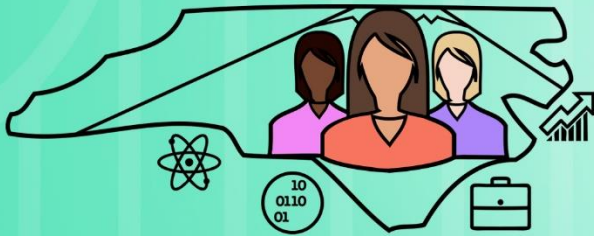




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WOMEN > A FORCE IN BUSINESS

NC CHAMBER CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN

SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

RALEIGH, NC

Leigh-Kathryn Bonner **Founder and CEO** **Bee Downtown**

Leigh-Kathryn Bonner is a fourth generation beekeeper and the Founder and CEO of a business, or “beesness” as she likes to call it, called Bee Downtown based out of Durham, NC. After starting Bee Downtown her junior year at NC State University, she decided upon graduating Summa Cum Laude in 2015 to pursue the dream of turning her passion for bees into a full time job. In 2015, Bee Downtown had 7 beehives sponsored by 3 companies in the Triangle. Now, Bee Downtown has more than 100 hives across North Carolina sponsored by some of the most renowned companies in the country including Burt’s Bees, SAS, IBM, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Bandwidth and more. Her bees and story have literally created quite the buzz across the country as she challenges the meaning of innovation and startup success. Because of this, her “beesness” has garnered the attention of major media outlets like National Geographic, The New York Times, Country Music Television, Bitter Southerner, was named one of the Top 5 Most Interesting Startups in the Triangle and was one of 4 companies chosen world-wide for a highly coveted Climate Innovation Fellowship with IDEO. To meet the demand this wildcard startup has created over the last 3 years, Bee Downtown plans to begin taking on investment in the coming months to expand to new cities across the United States.

