



The Florida Small Business Development Center Network is one of eight original SBDC pilot programs funded in 1976 by the U.S. Small Business Administration to successfully link the state's education system to community outreach, utilizing both faculty and students to aid in the development and education of the state's entrepreneurs and small business community. Today, the FSBDC is a statewide network of 31 centers involving seven universities, seven community colleges, two Chambers of Commerce and one county Economic Development Council.

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## Increasing Visibility and Awareness in the Community



L-R: UWF President John Cavanaugh and his wife, Patrice, visit with State Director Jerry Cartwright at the SDO booth.

- On April 4th and 5th, the FSBDC State Director's Office participated in the University of West Florida's Festival on the Green "Showcase UWF". The festival is held annually to celebrate community, art, education and family. One of the main focuses of the festival, this year, was the UWF Showcase. The purpose of the Showcase was to allow the community to witness some of the "cutting edge" research and activities that UWF is engaged in. Other activities at the festival included an arts and crafts show and sale, sports tournaments, music, theatrical performances, a

children's fair, a dog agility show, a variety of food vendors and more. The SDO display board highlighted two young girls selling lemonade with the tag "Even experienced entrepreneurs need help when it comes to growing a successful business..." SDO staff wore matching lemonade stand t-shirts and provided free samples of lemonade. Eight festival-goers won gift bags which included a festival t-shirt. Michael Johnson of Pensacola won a jug of 12,212 jelly beans for guessing closest (12,203) to the number of clients the FSBDC Network counseled last year.



L-R: Thawanna Price, UWF SBDC; Laura Subel, SDO PTAC; Bonnie Dimsdale; Dr. Parks Dimsdale, UWF Exec. VP & Provost



Sharon O'Hara, DETA; Jerry Cartwright



Regina Bell (L), UWF MBE; Brian Johnson (R), SDO



L-R: Lucy Heard, SDO; Evelyn Keith, SDO

- The Florida Department Of Community Affairs Division of Emergency Management provided funding for a one-year pilot program to operate the Business Continuity Program (BCP). The UNF and UWF SBDCs have been busy educating small businesses about disaster planning and the implementation of mitigation strategies into their business operations. A series of Disaster Planning workshops have been conducted during the first quarter in conjunction with local emergency management offices, Red Cross Disaster Team personnel and other business organizations in Okaloosa, Duval, St. John's, and Clay counties. Workshops are scheduled for April 16th in Santa Rosa County, May 22nd in Walton County and on May 28th at the Jacksonville Business Summit.
- The UCF SBDC is preparing to offer a new Advisory Board Service. Through networking and contacts within the business community, the SBDC is recruiting professionals to volunteer to serve on an Advisory Board for small business owners. The business owner will be a client of the Small Business Development Center who has expressed a desire for this service. In this manner, the business owner will have access to advice from a range of professionals, and will be able to expand their management team. This will also provide the business professionals with an opportunity to give back to others, while increasing the awareness of the SBDC within the business community.

## Increasing Visibility and Awareness... (continued from page 1)

- Through a partnership with Hillsborough County SBIC, Kimberly Lee represented the USF SBDC at the Carrollwood Business Association Expo that was attended by over 400 people.
- USF SBDC CBA Jim Parrish has been invited to speak at the National Conference for American Society of Consultant Pharmacists in May.
- The editor of *El Paracaidista Newspaper*, a Spanish publication, has been publishing FAU SBDC seminar schedules in the Calendar section of the paper. The editor also plans to write an article about the Center and its services. The SBDC has benefitted from this media source, not only through increased publicity, but with in-kind contributions, as well.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Alex Sokoloff and FAU SBDC Director Nancy Young represented the SBDC and gave a short presentation at a meeting in Marathon that was called for by the Governor's Office to explore ways in which various state agencies could be of assistance to the shrimping industry. Another Shrimpers' Assistance Meeting was held in Miami and attended by FAU SBDC Associate Director Nancy Orozco who presented information, in Spanish, about SBDC services, met with shrimp boat captains, and staffed a booth at the event.
- A ribbon-cutting ceremony took place on April 16th and was attended by distinguished guests such as Congressman Allen Boyd, 2nd Congressional District of Florida, and Dr. Jeff Stevenson, Dean of Workforce Education, Gulf Coast Community College.

