

SBDC at Daytona State College provides mentoring for visiting Fellow



In an effort to promote international business and economic growth between the U.S. and Latin America countries as well as the Caribbean, the SBDC at Daytona State College participated in the American Business Fellows Program. For a period of six weeks, Edgar Julian Galvez from Cali, Colombia, joined the SBDC to observe the inner workings of the Center and actively participate in its day-to-day operations.

The highlight of Galvez's first week with SBDC was a community round-table event hosted by Daytona State College. U.S. Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas met with representatives from banks, as well as start-ups and established businesses, to discuss aspects of the economic stimulus package for small businesses. Kosmas was keen to learn about the local business communities concerns about the current economic climate and the resources being made available via the Small Business Administration.

Serving as Galvez's mentor during his six-week stay, Doris Bernal, SBDC Certified Business Analyst, commented, "Congresswoman Kosmas' visit to the College was a unique opportunity for Edgar to learn firsthand from our clients and bank representatives about the challenges they are currently facing. During his stay, Edgar met individually with clients to assess their needs and help guide them in the business planning process. His experience at the Center for Entrepreneurship Development in Cali, Colombia will be a great asset to our department."

The ultimate goal of the program was for Galvez to examine best practices and models of effective business center management at the SBDC. The six-week visit provided a solid foundation in the development of a model that can be implemented in Colombia.

The Business Fellows Program sponsors the exchange of private sector professionals to carry out a fellowship at a host entity. By exchanging expertise and resources through the work of the Business Fellows, sending and receiving organizations establish valuable relationships with counterpart entities throughout the Americas. Partners of the Americas initiated this program in March 2006 with funds from the Department of State. The program has two key goals: to promote greater understanding of issues related to international business and economic growth with Latin America and the Caribbean, and to forge and strengthen long-term institutional linkages between the private sectors of the U.S. and Latin America through the exchange of technical resources and expertise.