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Welcome to e-news for *NEXT*

NEXT is the resource collaborative that specializes in developing the region's fast-growth entrepreneurial sector. The mission of *NEXT* is to create a new culture of entrepreneurship in the region and dramatically increase the number and quality of fast-growth, entrepreneurial companies headquartered in our region. *NEXT* pursues three key initiatives to achieve its mission: client services to technology-based entrepreneurs; infrastructure; and voice/advocacy.

For additional information, contact Brenda Laakso at 864-239-3711.

EVENT CALENDAR

***NEXT* BP Forum "Built to Run, Built to Grow, Built to Last – Creating and Sustaining Your Business in Good Times and Bad"**. Monday, June 1, 2009 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Greenville – Thomas Militello, Sequentus International will be our guest expert.

NEXT CEOs the opportunities and challenges facing any entrepreneurial company are often unpredictable and in many cases only achievable or preventable with great planning, attention to detail and luck. Take advantage of the opportunity to listen and learn from President and CEO Thomas Militello of Sequentus International as he leads a discussion on the best management practices and some key lessons learned for creating and sustaining your business in good times and bad.

About the Speaker – Thomas Militello, Sequentus International

Thomas Militello is the President and CEO of Sequentus International, a corporate development and consulting firm providing strategic planning, business development and operational support services for companies in the fields of computing, communications, energy, environment, material science and specialty chemicals.

While leading the Sequentus corporate and consulting practice, Mr. Militello devotes time at the University of South Carolina Columbia Technology Incubator, serving as an advisor to entrepreneurs, faculty and students beginning their business journey. Mr. Militello is also an industry advisor at his alma mater, Rochester Institute of Technology, where he serves on the Department of Mathematics academic and research program committees.

In 2005, Mr. Militello co-founded Palmetto Fuel Cell Technologies, a fuel cell component design and testing company. Today, Palmetto Fuel Cell Technologies is creating novel membrane electrode assemblies for portable fuel cells serving the military and homeland security markets. In 2003, he co-founded FuelCellSouth, a non-profit company focused on growing the hydrogen and fuel cell industry in the Southeastern United States. In 1998, Mr. Militello co-founded Conita Technologies, a voice recognition-based software as a service company, where he was Senior Vice President of Strategy and Business Development until the company's acquisition by Avaya in 2002.

At General Magic, Mr. Militello was the Director of Product Marketing for the Active Internet Division, leading the product planning and marketing strategy for mobile and intelligent agents. From 1985 to 1996, he served in multiple technology planning, product management, software development and quality assurance roles at AT&T Global Information Solutions and NCR Corporation.

Information Solutions and NCR Corporation.

An avid supporter of youth and young adult activities, Mr. Militello resides in Columbia, South Carolina where he volunteers time as an adult leader for Catholic Youth Ministry, Boy Scouts of America and Columbia United Youth Soccer. He is married to Lisa Weible Militello and they have three children.

NEXT event:

Tuesday, May 19th - NEXT Forum for Early Stage High Growth Technology Companies to be held at the GROW Expo Conference, Carolina First Center from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

NEXT, an Upstate entrepreneurial resource collaborative for entrepreneurs, technology start-ups and high-growth companies, will be hosting a panel, sponsored by SCLaunch, from. at the Carolina First Center during Grow Expo '09.

The event will feature a panel discussion titled "The Fast Track: Empowering High Growth Ventures," moderated by Logan Metcalfe, Arena Consulting. Panelists include Frank Greer, CEO of Zipit Wireless, Inc., Peter Waldschmidt, CEO of Gnoso, Inc., Michael Bolick, CEO of Selah Technologies, LLC, and Chuck Pringle, Chairman of SensorTech, LLC.

The discussion will focus on:

- What it takes to be a "High-Growth" business
- Key people and service providers needed to execute and how you find them
- Financing growth
- The resources we have in and around Greenville and what we are missing

Why Attend?

- Gain know-how on topics that will help grow business
- Network with current and potential entrepreneurs
- Learn more about entrepreneurship and its realities

Who should attend?

- Entrepreneurs of all stages
- Industry executives/experts
- Students
- Investors
- Service providers

About the Moderator

Logan Metcalfe is founder of Arena Consulting that provides CFO and management consulting services to companies experiencing or anticipating rapid growth. Logan spent five and a half years as CFO/COO of Immaculate Baking Company – America's leading brand of all-natural refrigerated cookie dough. He joined Immaculate in 2003 (three days before baking the World's Biggest Cookie) and crafted the company's business plan, established key financial and operational processes and raised over \$7.6MM in angel and venture capital investment. Logan previously worked as a Senior Management Consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton in Sydney and New York, where he consulted for several Fortune 100 companies and helped establish an initiative to accelerate the development of high impact technology start-ups.

