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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 32 centers involving seven SUS institutions, six community colleges, two Chambers of Commerce and one county Economic Development Council.

Engaging Students in Real-World Business Experiences



- This semester, University of West Florida SBDC Director Larry Strain agreed to conduct a new Marketing Elective for undergraduate students. The course, Marketing Consulting, is open to select Marketing and Economics Seniors as an elective and matches student teams with SBDC client businesses seeking in-depth, hands-on marketing assistance. The following info comes from the Department of Marketing web page. Have we got a deal for you! Marketing Consulting (MAR 4946) is a full-featured, hands-

on business consulting experience coordinated through the UWF SBDC. SBDC Executive Director will be the Instructor for the course. Economics majors can use MAR 4946 as an approved ECO/ECP elective for your degree program. Marketing majors can use it as a MAR elective. This opportunity will be offered in the Spring 2003 term and it is anticipated that it will be available on a regular basis. Students might consider taking this course as a more structured alternative to an Economics or Marketing internship. For more information, look through the FAQs. For other questions, contact Dr. Martin (gmartin@uwf.edu).

- Four graduate students with the UCF College of Business Administration are currently serving internships, working with SBDC CBAs and small business clients. These interns are finding in-depth market research information for the clients, which will assist the clients with making decisions for the future of their business.
- As part of the USF MBA program capstone project student teams are working on marketing plans for four clients. USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst is teaching an undergraduate course on entrepreneurship and small business management. She will bring several SBDC clients into the classroom to share their stories.
- Indian River Community College is working with students from Westwood High School in Fort Pierce, Florida to develop a marketing brochure for high school students that will provide information on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), water conservation issues, and IRCC degree programs associated with these initiatives. The students will research the CERP project, design an appropriate brochure, present their designs and "sell" their idea to an advisory panel that will choose one group's brochure for printing. The brochure will be distributed to all high school seniors in the region by the end of this school year and will recognize the students in the WHS Business Academy as the creators of the brochure. The project is related to a grant to the College and other business partners from the South Florida Water Management District.
- The FAU SBDC attracted a work-study student who started during the quarter and is doing an excellent job assisting with training programs.
- The Ocala office of the UNF SBDC hosted the Vanguard High School Academy of Entrepreneurship and Philip Geist, SBDC Regional Manager, taught a class on business planning on September 18. Geist is on the Board of the Academy and was one of the founders of this entrepreneurial program in the high school system.

Partnering with the Community to Promote Economic Development

- In September, the UWF SBDC and Florida First Capital Finance Corporation reached an agreement to partner and offer FFCFC's SBA 504 financing programs through SBDC offices. Founded by the State of Florida and licensed since 1984 by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as Florida's Statewide Certified Development Company, Florida First Capital Finance Corporation (FFCFC) is chartered for the primary purpose of advancing the economic development and general welfare of the citizens of the State of Florida by promoting and assisting the growth and development of small business concerns within the state. In 1988, FFCFC contracted with the Florida Department of Commerce to provide SBA trained and qualified staff for the operation of its SBA 504 loan program. In 1996, upon the dissolution of the Department of Commerce, FFCFC contracted with the state's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development and with the Capital Development Board of Enterprise Florida to provide its staffing and management services. Under the terms of this pilot project, James Hosman, Business Development Officer, will maintain office space in the UWF SBDC working with FFCFC clients, as well as lending his financing expertise and advice to SBDC clients and Business Analysts. James recently joined Florida First Capital after nearly three years as a Certified Business Analyst at the UWF SBDC.
- Working with the Orange County Board of County Commissioners, the UCF SBDC offered a six-part series, "Strategy Planning... Not Your Typical Recession/Recovery" over the summer. The series attracted 67 people from 45 Orange County businesses. A follow up series, "The Strategy of Marketing Your Business" is being offered during the Fall. There are 73 attendees from 50 Orange County businesses participating in the seminar.

As another aspect of the partnership with Orange County, the UCF SBDC ECAP offered a regulatory compliance seminar targeted to the vehicle industry, which was held in August. This seminar had the largest turnout to date with 87 attendees. From the response received from this sector, consideration is being given to conducting this seminar twice yearly.

The ECAP program also provided 33 Orange County businesses, located in a total of 257,000 square feet of building space, with energy and mitigation surveys. Current energy usage of these facilities was slightly over \$835,250.79. Full implementation of all recommendations will bring a total savings of \$158,675.50 in operating costs. In addition, there will be reductions of 2,975,155 gallons of potable water and of 3,371,843 pounds of pollutants due to the electricity savings.