## Partnering with the Community to Promote Economic Development

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves attended the "Business Assistance Workshop for Entrepreneurs," sponsored by the City of Miami, in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration South Florida District Office. Included among those present were Manny Diaz, Mayor of the City of Miami, other government officials and representatives from several banks. Miguel was invited to speak about how the SBDC helps small business owners obtain financing through the SBA.
- FAU SBDC Director Nancy Young and Certified Business Analysts Martin Zients and Phil Scruton attended an SBA/Banker's Meeting in West Palm Beach in January, which was part of a series of SBA/Bank Meetings to introduce new products and programs. The SBDC's role was to broaden its bank base to increase sources of referrals and working partners.
- The UCF SBDC is working with Orange County Government to assist small businesses with environmental issues, as well as with planning for their businesses. The SBDC recently offered three sessions of the "General Environmental Workshop" in conjunction with Metropolitan Environmental Training Alliance to inform business owners of environmental laws and regulations. The SBDC is also offering a six-part series on "Strategy Planning: Where Do We Go From Here?", to be presented by a UCF COBA professor to assist businesses with planning for the future in uncertain economic conditions.
- The UCF SBDC is preparing to move into the Disney/SBA National Entrepreneur Center. This center is a partnership between federal and county governments, in conjunction with private industry and the University of Central Florida, to provide a "one-stop shopping" center for small business assistance. The NEC will be located in downtown Orlando, and will offer a Business Information Center, as well as access to several business assistance organizations.
- The UCF SBDC works closely with the Kissimmee/Osceola County Chamber of Commerce to provide business assistance in that area. A full-time CBA and Program Assistant are located at the Chamber to provide counseling, training events and a Business Information Center.
- The USF SBDC's partnership with the Hillsborough County Small Business Information Center allows the County to leverage its Community Development Block Grant in providing entrepreneurship training in rural portions of the county. The SBDC continues its partnership with the City of St. Petersburg in facilitating training and providing counseling to promote its economic development plan. The SBDC's partnership with Highlands County Economic Development will provide small businesses with six seminars in three days. The SBDC participated in Business Development Week in Highlands County April 15-17 and continues to serve Highlands County once a month through its partnership with the Sebring Chamber of Commerce.

- The FGCU SBDC appointed Daniel Telep to the Florida PTAC program as Procurement Counselor. Telep will work with business owners to identify contracting and business opportunities with the federal, state and local governments. Telep has 24 years of experience with the federal government, specifically procurement experience in military and civilian agency contracting. His experience includes small purchase awards, major contract awards, best value awards, cost and pricing analysis, and procurement policies and procedures. Telep holds a Master's degree in business management and supervision, and is a Florida SBDC Certified Business Analyst.

## Capitalizing on Expertise to Enhance Outreach

- Bay County Small Business Incubator Board of Director Member, Ed Linsenmeyer, has been selected as a member of the State Advisory Board for Small Business Development Centers. Mr. Linsenmeyer states "this appointment offers a unique opportunity for me to interact with other SBDCs and to initiate programs which will be beneficial to our state's small business community."
- FAU SBDC Assistant Director Ted Kramer attended a meeting held by the Palm Beach County Roundtable, an umbrella organization for several community action groups. Ted spoke to the individual attendees about SBDC seminars and services, highlighting the free Office Depot classes in Palm Beach Gardens. Ted was asked to provide a list of seminars, and he will be provided with the e-mail addresses of attendees.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Carole Hart attended a presentation given by the Office of Small Business Assistance titled "Doing Business with Palm Beach County" in preparation for a new certification program. The information she gained from this class was incorporated into an SBDC presentation that was given in Belle Glades on March 26 regarding procurement opportunities in the county. The information also will be shared with the SBDC's PTAC clients.
- USF SBDC CBA Mario Iezzoni conducted seminars on "Being Independent Contractors" to previous St. Petersburg Times employees. SBDC Director Irene Hurst served as Chair of Judges for The Business Journal Women In Business Awards, reviewing more than 50 applications. She also serves on the Greater Tampa Chamber Judging Committee for "The Small Business Of The Year". Judy Gray serves on the board of the Public Relations Society and set up an event earlier this year between PR officers and journalists.
- USF SBDC Assist. Director Eileen Rodriguez went to the Pasco County and Dade City Chambers to extend SBDC visibility. Eileen spoke to high school students at Pasco and Clearwater High Schools about small business ownership.