Register [here](#) to attend.

NEXT BP Forum "Searching for the New Knowledge Economy" Monday, September 14, 2009. Bruce Yandle, Dean Emeritus, Clemson University College of Business will be our guest expert.

NEXT CEO's attend to learn about: Brains filled with wealth-enhancing knowledge form the capital of the future. But brains are far more mobile than machines and factory buildings. Where are they locating in the U.S.? How can we measure the location of the knowledge economy across states and cities? How is South Carolina faring as a competitor in the new knowledge economy?

About the Speaker - Bruce Yandle, Dean Emeritus, Clemson University College of Business

Bruce Yandle is Alumni Distinguished Professor of Economics Emeritus at Clemson University, and Dean Emeritus of Clemson University's College of Business & Behavioral Science. Dr. Yandle served in Washington on two occasions, first as a senior economist on White House staff during the Ford and Carter Administrations and later as Executive Director of the Federal Trade Commission in the Reagan Administration. He is a Senior Fellow with Clemson's Thurmond Institute and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Economics with George Mason University's Mercatus Center where he lectures regularly on Capitol Hill. Dr. Yandle has been a member and chairman of South Carolina's State Board of Economic Advisors. He is past-president of the Association of Private Enterprise Education and a trustee of Spartanburg Methodist College. He is author/coauthor of some 16 books, including *Regulation by Litigation*, just released by Yale Press. Prior to entering a career in university teaching, Dr. Yandle was in the industrial machinery business for 15 years. His quarterly *Economic Situation* newsletter on the economy is distributed by Clemson's Strom Thurmond Institute.

FastTrac NewVenture – Greenville. Specific dates and location are to be determined. Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

FastTrac GrowthVenture – Greenville. Specific dates and location are to be determined. Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

FastTrac TechVenture – Greenville. Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

NEXT PARTNER SERVICES and EVENTS

"How to Export Your Business" Panel Discussion / Workshop May 18, 2009 - 12:00-1:30 pm at The Greenville Chamber of Commerce. This 1-1/2 hour workshop is ideally suited for small and medium-sized companies, experienced and new-to-export alike who want to grow their business through exporting. We'll go over available trade resources and include a primer on the mechanics of exporting. Brief, one-on-one counseling will be available after the workshop. This workshop led by a panel of four experts:

Dorette Coetsee, Director, South Carolina U.S. Commercial Service. Coetsee coordinates and leads efforts to develop and executive strategic initiatives in the State. Coetsee focuses on developing new markets for small to medium sized companies (SME) and is also responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with statewide partner organizations. She also maintains direct relationship with congressional offices in the State.

Denis Csizmadia, Manager, Greenville U.S. Export Assistance Center, U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Dept of Commerce. Csizmadia directs the U.S. Commercial Service's Greenville U.S. Export Assistance Center where he collaborates with local and statewide partners to provide international marketing and export finance assistance in eleven counties throughout South Carolina's 'Upstate'.

Clarke Thompson, International Trade Specialist at the SC Dept. of Commerce, facilitates overseas export opportunities for South Carolina companies primarily through the use of international trade missions. These trade missions provide an opportunity for businesses, educational professionals, economic development professionals and governmental leaders to travel to foreign markets and collaborate with their peers and potential customers.

Fred Monk, President, ECI-Find New Markets. Monk has served as President of ECI since 1997. By working closely with ECI's investors and board of directors, Fred maintains the strategic alliances that set the stage for the organization's future success. Fred has actively promoted international business and relationships at the local, state and regional levels. He was instrumental in the creation of the Columbia World Affairs Council and currently serves as chairman.