- Barbara Butler, Gary Beckert and Victoria Peake of the Brevard Community College SBDC exhibited SBDC programs and resources at the NASA/KSC and 45th Space Wing Business Opportunities 2002. They also provided counseling to participants requesting sessions with small business advocates.
- Marsha Thompson, Director of the Small Business Development Center at Indian River Community College, was recently elected as the Chair of the St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce Leadership St. Lucie Alumni Council. Leadership St. Lucie is a year-long program offered to management level personnel from various businesses and agencies to acquaint them with the economic impact of local government, tourism, education, cultural arts, education, law enforcement, healthcare issues, etc. The Leadership St. Lucie Alumni Council coordinates and oversees all activities of this program.
- In coordination with Office Depot, the FAU SBDC provided two seminars a week at the Fort Lauderdale Office Depot location. The FAU SBDC continued to provide three seminars per week at the Palm Beach Gardens Office Depot location, as well as counseling by appointment at both locations. Attendance numbers grew with attendee averages now at 11 for Palm Beach Gardens and 24 for Ft. Lauderdale.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Rafael Cruz hosted an event at the SBDC site located within the Bank of America SBRC, at the Broward County Main Library, to coincide with VIVA Broward, a month-long celebration in Broward County coinciding with Hispanic Heritage Month. Various small business owners, community leaders and the press attended the event. Rafael gave a presentation on funding a small business and FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Angel Pareja gave a presentation on becoming a minority certified business. The event was a great success, with participants that included the President of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, various vice presidents of business banking at Bank of America, the head of Economic Development for the City of Fort Lauderdale, and the Assistant Vice President of University Advancement for FAU, among others.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves was invited to be part of a panel of financial analysts at the Spanish speaking Radio Station Caracol.

- The UNF SBDC's Ocala office is the lead agency in the Coalition for Dunnellon's Future. An outgrowth of the Dunnellon Area Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Committee, which has been chaired by Philip Geist since 1998, the Coalition brings agencies like Main Street, the City Council, Florida Greenways and Trails and others together to coordinate efforts to stimulate and grow the Dunnellon area economy.

Providing Educational Programs that Inspire Creative Learning

- Gulf Coast Community College SBDC is partnering with the Bay County Chamber of Commerce to sponsor a free marketing seminar on November 6. The seminar entitled "One Hour of Marketing Power" was hosted last month by Troy State University SBDC in Pike County, Alabama. The program is designed to give small business owners and entrepreneurs practical tips on powerful new direct marketing techniques designed to generate consistent growth.
- The USF SBDC is designing new classes to better appeal to targeted markets. Kim Lee, SBDC Certified Business Analyst, is teaching a variety of seminars--everything from Marketing 101 to Office Organizing tips--at the satellite center in Temple Terrace. Class attendance continues to rise steadily.

The USF SBDC staff met with representatives of local financial institutions to discuss SBDC programs and services. Working relationships with these institutions are mutually beneficial in increasing the chances for small businesses to obtain financing.

SBDC Marketing Director Judy Gray has made presentations to local realtor organizations and to the local chapter of the Financial Planning Association to increase awareness of SBDC services.

- Several new topics introduced at the FAU SBDC's Office Depot locations this quarter included seminars on creating a marketing plan; preparing balance sheets and profit/loss statements; advertising/promotion; a visioning workshop; web designing; and effective purchasing skills.

The FAU Festival Plaza SBDC worked with PR Coordinator Pam Piasek and FAU SBDC CBA Phil Scruton, from the Boca Raton SBDC, to offer a "Press Release Writing Clinic" in Miami Dade County. A special marketing effort was conducted by the Festival Plaza office, and registration for this clinic was closed several days before the event due to over-booking.

New marketing/sales seminars were developed in English and Spanish by FAU SBDC CBA Ruby Ortiz as part of a marketing plan that was developed at the Festival Plaza SBDC to attract old and new attendees to the Miami SBDC/Office Depot.

- Philip Geist, UNF Ocala SBDC, was a guest lecturer at the Community and Adult Education Center on September 26 and presented a program on "Thinking Outside the Box." The attendees were in the Center's Administrative Services program, which teaches business skills to adults with technical trades ranging from chef to farrier to massage therapy.

