

# The Legacy Report

JUNE 2025 - FEISC NEWSLETTER



*FEISC members were able to work alongside one another during our April workshop series titled "Striving, Thriving, and Enduring: How Family Businesses Become Enterprising Families," led by Jean Meeks-Koch with Positively People.*



**KENNETH RHODES &  
ASSOCIATES HONORED  
WITH AWARD**

The Greenville Chamber of Commerce recently named Kenneth Rhodes & Associates as its 2025 Small Business of the Year, recognizing the company's outstanding leadership, commitment to customer service, and impact on the local community. This prestigious award highlights the enduring strength of small, family, legacy-driven businesses—a testament to the values that have defined Kenneth Rhodes & Associates since its founding. *(continued on page 2)*

THE LEGACY REPORT  
FEISC NEWSLETTER

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Founded by Kenneth Rhodes, the second-generation family business has matured into a highly respected, customer-focused insurance agency with locations across South Carolina and Georgia. With a steadfast commitment to providing personalized insurance solutions, the company has built a reputation for integrity, service, and a deep-rooted connection to the families and businesses it serves. Under the leadership of Kenneth and his son, Luke Rhodes, the family business continues to thrive, blending traditional family business values with forward-thinking innovation.

### **A Family Business with a Legacy of Excellence**

Kenneth Rhodes expressed gratitude for the Chamber's recognition, emphasizing the significance of family-owned businesses in shaping the local economy and community.

"We are deeply honored to receive this award," said Kenneth Rhodes. "This recognition is not just about our company—it's about the incredible team we have, the clients who trust us, and the community that has supported us for years. As a family business, we take pride in building lasting relationships and helping families and businesses protect what matters most."

As a second-generation leader in the company, Luke Rhodes has played a key role in expanding their professional services while maintaining the core values instilled by his father. His leadership reflects the unique strengths of family enterprises—bridging tradition with innovation to meet evolving client needs.

"Growing up in the business, I saw firsthand the dedication and passion that my father put into serving our clients," said Luke Rhodes. "Winning this award is a testament to the work ethic, teamwork, and personal connections that define our company. We are excited about the future and committed to continuing our legacy of excellence."

### **The Power of Small, Family, Legacy-Driven Businesses**

The recognition of Kenneth Rhodes & Associates as the Small Business of the Year is a powerful reminder of the critical role small, family-owned enterprises play in the economy. These businesses are more than just economic engines—they are pillars of their communities, passing down values, expertise, and opportunities to future generations.

Dr. Brad Bechtold, Executive Director of the Kim S. Miller Family Enterprise Institute of South Carolina, praised The Rhodes for exemplifying the resilience and innovation that define successful family businesses.

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***"We don't just sell policies—we  
build relationships. That's what  
makes a family business special."***

***– Kenneth Rhodes***

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"Kenneth and Luke Rhodes are shining examples of the power of family enterprise," said Dr. Bechtold. "Their commitment to excellence, customer service, and community engagement reflects the very best of what family businesses have to offer. This recognition from the Greenville Chamber of Commerce is well deserved, and we celebrate their success as an inspiration for other family-owned businesses."

At the Kim S. Miller Family Enterprise Institute, supporting multi-generational businesses like Kenneth Rhodes & Associates is a core mission. Family enterprises face unique challenges, from succession planning to governance structures, and organizations like the Institute provide resources to help them navigate change, build resilience, and sustain their legacy.

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"Small, family businesses are the backbone of our communities," Dr. Bechtold added. "They create jobs, foster innovation, and uphold traditions that make our local economies thrive. When a family business like Kenneth Rhodes & Associates is recognized for its excellence, it's a win for all of us who believe in the strength of legacy-driven businesses."

#### **Looking Ahead:**

##### **The Future of Kenneth Rhodes & Associates**

With a strong foundation and a vision for the future, Kenneth Rhodes & Associates is well-positioned to continue its success. The company remains focused on delivering personalized insurance solutions while adapting to the changing needs of customers and the industry.

"Our goal has always been to provide peace of mind to our clients," said Kenneth Rhodes. "We don't just sell policies—we build relationships. That's what makes a family business special. You're not just another customer; you're part of our extended family."

As they look to the future, Kenneth and Luke Rhodes are committed to growing their business while staying true to the values that have made Kenneth Rhodes & Associates a trusted name in insurance. Their journey serves as a powerful reminder that small, family, legacy-driven businesses are not only surviving, but thriving—and making a lasting impact on the communities they serve.

**Congratulations to Kenneth Rhodes  
& Associates on this well-deserved honor!**

**WELCOME NEW FEISC MEMBERS!**



b a t s o n



# FAMILY BUSINESSES ARE MORE THAN TRADITION— SO WHY DOESN'T THE PUBLIC SEE IT THAT WAY?



BY KATIE RUCKER



Family businesses are known for their trust, dedication, and long-term vision. And while that's something to be proud of, a recent national study conducted by **MacKenzie and Next Gen Collaborative** reveals that public perception doesn't always capture the full picture.

Surveying over 1,000 U.S. adults, the study uncovered key perception gaps—ones that could impact talent attraction, brand reputation, and competitive positioning. And the results? They present both a challenge and an opportunity.

One finding stood out: words like charitable and socially responsible ranked lower than expected when people described family businesses. That's surprising, because so many family businesses are deeply ingrained in their communities—supporting local initiatives, funding scholarships, and making an impact in ways that don't always make the headlines. If the public doesn't associate family businesses with generosity, what does that say about how we're telling our story?