Cost is \$15.00. Register online by 5/13 at: <http://business.clemson.edu/recenter/RenaissanceCtr.htm>

FastTrac® NewVenture™ FastTrac NewVenture is ground zero for anyone interested in starting a business. An education program created by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs, FastTrac NewVenture is designed to help you evaluate and perfect your business concept. Taught by seasoned entrepreneurs in your community, FastTrac's

evaluate and perfect your business concept. Taught by seasoned entrepreneurs in your community, FastTrac's hands-on program uses your idea as a case study, giving you an opportunity to "workshop" your venture in a safe and supportive environment. FastTrac NewVenture is a nine-module, 31.5 hour, program. The cost for the NewVenture course is \$195. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

FastTrac® GrowthVenture™ What do you get out of FastTrac GrowthVenture? That's easy. Control of your business and your life. Graduates of FastTrac GrowthVenture describe the program as one that encourages entrepreneurs to streamline their business processes, analyze strengths and shortcomings, and achieve more balance in their work and personal lives. By working closely with other entrepreneurs in the intensive, FastTrac GrowthVenture environment, you'll interact with a group of people with whom you can share ideas, strategies, and successes. You'll also hone business skills that you'll use to shape your business for years to come. The cost for the GrowthVenture course is \$295. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

FastTrac® TechVenture™ What do you get out of FastTrac TechVenture? That's easy. The tools you need to advance your technology venture to the next stage of business, whether that is seeking your last round of financing before going public, or moving beyond the start-up stage. Graduates of FastTrac TechVenture describe the program as one that encourages technology entrepreneurs to determine the economic feasibility of their business concept, reevaluate the feasibility of the technology, design a business model that matches a personal vision, and create a business plan to communicate the opportunity to investors. The cost for the TechVenture course is \$395. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

Downtown Greenville cultural events:

http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events_cal_resultsGG.asp?Start_DateM=06&Start_DateD=15&Start_DateY=2007

PRESS RELEASES

Merge Launches new Site for Carolina Center for Foreign investment Greenville, SC, April 27 - Merge, an Upstate developer of high-performance web sites, announces the completion of the site design for Carolina Center for Foreign Investment.

The Carolina Center for Foreign Investment engaged Merge to create the www.carolinaregionalcenter.com web site to promote foreign investment in the State of South Carolina. These investments will promote job growth through real estate development projects that qualify under the EB-5 (immigration) program. Merge created this site using a customized content management system to allow CCFI staff to maintain the site on a daily basis.

The Carolina Center for Foreign Investment web site can also be viewed at www.mergeweb.com.

Merge Launches new Site for Old Edwards inn and Spa Greenville, SC, April 07 - Merge, an Upstate developer of high-performance web sites, announces the completion of the site design for *Old Edwards Inn and Spa*, located in Highlands, North Carolina.

Old Edwards Inn and Spa came to Merge with the objective to transform their web presence and position it as one of the best luxury inns in the United States. Other enhancements included creating new brand recognition, a user-friendly reservation system and giving the client the ability to effectively market specials and events through a customized content management system.

The Old Edwards Inn and Spa web site can also be viewed at www.mergeweb.com.

About Old Edwards Inn and Spa

Located in Highlands, NC, Old Edwards Inn and Spa has 29 guestrooms and suites. Due to its location and amenities, Old Edwards Inn and Spa is an ideal choice for weddings and corporate meetings and retreats.

About Merge

Merge is the only web development firm in Greenville, SC that offers a comprehensive, strategic approach to developing high-performance web sites for its clients. Founded in 2002, Merge has established itself as one of the leading web firms in the Southeast. You can visit Merge's web site at www.mergeweb.com.

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S.C. Group Seeks Funds for Amazon Medical Project by [Ron Barnett](#), USA TODAY Greenville, S.C. - Jonathan Shanin has trudged through jungles with a kayak on his back, and he has worked with businesses to help them climb the Internet search-engine rankings to reap bigger profits.

Now, he says he has found a way to combine his love of outdoor adventure with his expertise in online marketing to do something for others.

Shanin, and a small group of Internet entrepreneurs based in Greenville, S.C., are donating their efforts and skills to create a Web-based fundraising campaign for a group of health care providers who want to build a hospital boat on the Amazon in Peru.

VIDEO: [Listen to Shanin discuss Project Amazonas](#)

Since starting the project in April 2008, Project Amazonas and its partners have raised about \$130,000, and Shanin's group is working to raise an additional \$375,000, he said.

"It's not just selling more electronic goods for myself. It's not just pushing a company to just sell more stuff," Shanin said. "It's going and making a radical difference in peoples lives with my expertise. It's really, really gratifying."

Shanin, 35, is a former member of the U.S. Kayak Team who has competed in events in extreme environments in Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and across the USA.

He ranked as the seventh fastest marathon kayaker in the nation in 2000. When he began to feel the call to do something more than make money and paddle kayaks, his "business mentor," Peter Elliman, told him about a speaker from a non-profit Christian ministry called Rivers Of The World, who had given a talk at Elliman's church.

Through that organization, Shanin learned about Project Amazonas (www.projectamazonas.com), a group of doctors that had been self-financing expeditions into the Peruvian Amazon.