Collaborating to Educate and Increase Opportunities for Diversity



- In recognition of the national celebration, Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week, the UWF SBDC and the Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce partnered to offer Business Expo 2002 for Women and Minorities in August. National MED Week provides a forum for discussing issues affecting the growth and development of minority enterprises and it also raises the Nation's awareness of the significant contributions made by this increasing segment of the business community to the economy. The theme: "Entrepreneurial Strategies for

Growth" highlighted the strategies, skills, and tools MBEs need to achieve entrepreneurial parity. This year's business expo attracted approximately 618 people, 41 exhibitors and more than 100 business people participated in the free workshops. The topics included: Bartering, E-Procurement 101, Collection Techniques for Small Businesses, Urban Redevelopment Initiatives. Six state government agency purchasing managers participated as vendors to discuss contracting opportunities, agency goals and bidding/purchasing procedures. To increase the contribution of minority-owned businesses in the economic being of the state, the State of Florida encourages minorities and women to become vendors and contractors. The State of Florida's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification program serves as a marketing tool for MBEs. The Office of Supplier Diversity supported the event by providing a representative for an on-site certification review for the evaluation of MBE certification applications. Seven businesses were certified, on-site, as minority business enterprises; eight businesses were granted pending certifications; and six businesses were rendered technical assistance. By participating in the on-site certification review, the decision process was shortened by at least six weeks.

Also in August, fifty-seven business owners attended a Minority and Women-Owned Businesses workshop sponsored by the UWF Purchasing Minority Business Outreach Program in conjunction with the UWF SBDC. The participants were informed of UWF's commitment to Minority Business Enterprises, Networking, Economic Development in the Urban Areas, Obtaining Government Contracts, Forming, Sustaining & Growing Small Businesses, and growing a successful business. Thawanna Price, UWF SBDC Certified Business Analyst, participated as an advisor and a workshop speaker.

- The USF SBDC was involved in the planning committee that hosted the Minority Enterprise Development Week. This year, the conference was held in St. Petersburg.

Assistant Director Eileen Rodriguez continues to serve as President of the West Coast Chapter of the National Minority Suppliers Development Council and conducted their monthly networking meetings. Eileen also prepared several Steps to Starting a Small Business classes in Spanish.

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ruby Ortiz was invited to a meeting of the Miami-Guatemala Lion's Club. She was invited by the President of the Club, Mr. Jose Luis LaTorre, to be the guest speaker during their monthly meeting. The topic was the service that SBDC Festival Plaza offers in English and Spanish to the Miami-Dade County business community. Thirty people attended and three people registered for seminars. The Board of Directors is interested in referring business entrepreneurs to the SBDC Festival Plaza.

Angelica Velasquez, Editor-in-Chief of the El Inversionista newspaper, interviewed FAU SBDC CBA Miguel Nieves. During the interview, Miguel presented information about the SBDC, its services, and how the SBDC can assist business owners on getting financing through the various SBA loan programs.

- Philip Geist and Ted Ledvina, UNF SBDC, met with the NF Workforce Development Board to develop funding to expand SBDC and other small business services in Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison, Swannee, and Taylor counties. The Live Oak Committee of Progress pledged money to expand SBDC services. The UNF SBDC is coordinating with the FAMU SBDC to ensure that SBDCs are funded for counties in their service area.

Fostering the Development of a Global Relations

- As a board member of Space Coast World Trade Council, Victoria Peake has helped promote the SCWTC's Sixth Annual Regulatory Review. The review brought to Brevard County an overview and update of today's export controls and compliance issues. The event was held October 24-25, 2002 in Cocoa Beach.
- USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst attended the State of Florida Partnership for International Visitor Programs Conference in Tampa. Eileen Rodriguez, USF SBDC Assistant Director, serves as Secretary for the Tampa Bay Women in International Trade and is involved in numerous international activities in the community.
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Rafael Cruz provided a display targeting International Business and Trade to the Caribbean in the Bank of America SBRC. Various books, articles and data were compiled and displayed for the benefit of the business patrons visiting the center. Many positive compliments were given on the display.
- The FAU SBDC Trade Specialist Christina Torrens presented an "Importing into the U.S." workshop this quarter.

