



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SOUTHERN BUSINESS INSTITUTE HOSTS INAUGURAL CONFERENCE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – Southern Business Institute is gearing up for its inaugural event, CollabSouth, for the small business community of Jackson. Founders and employees of small businesses are invited to attend this one-day conference on August 26th to hear from experts within their community. Mississippi Secretary of State Michael Watson will be the keynote speaker. Several other speakers and panelists will discuss topics such as business growth and development, marketing, accounting, human resources, and more.

“Small businesses are vital to the state of Mississippi, and we want to make sure we’re doing everything we can to set them up for success,” said Mississippi Secretary of State Michael Watson. “I am honored to be speaking at this event and believe it will be a day packed with opportunities for business owners to learn, grow, and network to ensure they continue to be successful.”

During the height of the pandemic in 2020, Susan Woods, Allison Muirhead, and Mary Margaret Gay founded the Southern Business Institute as a collaborative membership group for small businesses in the South to help align business interests, empower business owners, and share resources. CollabSouth will be the first community-wide event and will include breakout groups and panel discussions to help entrepreneurs to grow their businesses.

“During the pandemic, we saw that small businesses took a big hit. We founded the Institute to empower small businesses and provide them with the resources and community necessary to thrive,” said Susan Woods, Co-Founder of Southern Business Institute. “We’re very excited to connect business owners and cultivate this community in Jackson.”

CollabSouth will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 26th, at the Country Club of Jackson, followed by a cocktail hour for attendees to network with other entrepreneurs. Tickets can be purchased on Southern Business Institute’s website, [southernbusinessinstitute.com/collabsouth](https://southernbusinessinstitute.com/collabsouth). Follow Southern Business Institute on Instagram @southernbusinessinstitute to get updates on the event.