Max Themme Feonez, one of the doctors involved in Project Amazonas, said the Peruvian government's health system isn't sufficient to reach the people in the region served by the organization.

"The communities in the Amazon are very dispersed," he said. "It's very difficult to get to them, which is why it is important to have this hospital boat."

Shanin teamed up with like-minded friends and formed a non-profit fundraising organization called [AidJoy](#) with the aim of using their technical know-how to help good causes around the world. The group includes the owners of a Web design firm called OrangeCoat, a photographer, a videographer and a writer — all working as volunteers.

Photographer Michael Bergen, who met Shanin kayaking, says he wanted to use his expertise to make a difference.

"Hopefully in five to 10 years we've helped dozens of causes, helped them become more known in the world and made the world more aware," he said.

made the world more aware," he said.

Jim Ciallella, of OrangeCoat, had used his Web design skills for local charity groups and was happy to join Shanin's international effort.

"The idea is that we would do three or four causes a year, and we would implement websites for each of them and try to raise money for whatever the need was," he said.

Shanin and friends headed south to film a documentary as they traveled in the 72-foot wooden-hull boat the doctors now use on expeditions along the Amazon. The documentary has been broadcast nationwide in Peru, Shanin said. During the trip, the AidJoy group saw how Project Amazonas did what it could to help people scattered in 3,000 villages in an area the size of the two Carolinas and Georgia, Shanin said.

Shanin took a small boat farther up the river to see how those who hadn't received health care from the group were doing.

"It was really a night and day difference between the two, by supplying very simple medical care," he said.

The goal is to raise enough to build a three-story steel-hull boat with a pharmacy, surgery unit, emergency room and neonatal facility.

Dr. Ernesto Salazar, former minister of health of the Loreto Region of Peru and dean of the College of Medicine at Universidad Nacional de la Amazonía Peruana, said AidJoy's efforts with Project Amazonas are helping him "better serve the people of the Amazon."

Shanin said he's working seven days a week on the project, sometimes putting in 100 hours or more a week between the charity and his business.

"AceEngine continues to thrive," Shanin said of his Internet marketing company in e-mail from Peru in March. "However, my heart is in AidJoy. Life is too short to do anything other than follow my heart."

José Carlos Requena, an official of the U.S. Embassy in Peru, said by e-mail that he couldn't speak on behalf of the embassy, but that AidJoy (www.aidjoy.org) is playing an important role in bringing health and social services to underprivileged communities in the Amazonian jungle.

"AidJoy uses effective marketing tools that are very innovative and fit perfectly for fundraising and raising awareness campaigns," he said. "AidJoy is an appealing, reliable partner for social change."

Barnett reports for The Greenville (S.C.) News.

MIT DVD BROADCASTS AVAILABLE FOR CHECK-OUT

Exploring the Future of Enterprise Software, February 12, 2009

Paint It Black: Avoiding the Financial Beast of Burden in 2009 and Beyond, February 25, 2009

The Future of Wireless Communications, November 24, 2008

From Soft Drinks to Real Estate: How a Looming Water Crisis Affects Our World and How to Optimize the Business Opportunity, October 23, 2008

Pathways to Entrepreneurship, September 23, 2008

Innovation to Commercialization: Using Government Funding to Kick Start Your Start-Up, June 4, 2008

Enterprising Georgia: How Virtual Worlds Will Transform The Way We Do Business, February 20, 2008

Are You Ready for IPO? Strategies and Steps for How and When to Take Your Company Public, January 24, 2008

Enterprising Georgia Energy, Security & the Economy, October 24, 2007

Entrepreneurship: Success, Failure, Greatness A Fireside Chat with Ann Winblad and Jason Pontin
September. 27, 2007

A.B.L.E. Tech: Achieving Better Life Experiences for People with Injury, Disability and Aging Challenges Through
21st Century Technologies, June 6, 2007

Financial Markets: Outlook 2007 moderated by Liz Claman, CNBC, January 25, 2007

A Very Special Evening with Geoffrey Moore, November 15, 2006

Angel Groups in Action: Funding Early Stage Innovation, June 1, 2005

Forecasting Markets: The Capital Update for 2006, January 26, 2005

Talk to an Angel: Crucial Connections to Early Stage Capital, June 7, 2006

The dvd's can be checked out for 2 weeks. Please contact Brenda Laakso blaakso@greenvillechamber.org if you are interested.

For more information on the services of NEXT partner organizations, visit: NEXTGreenville.com

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