Program Agenda

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Lunch/Networking Reception

1:00 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.
Welcome
Peter Brews
Dean
Darla Moore School of Business

1:10 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.
A Vision for UofSC and Economic Development in South Carolina
Robert “Bob” Caslen
President
University of South Carolina

1:40 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.
The 2020 Economic Outlook: South Carolina
Joseph Von Nessen
Research Economist
Darla Moore School of Business

2:10 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.
The 2020 Economic Outlook: United States
Sarah House
Director and Senior Economist
Wells Fargo

2:40 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Q&A

2:50 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Break

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Regional Competitiveness: Challenges Facing the Midlands
Doug Woodward
Director, Division of Research and Professor of Economics
Darla Moore School of Business

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Final Q&A

3:45 p.m.
Wrap-up

SPECIAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Bob Caslen, the University of South Carolina’s 29th president, is a retired Army lieutenant general and former superintendent and president of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

“I am at South Carolina because of my love of the next generation of men and women who are going to be the leaders and contributors in service to their communities,” Caslen says. “I want to give back to this next generation.”

During his time at West Point, the academy was recognized as the nation’s No. 1 public college by U.S. News and World Report and Forbes magazine. After retiring from the Army in 2018, Caslen became the senior counsel to the president at the University of Central Florida and served as interim chief financial officer.

Caslen grew up in Vermont, where he worked in his family’s ski lodge business and was on the high school ski and football teams. From there, he was recruited to play football at West Point. Along with his bachelor’s degree from West Point, Caslen holds an MBA in finance from Long Island University and a master’s in industrial engineering from Kansas State University. He and his wife, Shelly, have been married for 42 years and have three sons and four grandchildren.
Sarah House

Sarah House is a director and senior economist with Wells Fargo Securities. Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, she covers the U.S. macro economy, including the labor market, inflation trends, and business investment. House frequently speaks about the economy to the national media, including The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg News, and National Public Radio. Prior to joining Wells Fargo in 2010, she worked as a research associate for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.

House earned a B.A. in economics from Tulane University in New Orleans and M.Sc. in local economic development from the London School of Economics. She has co-authored two books, Economic and Business Forecasting (2014), and Economic Modeling in the Post Great Recession Era (2017), both published by Wiley.

House currently serves on the board of the Charlotte Economics Club. She is a member of the National Association of Business Economics and has previously served as chair for the association’s healthcare industry committee.

Joseph Von Nessen, Ph.D.

Joseph C. Von Nessen is a research economist in the Division of Research at the Darla Moore School of Business where he specializes in regional economics, regional economic forecasting and housing economics. He regularly conducts a wide variety of economic impact analyses, feasibility studies and independent market research projects for clients in both the private and public sector.

Von Nessen engages in industry-level and regional economic forecasting for organizations at the state, national and international level. He has served as lead researcher on projects with clients as diverse as Sonoco, BlueCross BlueShield, Michelin, Boeing and the Savannah River National Lab, among others. He has also been the recipient of many grants from both local and national sources, including the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Von Nessen is a frequent speaker for business and government leaders throughout the southeast, providing information and consultation about business, housing markets and local economies. He also makes frequent media appearances to discuss various local economic topics of interest.

Doug Woodward, Ph.D.

Doug Woodward is professor of economics and the director of the Division of Research at the Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin in 1986. He joined the University of South Carolina faculty in 1987.

Woodward’s primary research interests are regional economics, firm location, urban and industrial clustering, and foreign direct investment. He is co-author of a book on foreign direct investment in the United States, The New Competitors, ranked as one of the “top ten business and economics books” by Business Week and listed by Fortune as one of the books “CEOs are reading.” He has published widely in academic journals, including the Journal of Urban Economics, the Journal of Regional Science, Regional Science and Urban Economics, the Journal of Economic Geography, and the Review of Economics and Statistics. His recently published papers have investigated local area labor matching and knowledge spillovers. Professor Woodward also has ongoing research comparing regional economic cluster development across the world.