Increasing Visibility and Awareness in the Community

- The Brevard Community College SBDC brought programs on entrepreneurship to Patrick Air Force Base Family Support Center and The Transition Assistance Program.
- USF SBDC staff continue to be actively involved in various business organizations such as Rotary, Business and Professional Women, National Association of Women Business Owners, Society of Professional Journalists, Public Relations Society of America, Tampa Bay Advertising Federation, and area Chambers of Commerce.

- Office Depot hosted a special ceremony to announce the trilateral agreement reached between Office Depot, the SBA and FAU's SBDC. SBA Administrator Hector Barreto as well as the Mayor of Fort Lauderdale were special guests at the event.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Meriweather-Brown continued to advocate for small and women-owned businesses in the South Florida area. Ondria worked with the National Association of Women in Construction and National Association of Women Business Owners to make these organizations aware of how the SBDC interfaces with women business owners. Ondria continued to develop relationships with women's organizations, national private firms, government agencies, and financial institutions to elevate the SBDC's presence in the community.

After many months of persistence and hard work, FAU SBDC Training Coordinator Monica Cuyun received an invitation from Caracol Radio for the FAU SBDC staff to be part of the number one Hispanic community radio program. FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves and Financing Assistant Liliana Bello were assigned to represent the Festival Plaza SBDC during this live radio talk show, during which they were able to answer questions from the audience and promote SBDC services.

Thaddeus Hosley, from the SBA South District Office, recommended FAU SBDC Associate Director Nancy Orozco to be a guest speaker at the number one Spanish TV station for a program aired nationwide titled "Despierta America" (Wake-up America). Nancy was contacted and invited to go to the studio and answer live questions from two entrepreneurs, one located in New York and the other who lives in California. The TV program producers were so pleased and impressed with the information provided by Nancy that they immediately requested her help with a new program focusing on the steps to start a business.

Exchanging Ideas and Knowledge for the Betterment of the Community

- Dr. Jeff Stevenson, Gulf Coast Community College's Dean of Workforce Education, and Andre Brewton, GCCC SBDC Certified Business Analyst, attended an Economic Symposium entitled "September 11th: One Year Later; the Effects on the Global Economy". The event was hosted by the International Trade Alliance in conjunction with Bay County Chamber of Commerce's Industry Appreciation Week. The Symposium, held September 18, featured keynote speakers, Dr. Tony Villamil, of the Washington Economics Group, Inc. and Dr. Thomas Cunningham, Vice President and Associate Director of Research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. The speakers offered excellent information about emerging global trends as an outgrowth of 9-11 and the resulting impact on the economic future of area business and industry.

- Judy Gray, USF SBDC Marketing Director, continually conducts outreach and informal presentations for service clubs, veteran groups, librarians and high school business teachers throughout the USF SBDC service area.

Each month, USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst answers a question from a small businessperson in a section called "Ask Irene". The SBDC continues to search for opportunities for unique and creative ways to spread the word about SBDC services.

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Rafael Cruz provided a display targeting E-Businesses in the SBRC. Various books, articles and data were compiled and displayed for the benefit of the business patrons visiting the center. Many positive compliments were given on the display and the information it provided.

The FAU SBDC supported the City of Fort Lauderdale CRA by providing financial and marketing counseling for the projects that require CRA capital or involvement. FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Enrique Becerra worked with the City of Fort Lauderdale Enterprise Zone Manager to help create an avenue to build facilities that are needed and, at some point in time, purchase them from the developer.

Capitalizing on Expertise and Strengths to Enhance Community Outreach



- On October 25th more than 80 women business owners from across the Panhandle spent a day acquiring "Power Tools for Women in Business" at the Gulf Coast Women's Business Conference and Trade Fair. The University of West Florida SBDC offices in Fort Walton Beach and Pensacola teamed up with the Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce and several community partners to put on the day-long event. Attendees heard presentations on Cultivating Confidence, Closing the Deal, Gender Leadership Styles, Relationship Asset Management, and 20/20 Thinking. In addition, the group heard the truly inspiring stories of four women entrepreneurs from the SBDC's client base. The conference was moderated by Pat Kempf of the Gulf Power Company and President of the Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce. Speakers at the event included Dianne Barlar, Director of the UWF Fort Walton Beach Campus; Magi Thomley, President, Thomley Marketing and Promotions; Tamela Ramos, Assistant Director of the UWF Whitman Center; Sandra Bell, President, ImageMaker & Co.; Evon Emerson, President, Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce and Maggie Greenwood-Robinson, PhD,

President of MGR Communication. Kristina Runciman, President of LifeForce Glass, Inc.; Marie Nowak, Owner/Operator of six McDonald's Franchises; Colleen Fowler, Owner, The Original Pocketbag; and Sheila Green, Owner, Sheila's Boutique, were the client panelists. The UWF SBDC received financial and in-kind support from the following businesses: Sprint, Gulf Power, Whitney Bank, WEAR-3 TV, [The Independent Voice Newspaper](#), and the [Northwest Florida Daily News](#).

