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Business Innovation Group (BIG) News

Georgia Southern University

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Displacement Board Company Rolling at Top Speed in FabLab

November 21, 2017

It's obvious that mechanical engineering student Evan Duffield likes things that go. Not only is he the president of the Society of Automotive Engineers Eagle Motorsports organization for campus, he's also an avid longboarder. He took up the hobby a few years ago when he became a student at Georgia Southern.

"Longboarding was more than a passion for me. It became an emotional refuge during times of turmoil," said Duffield. "No matter what happened in my personal life, school curriculum and professional life, I could always grab my board and some earbuds and go for a ride."

Duffield and his boarding friends decided to develop their own longboard company this summer. Displacement Board Company began as a solution to a breakage problem. Sometimes longboards get away from their riders and get run over by cars, trucks or even university buses. After having a couple of boards destroyed by bigger wheels, Duffield started researching boards made from different materials.

He and the team got to work designing iterations of a longboard that would be suitable for downhill, freestyle, cruising, and even dancing.

"Coming from a background of automotive racing and advanced materials research at Georgia Southern, I submitted the idea that we could manufacture these longboards out of waste composite materials," said Duffield. "So, I set to work e-mailing nearly every composite company in the world asking for donations of waste materials or material that wouldn't get utilized."

Things got really interesting when Duffield received a call from a delivery driver in an 18-wheeler delivering nearly 1,000 pounds of donated carbon fiber and kevlar to his small duplex. The guys were ready to start manufacturing with the beginning of the fall semester at Georgia Southern, but where would they start?

Duffield remembers, "I had heard of the Georgia Southern University Fab Lab before, and decided that they might have some tools that I could use to get the longboard business up and running. After a brief tour of the Fab Lab, I had met a variety of people from the Business Innovation Group that were all extremely kind and willing to help."

Displacement Board Company joined the FabLab and started fabricating molds with varied layups for making boards. Several iterations later, they are nearing the launch of their first official longboard deck from Displacement Board Company. Their goal is to be adaptable to riders needs. Duffield does not believe that they're just making longboards for people who enjoy riding. He believes Displacement Board Company gives riders an escape from trials of everyday life with a lasting creative outlet.

"The Business Innovation Group is helping me immensely to meet my goals by providing a space to work in, connections to further develop my company, knowledgeable advice from outstanding faculty, and various opportunities to present my ideas among other innovators," said Duffield. " I am extremely grateful for the Business Innovation Group, and their desire to assist me in my company in our journey towards success!"

Posted in [Entrepreneur Spotlight](#)

Tags: [FabLab](#), [kevlar](#), [longboards](#), [make](#), [Manufacturing](#)

VBOC Client Keeps Heads in the Clouds

November 21, 2017

by Amanda Wynn

In October, the VBOC team met with several of Statesboro and Savannah's local Veteran business owners to provide valuable advice and feedback alongside local SCORE resource partners. VBOC and SCORE advisors strive to develop and maintain an ongoing relationship with their clientele. Outside of the local area, VBOC Director Jeremy Horstman attended the VECTR Financial Resource Fair in Warner Robins, GA providing educational information on the services VBOC offers to the Veteran community. Meanwhile, VBOC Advisor Jeff Smith attended Fort Jackson's Hiring our Heroes offering entrepreneurial advice and assistance to Veterans and their spouses.

For our November VBOC business for the month, we highlight Cameron Jones with Southeastern Balloon Services in Statesboro, Georgia. Cameron is an Air Force Veteran and Georgia Southern Alumnus that works as a Georgia Southern maintenance foreman by night and a certified balloon pilot by day.

Southeastern Balloon Services was founded by Cameron's father in the 1980s. Ballooning has always been a part of his family history and his life. Continuing the family tradition, Cameron provides hot air balloon rides to the Statesboro and surrounding areas in his balloon the "Pink Pachyderm" with the assistance of his two daughters. In addition to balloon rides, he offers jumpers the opportunity to

skydive from heights of around 5,000 to 6,000 feet!



VBOC Courses in November include the Veteran Small Business Matchmaker course and the Starting a Home-Based Business for Military Spouses in Columbia, South Carolina. The VBOC team will also attend and participate in several Boots to Business courses throughout the month. For more information on VBOC services, events, or information on scheduling a ride with Southeastern Balloon Services, please contact our office at 912-478-7781.

The Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) is an SBA-funded resource available to service members, veterans, National Guard & Reserve members and military spouses with an interest in starting or expanding upon a small business. With over 20 locations across the United States, VBOC advisors provide entrepreneurial development assistance, mentoring and training in areas such as international trade, franchising, internet marketing and accounting.

In addition to personalized training and development, the Georgia VBOC attends, conducts and provides support for Boots to Business courses located in South Carolina and Georgia's military installations. The Boots to Business program is a two-day program available to transitioning service members in any

branch of the military and their spouses. During this program, service members learn the steps for evaluating business concepts, the foundational knowledge required to develop a business plan, and information on the resources available to help access start-up capital and technical assistance.

Forget Black Friday and Cyber Monday! SHOP SMALL this Saturday!

November 21, 2017



by Eminah Quintyne

Created by American Express the Saturday after Thanksgiving, Small Business Saturday® is a national holiday established as a shopping tradition to celebrate and support the significance of small businesses in communities all over the United States.

In cooperation with the Small Business Association (SBA), local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) employees at BIG are charging community members to acknowledge Small Business Saturday® and to go out and shop in Statesboro! Local businesses stimulate local economies, and add life to a community. They create charm, identity, and color in the memories for many who call a neighborhood home.

“I love visiting Statesboro,” said Amanda Williams, parent of a Georgia Southern employee “When I am in town, my first stop is usually The Farmers Market on Saturday mornings! The farmers, vendors, and craftspeople have a fabulous assortment of items no matter what time of year I’m in town. I enjoy going into all the shops downtown and talking to shop owners. All are so friendly, sociable, and the diversity of goods and merchandise are a bonus.”

Deputy Director of the Averitt Center Rahn Hutcheson, encourages community members to think of options at the Averitt Center as great gift ideas for both adults and children as well.

According to the 3/50 Project, for every \$100 spent in local independently owned stores, \$68 is put back into the community via payroll, taxes or other disbursements. Researchers state small-town communities may become void of business when money is not put back into a locality.

Look for Shop Small® posters, balloons, and tote bags outside businesses around town. As a shopper in Statesboro on Nov. 25, you represent a cause implemented as a state-to-state campaign. Congress passed a resolution in 2011 in support of Small Business Saturday®.

Small Business Saturday is about more than just shopping at small businesses. It's an annual shopping tradition dedicated to supporting small businesses and celebrating communities across the country. The Small Business Development Center is committed to supporting the #ShopSmall movement and encouraging everyone to #ShopSmall the Saturday after Thanksgiving on November 25, 2017.

