

Bill Cone, Director of the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center

Bill Cone has served as the Director of the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center (Innovation Center) since November, 2011. The Innovation Center is part of the College of Business at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, Texas. During his tenure, the Innovation Center has completed the remodeling and expansion of its facilities to accommodate approximately 30 resident clients and has expanded from one to four programs to assist clients in various stages of development. From Pre-Incubation to Post Graduate programs, the Innovation Center offers support, networking, mentoring, shared equipment and services, and office space to its clients. Mr. Cone just completed one year of service as a member of the Council of Principal Investigators and its Executive Committee as the College of Business representative.

Recently, the Innovation Center facilitated the organization of the South Coast Angel Network (SCAN). SCAN began operations in the summer of 2014 with 22 members and now has total membership of 27 and has six deals under due diligence as of September, 2014. A member of the Alliance of Texas Angel Networks, and the Angel Capital Association, SCAN is able to syndicate deals and participate in deals with other Texas Angel Networks. This has created an effective and efficient method of getting entrepreneurs in front of investors.

Mr. Cone retired from a 43 year career in community banking that included the opening of four start-up banks including two in Houston, one in Austin, and one in New Braunfels, Texas. The bank in New Braunfels was acquired by Norwest Corp., (now Wells Fargo) in 1995. Mr. Cone retired from Wells Fargo's community banking operations in 2010 after serving as a Regional President for the Heart of Texas Region.

Mr. Cone has a BBA from the University of Texas at Austin, and had a long engagement with the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking at SMU (SWGSB). After graduating from SWGSB in 1978, he served the school for 20 years in various roles including Instructor, Dean for Bankers, Board Member and Board Chair.

Civic involvement includes leadership positions in United Way campaigns in three different communities, eight years as a director of a community hospital, community theatre and symphony boards, public television board member, and many chamber of commerce boards and committees.

Professional affiliations include terms as a director of the Texas Bankers' Association, and the Independent Bankers' Association of Texas as well as participation in the Assembly for Bank Directors program conducted by the SWGSB Foundation.