## Fostering the Development of Global Relations

- The FAU SBDC interacted with resource partners such as the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Customs and Enterprise Florida to remain current with global information as it relates to international trade. The FAU SBDC has continued to teach ongoing classes that relate to importing and exporting.
- USF SBDC's Eileen Rodriguez and Irene Hurst participated in the NAFIN Conference hosted by the FGCU SBDC. They met with the Mexican delegation and discussed the promotion of the SBDC in the Yucatan Peninsula. Eileen Rodriguez is participating in The Small and Medium Businesses of Costa Rica program in San Jose, Costa Rica, with the Costa Rican Ministry of Economics, Industry, and Commerce. Eileen's bi-lingual skills have proven valuable.



FGCU SBDC Business Analyst Alberto Chavez and FGCU SBDC Director Dan Regelski receive an award from the U.S. Department of Commerce for excellence in educating and promoting awareness of international opportunities to small businesses in Southwest Florida.



Mexican Delegation

- The FGCU SBDC says, after one year of promoting international trade in the region, a new survey shows that the level of international business activity is increasing at a rapid pace in Southwest Florida and small businesses are only in the early stages of the exporting life cycle. Consequently, the FGCU SBDC is planning a series of training programs to assist local companies with expanding their sales to foreign markets. During the International Business Watch Luncheon last month, the FGCU SBDC said that in addition to the survey results, the FGCU SBDC hosted a delegation from Mexico representing Nacional Financiera (NAFIN) and the Secretaría de Economía looking for assistance in how to manage a business development center of the SBDC's nature. The Mexican central government has a keen interest in starting a similar network of business centers in their country, and they have identified the FGCU SBDC as the role model to follow. Currently, the SBDC is working on developing a Southwest Florida International Council. The SBDC said during the last 12 months it has put emphasis on the international front with promotional efforts made possible by a grant from the Horizon Council of Lee County. The SBDC participated in several international events and incorporated an introductory seminar on exporting as a regular quarterly event.



Mexican Delegation Meeting at FGCU

## Exchanging Ideas and Knowledge for the Betterment of the Community

- USF SBDC Office Manager Kris Manning keeps the SBDC abreast of issues on campus in regard to pay policy and work/life and status of women issues.
- USF SBDC Public Relations and Marketing Manager Judy Gray received the Excellence in Community Service Award from the Public Relations Society of America.
- FAU SBDC business analysts attended an SBA presentation about the new look and new role of the SBA in making more "user friendly" loans, i.e. SBA Express and Import Express. The emphasis was on shorter forms, shorter waiting periods and forthcoming Internet applications. Discussions also focused on the decision-making process, discussing the 4 Cs of loan evaluation. There was an opportunity at this meeting to talk to representatives from the local chapter of SCORE, who also were in attendance, about ways to work together to increase funding for clients.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves met with the Vice President of Government Lending from Bank of America regarding the bank's new loan program. Start-up businesses can receive loans up to \$10,000, and businesses that have been in operation for more than two years can receive loans up to \$50,000. This is a great opportunity for SBDC clients who are looking to borrow small unsecured loans.

## Leveraging Expertise to Accelerate Knowledge

- UWF SBDC's Judy Gray judged the Society of Professional Journalists' writing submissions for the State of Colorado, listing her occupation as freelance journalist, PR manager for the Small Business Development Center.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Martin Zients attended an SBA Product Information Meeting held with the banking community of Northern Palm Beach County, which was sponsored by the City of West Palm Beach. The purpose was to introduce the banking community to the new outreach programs of the City of West Palm Beach and the role that the SBA can play in the expansion and growth of small businesses, for both startup and expanding businesses.

## Engaging Students in Real-World Business Experiences

- The FAU SBDC had work-study students working on various projects during the quarter. Students worked on training event and public relations projects, coordinated in-kind donations and managed the Center MIS and the Web site.
- This Spring semester, USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst is teaching "Small Business Counseling" at the USF College of Business Administration. The class is an senior level elective for students with a management major. Irene guides student groups in developing business and marketing plans for SBDC clients, along with the assistance of other SBDC Certified Business Analysts. Currently, the group is working with five clients. The students spend hundreds of hours researching and developing recommendations for the clients, giving them real-world experience. Feedback has been very positive. The class says they are learning more about the application of their other business courses in this one seminar class than any other classes they have taken. By working with established businesses, they realize the effort it takes to run a successful business. Eileen Rodriguez, Assistant Director, oversees an additional 7 graduate student teams working with USF SBDC clients this semester.