This isn't just about public relations—it's about owning our identity. If family businesses want to be recognized for their impact, we have to be more intentional about sharing it. That means showcasing philanthropic efforts, highlighting ethical business practices, and making it clear how we show up for our communities.

Beyond that, the study also revealed a widespread belief that family businesses struggle with change. In fact, 84% of respondents think they have a harder time adapting than non-family businesses. While tradition is a cornerstone of many family enterprises, that doesn't mean they aren't evolving. I've seen family businesses lead in innovation, embrace new technology, and develop leadership pipelines that sustain success for generations.

Still, if the public perceives family businesses as slow to adapt, that perception can impact hiring, customer trust, and strategic partnerships. The good news? Perceptions can shift. By proactively showcasing transformation—whether it's leadership succession plans, digital advancements, or business model shifts—family businesses can push back against outdated narratives and position themselves as both legacy-driven and future-focused.

Perhaps the most surprising gap in perception is around career growth. Despite offering personalized career paths, leadership development, and long-term stability, only 27% of respondents see family businesses as great places for professional advancement. That's a major disconnect. Family businesses may provide some of the most meaningful career opportunities, but if job seekers don't recognize these advantages, they might overlook them altogether.

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Attracting top talent starts with visibility. Employee success stories, mentorship programs, and leadership development initiatives need to be amplified—whether that’s through social media, industry events, or employer branding efforts. By shifting the narrative, family businesses can ensure that future generations see them not just as places of legacy, but as places of opportunity.

At the heart of these findings is a powerful truth: perception isn’t fixed—it’s shaped by the stories we tell. Family businesses have an opportunity to close these gaps by owning their impact, demonstrating adaptability, and making career growth opportunities more visible. **The narrative of family businesses isn’t just about tradition. It’s about resilience, evolution, and impact.** And it’s time the world saw the full picture.

***For more insights and opportunities, download the free 2025 Family Business Perception Report.***

## Member **Spotlight**

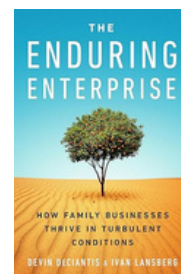
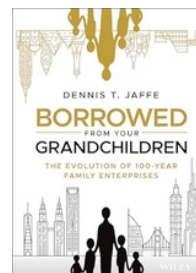


President  
**AVA  
SMITH**  
Flat Fee  
Recruiting

Ava is a Board Member for the Asheville Chamber of Commerce. She was just placed on the Executive Committee and has been named the Chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

**CONGRATS, AVA!**

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR FAMILY ENTERPRISES



***The Founder's Mentality*** by Chris Zook and James Allen explores why fast-growing companies often struggle as they scale, identifying a loss of the original founder’s mindset as a key reason. The book outlines three core traits of the founder’s mentality—an insurgent mission, an obsession with the front line, and an owner’s mindset—that drive sustained growth and resilience.

***Borrowed from Your Grandchildren*** by Dennis Jaffe explores how family enterprises can build lasting legacies by evolving their values, governance, and purpose across generations. Drawing from extensive research on 100 long-lasting global families, Jaffe outlines how successful families foster collaboration, adapt to change, and engage the rising generation in meaningful ways.

***The Enduring Enterprise*** by Devin DeCiantis and Ivan Lansberg examines how multigenerational family businesses sustain success, purpose, and unity over decades and even centuries. Through case studies and research, they highlight the practices, values, and governance structures that help families navigate complexity, adapt to change, and remain cohesive across generations.

## UPCOMING FEISC EVENTS

6/18/25 - Lunch Briefing  
(Columbia)

*"Building a Legacy: Legal  
Strategies for Family-Owned  
Businesses"*

7/16/25 - Lunch Briefing

*"Please, Please! Let's Talk  
Money!"*

8/18/25 - Fall Social

*"An Evening at Biltmore:  
Private Tour and Fireside Chat  
with 4th-5th Generation  
Vanderbilt Descendants"*

9/17/25 - Lunch Briefing  
(Columbia)

*"Leading Through Conflict:  
Effective Communication  
Strategies in Family Business"*

10/15/25 - Breakfast Briefing

*"Building Foundations for  
Success: Crafting Family  
Employment Policies and a  
Strong Family Constitution"*

11/13/25 - Awards Luncheon  
FEISC: Fifth Year Anniversary  
and Awards Luncheon

## NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



Rachel Nafziger

*I'm excited to join*  
**THE FAMILY**

### About Me:

I graduated from Lee University in 2006 with a B.A. in Communication and minors in Writing and Bible. Then, in 2011, I received a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration from Clemson University. I started my professional career with a world missions organization, supporting missionaries by designing and editing newsletters, brochures, and other media projects. Next, I spent 15 years working for Greenville County Emergency Management as the Community Program Coordinator, developing, implementing, and coordinating various preparedness programs for the Greenville County area.

I have been married to my husband, Tim, for 12 years, and we have an 8-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son. We attend the Greenville campus of NewSpring Church where I volunteer in the nursery.

**It has been my privilege to meet some of you over the past month, and I look forward to meeting and working with all of you in the near future!**



THE KIM S. MILLER  
Family Enterprise Institute  
of South Carolina  
at ANDERSON UNIVERSITY

*Rachel Nafziger*

[www.andersonuniversity.edu/feisc](http://www.andersonuniversity.edu/feisc)