Dear Members,

No lengthy update today, BUT I do have 3 important things to share:

1. **Would you mind taking the survey we launched Friday night (I know...a terrible time to launch a survey 😊).** We have 62 respondents so far, but we want to see more. Here you go: **How is your business doing? Please take our short survey.**
   
   At the very start of this disruption, the Chamber conducted a quick survey with businesses to see how you were faring. Several weeks later, we’d like to do that again. We’ve tweaked some of the questions, but it should still take 5-10 minutes or less. The survey will be open through Wednesday, and then we will publish some of the aggregate data with you (no individual information will be identified). We need your help on this, owners/managers – please take a few minutes to complete the survey here.

2. **Don’t Miss - Chamber Digital Academy – 4/16/20 – Resources for Employers**
   
   This specific event will be focused in providing information to employers regarding resources to help their employees during this time – such as unemployment, social service programs, social/emotional support, and general wellbeing. We know that our employers are all over the place – some with people employed and working, some who have had to layoff, some employed but not working. And many employers are worried about their employees in the short-term but also longer term – will they return when the business opens up again? We will have a conversation to help employers think through what they might be able to do during this time to help their employees and stay connected so that when things start up again, they are still ready to come back. Free, register here.

3. **Paycheck Protection Program** – Keep an eye on the US Treasury CARES Act page as it is continuing to be updated. In particular this caught my eye today, it’s a much more in-depth description of the program, and what you must do to have your loan forgiven. We’ll continue to monitor for other changes.

Okay, I lied...2 more quickies:

4. **Make sure you vote!** If you didn’t do early voting, then primary voting will be by absentee ballot only. If you have not already, be sure to download the ballot request form and return it to the Richland County Board of Elections to get your ballot mailed. I did it. It’s easy.

5. Make sure you **participate in the 2020 Census**. The census drives tens of millions of dollars for our community, it impacts everything from economic development to infrastructure, and much more. You can check out the response rates in our state, county, and cities in this nifty tool.

**Final Thoughts**

So much news pouring out these days. We’re absolutely flooded in it! One minute it’s full of despair, and one minute it’s somewhat hopeful. I feel a bit all over the place...I’m sure you can relate.

Today I feel a little bit rebellious. (Don’t worry, I’m staying home as directed). But am I content to just watch everything we’ve been working so hard for in this community fall away because of this crisis? So many years of work, by so many people and things were gaining momentum. Can I just stand idly by?

Nope. Today I feel like fighting. We’re going to get through this Richland County. We’re not done writing our future. There is a lot left to do.
To quote another great movie character:

"Never tell me the odds."
- Han Solo

(in response to C3PO telling him the odds of surviving an asteroid field, The Empire Strikes Back)

Stay Strong!

Onward,

Jodie

Jodie A. Perry, CCE, IOM, CCEO-AP
President & CEO
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PS – We have been widening our email list. If this is the first email you’ve received – Welcome! Here is a link to our past emails and other great resources to help your business!