want to come to school, graduate, and find suitable employment; and where top faculty and staff want to live and work
- CONNECT the campus of VSU and Downtown Valdosta, and the faculty/staff/students of VSU to Valdosta and the business community
- PROMOTE the community as a great place to go to university, and great place to start a new career

## **DRUGS DON'T WORK in South Georgia**

### ***Mission:***

*To promote business and community development by encouraging area companies to become and to remain certified drug free workplaces, thereby increasing productivity and safety in the workplace and reducing the companies' Workers Compensation insurance premiums by 7.5%.*

- Communicate regularly with Chamber partners (i.e., 10 chambers of commerce in South Georgia) to enhance current relationships
- Recruit one additional new Chamber partner (12 chambers, total)
- Retain 210 drug-free workplaces throughout the 12-county network (210 in 2017)
- Recruit 15 new members within the 12-county network for a goal of 225 members
- Distribute bi-monthly DDW newsletters for employee and supervisor training
- Provide technical assistance to members