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Tim Redding and Lynn Lilly Visit College of Business
Entrepreneurship Classes

November 10, 2011

On the 3rd of November, the Center for Entrepreneurial Learning and Leadership Advisory Council Chair – Jim Williams’ Entrepreneurship classes had presentations by two entrepreneurs: Tim Redding and Lynn Lilly.

Mr. Redding was the first to speak to the students. Among many businesses he currently owns, are several automobile dealerships including: Metter Ford, Dealership in Metter; Swainsboro Ford – Lincoln in Swainsboro and Dublin Ford – Lincoln in Dublin. He started the presentation telling the students that every entrepreneur faces a lot of challenges, if you find your way to overcome these challenges you will be successful. Mr. Redding started working at 18 years old. Once an opportunity to work at a car dealership in Savannah came up, he accepted it. After showing his entrepreneurial skills by selling a huge amount of cars, he was invited to be the store manager, which he accepted. He advised the students to always work hard and do the best you can. In 3 years the profits of the store quadrupled. However, Mr. Redding wanted more and decided to open his own store. In 1991, the Metter Ford dealership opportunity became available. He explained to the students that after going through all the steps required by Ford Motor Company, it was easier to manage his own store. He mentioned that even though entrepreneurs have to work hard, you can do it at your own pace, choose the area that you want to work on and select the people you wish to have in your organization and mentor them toward success. He finished his talk by telling the students to know what they want to do in the future and practice, practice and practice and become knowledgeable about whatever they choose to do.
The 2nd entrepreneur was Lynn Lilly, from The Lilly Group, an advertising and marketing communications consultancy now based in Statesboro. At Georgia Southern University, she is an Entrepreneurial Fellow of the Center for Entrepreneurial Learning and Leadership, on the Advisory Board of Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) and a member of the Community Advisory Board of the Department of Writing and Linguistics. She graduated from Muskingum College.

Ms. Lilly worked two decades for an $85million company marketing and communications in Cleveland, Ohio becoming one of the youngest owners and the youngest vice-president. In 2001, after acquiring enough experience, she decided to start her own company, The Lilly Group. She works in advertising, public relations, web writing, direct marketing, blogging, speech writing and whatever else clients need — for clients in consumer goods, transportation, education, home furnishings, banking, consumer goods and technology sectors. She started her speech talking about her background and then telling the students that in order to succeed; ‘it is not what you want to sell, it is what the customers want to buy’. She said you cannot only be creative, you have to create a solution to a problem and be creative at the same time. Ms. Lilly told the students to know what they are good at and focus on that. She also told the students that if they start a business not to spend money on things they do not need. For example, if you really do not need an office then do not buy one, work out of your home or in a lower cost leased space. She finished the presentation by saying: “It is always about the customer and NOT about you”.

The students in both classes asked many questions of Mr. Redding and Ms. Lilly.