## Providing Programs that Inspire Creative Learning

- The FAU SBDC introduced two new clinics during the first quarter of 2003: "How to Write a Business Plan Clinic," and "Getting Your Business Up and Running Clinic." The business plan clinic is a four-hour class that provides step-by-step instructions on how to write a business plan and provides opportunities for attendees to have hands-on business plan writing experience. "Getting Your Business Up and Running Clinic" also is a four-hour class and provides in-depth information about business planning, marketing, financing, licensing and more. Both classes were well received and will continue to be offered throughout the year.
- The FAU SBDC, which is dedicated to the process of continuous improvement, contracted with a training consultant who has expertise in the area of instructional design. The instructional design process facilitates the development of training programs that enable better learning to take place and includes methods for measuring the program's impact on attendees.
- The USF SBDC continues to revise its standard seminars with new information and/or new material. Jane Bunch just revised and rewrote the book for her Marketing class. She has been invited to speak at the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce on Marketing topics. The marketing and advertising classes she teaches are hands-on and interactive, allowing attendees to develop their own marketing and advertising material before leaving class.
- As of March 31, the State of Florida converted its certification to an on-line process. The USF SBDC has been teaching classes on M/WBE certification on a regular basis. The SBDC has completely revamped information for the class to reflect the new changes on getting certified, as well as policies and procedures for doing business with the State of Florida.

## Recognizing and Rewarding Excellence

- USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst received formal kudos from Congressman Bill Young in regard to her support of deployed reservists. Irene provided information for small business owners faced with the specter of lengthy deployments and has been dealing with this issue on her own staff.
- Teri Takahashi, FAU SBDC employee, was promoted to training manager in February. She now oversees the entire training program, focusing on ISO compliance, instructional design and technical analysis.

## Demonstrating Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement Excellence

- Three FAU SBDC staff members, Yasser Khan, Maria Borgen and Phil Scruton, attended a training event titled "Internal Auditing for Quality Systems," which was presented by the American Society of Quality, Section 1515, and D.A.C. Industries, Inc., an auditing and consulting professional organization. The SBDC staff members, having successfully completed the training sessions, are now authorized to perform internal ISO 9001:2000 audits to measure compliance of the FAU SBDC quality management system.
- The USF SBDC is in the continuing process of implementing its strategic plan. Each working group provides progress reports at the monthly staff meeting. Three members of the USF SBDC staff were selected by their peers to be involved in the statewide strategic planning process. The CBAs have been meeting to discuss interesting case and client relation issues to better share "best practices" and client process improvement.

## Securing Support to Expand Community Outreach

- The UNF SBDC submitted proposals with 5 Regional Workforce Boards to provide training in 21 counties in conjunction with a new grant opportunity. The training will assist area businesses in Preparing for the Unexpected.
- USF SBDC representatives met with the Vice Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg to request funding support for increasing outreach within that city. The SBDC also contacted the Hillsborough County Economic Development Department for potential funding support to expand the PTAC program.
- A sharing agreement was reached with the Florida Keys Community College to provide office space to house the Key West office of the FAU SBDC. The new address is 5901 College Road, Key West, FL 33040.
- FAU SBDC CBA Ondria Merriweather-Brown assisted Wachovia Bank in developing loan programs for women-owned businesses. The program was designed to address women-owned business needs with funding for their corporate, federal, state, and local government contracts.

## Collaborating to Increase Opportunities for Diversity

- USF SBDC Assist. Director Eileen Rodriguez continues to serve as the President of the Florida Minority Suppliers Development Council West Coast Chapter to promote minority participation in doing business with major corporations. The SBDC continues to provide regular classes on minority certification and opportunities for minority companies. SBDC Director Irene Hurst is actively involved in the Minority Development Week Planning Committee. The committee plans, executes and hosts a week-long Minority Business Conference in conjunction with the National Minority Development Week in September. She also serves on the Pluralism Committee for the Suncoast Girl Scout, Inc., helping them reach out to ethnic minorities in the community. Both Eileen Rodriguez and Judy Gray are members of the Carrollwood Business and Professional Women's Organization where they promote SBDC activities and classes.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Merriweather-Brown provided information about the SBDC and its programs at the "Broward County School Board W/MBE Purchasing Expo." She also provided guidance to the Florida Office of Supplier Diversity and the Florida Business Advocacy Council in order to assist them in making decisions concerning the new W/MBE certification process and the Minority Mobilization Loan Program.
- As a result of a suggestion by FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ruby Ortiz, an SBDC client created an Internet group to communicate with entrepreneurs that attend FAU SBDC seminars and activities. The group has more than 30 members, all FAU SBDC clients. Ninety-five percent of the group is made up of Hispanics and Black Americans. Ruby Ortiz has posted seminar schedules on the site, as well as links to sites with marketing topics and tips.