

Fayetteville-Cumberland County Chamber of Commerce is Certified Green!

The Fayetteville-Cumberland County Chamber of Commerce recently became a Sustainable Sandhills Certified Green Business. The Chamber is the catalyst for their community becoming a major economic center in the Southeast United States for business, defense and industrial development.

The Chamber's staff of 20 is led by President/CEO Doug Peters, and their 9705 SF office is located on the fourth floor of the R.C. Williams Business Center in historic downtown Fayetteville. The Chamber is one of several tenants in the building, which is owned and managed by the City of Fayetteville's Public Works Commission – another SS Certified Green Business!



The following interview with members of the Chamber's Green Team describes why and how the Chamber became a SS Certified Green Business.

Why did you decide to participate in the SS Certified Green Business program?

As the leading advocate for businesses in Fayetteville and Cumberland County, we want to lead by example and demonstrate how adopting green practices can be good for businesses and the community.

What is the most valuable thing that you have learned from the Program?

How a series of seemingly small changes can add up to a significant impact on the environment and our bottom line.

Can you share an example of how your certification has influenced your customers or client's behaviors?

We host so many meetings with our membership and local leaders and whenever possible, we try to incorporate "green meeting" practices. These include: recycling plastic and aluminum beverage containers, using compostable plates,



cups and tableware, and purchasing blocks of green energy to offset the meeting's HVAC and lighting energy use.

How did your staff receive the program?

Everyone does their part and it's great to see those who were resistant at first, finally coming along. Any initial resistance was overcome by our Green Team's efforts to raise awareness and to work with the rest of the staff in implementing the Green Business Program. Our staff now has a new outlook on eco-friendly practices!

Were there any particular employees that embraced and championed the program?

The members of the Chamber's Green Team are the Program Champions. The Green Team leads by example and most of the staff have incorporated green practices into their personal lives as well.

Can you share a few examples of changes you've made at the Chamber?

We now use eco-friendly stationary and other office paper products. We've reduced paper use by making 2-sided printing our standard practice, and by relying on paperless communication and record-keeping as much as possible. Every staff member has a recycling bin at their workstation. We are utilizing natural light in our offices as much as possible and we're turning off lights when rooms are not in use.

Would you encourage others to participate in this program, and if so, why?

Absolutely! It is a movement that is bigger than all of us and we have to make these changes for future generations, employees and other businesses.

Has this carried over into your personal life, and if so, how?

Yes. Repetition is habit-forming! Being green at work makes it easier to be green at home, really triggering a whole lifestyle change. The Green Team also sends out Green Tips to the staff and our Chamber membership that are relevant to our business and personal lives.

The Chamber, along with Sustainable Sandhills and eight other leading institutions and organizations, are sponsoring the Greater Fayetteville Futures II Community Development Initiative. SS is the lead sponsor the "Sustain and Grow a Sustainable Community" objective. The Chamber and SS are working together on an "institutionalizing sustainable practice" initiative to dramatically increase the



number of certified businesses, local governments, institutions and K-12/higher education certifications in the SS Certified Green Business program!

Green businesses reduce waste, promote recycling, become energy and water efficient, purchase eco-friendly products and educate their employees and customers about the multiple benefits of a sustainable community. For more information about how your business can become a SS Certified Green Business today, please contact one of our Green Business Coordinators:

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For more information on the SS Green Business Program, [click here!](#)