- Gary Beckert, Procurement Specialist at the Brevard Community College SBDC, was a featured speaker at a Brevard Small Business Assistance Council meeting. Gary discussed resources available through the SBDC.
- USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst was one of the judges for the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Small Business of The Year awards. As one of the judges, she interviewed applicants and visited the finalist's businesses. She was the co-chair of the judging committee for [The Business Journal](#) "Women Business Awards".
- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves was a guest speaker at two City of Miami Small Business Administration, Small Business Assistance Workshops. Included among the attendees were the Honorable Manny Diaz, Mayor of the City of Miami, city commissioners and Gilbert Colon, the Deputy District Director of the South Florida District of the SBA.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves was invited by the Small Business Administration/First Born Christian Church to be part of a panel formed by bankers and other institutions to provide attendees with information on the SBDC services, and how the SBDC can assist business owners on getting financing through the SBA. More than 300 people attended.

Leveraging Expertise to Accelerate Knowledge

- On October 10, Indian River Community College's SBDC partnered with the St. Lucie County Chamber, The Workforce Board of the Treasure Coast and First Union Bank to provide a "Small Business Finance Workshop" for Woman-Owned businesses. Ray Sjogren, Small Business Banking Relationship Manager at First Union Bank, brought together representatives from First Union Bank to address 30 local business owners. Topics included a presentation by Jo Massey on Consumer Credit; Business Credit presented by Ray Sjogren and Joe Vetter; and Business Leasing presented by Lawanna Kimball. This was the final workshop in a series of workshops presented to Small Minority-Owned Businesses under a grant from the Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast. The SBDC has worked with the St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce for the last year providing services at the St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce's two locations.
- A purchasing coordinator from the FAU Purchasing Department was recruited to speak at a new SBDC training event, "Effective Purchasing for Your Small Business." SBDC Director Nancy Young recruited a client and seminar attendee with coaching and training experience to be a speaker for the SBDC on HR issues.

Securing Support to Expand Outreach to the Community

- Bay County Small Business Incubator is growing! Bay County small businesses will soon have more opportunity to take advantage of the business training, advising, and office/manufacturing space offered by the Bay County Small Business Incubator (BCSBI) and Gulf Coast Community College Small Business Development Center (GCCC SBDC) located in Lynn Haven. Construction of an additional 9,000 square foot facility began September 16, 2002 with estimated completion in March 2003. The \$300,000 expansion project is being funded by a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant awarded the BCSBI last year. The existing 26,000 square foot facility has been the initial home to many successful small businesses in our community since 1991 when the BCSBI was established as a joint endeavor of Gulf Coast Community College and the Bay County Chamber of Commerce. In 1993, the GCCC SBDC was added to provide additional business training and counseling, not only to Incubator tenants but also to businesses in the out-lying counties of Calhoun, Gulf, Jackson, Holmes and Washington. In 1999, the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) was added under a cooperative agreement with the SBA to provide business counseling and training opportunities to veterans in an eight state region which includes Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Kentucky.
- Brevard Small Business Assistance Council and the National Supplier Development Council will be available at Brevard Community College SBDC's 2nd Annual Veterans Conference. Mr. William Elmore will travel from Washington, D.C. to be the keynote speaker at the Veterans Conference scheduled for November 14, 2002. Elmore is the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development, SBA. Mr. Robert Chavarria will represent the Miami District SBA.
- The USF SBDC continues to fine-tune its partnerships with Hillsborough County Small Business Information Center, St. Petersburg Business Development Center, Clearwater, Manatee, Sarasota, and the Sebring Chambers of Commerce. This helps the SBDC localize its services and bring their expertise directly into these communities.
- FAU SBDC Director Nancy Young met with Senator Ron Klein during the quarter to discuss service delivery and opportunities for funding support. Senator Klein requested a short proposal for his review.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Martin Zients continually met with representatives from several banks in an effort to get the banks to increase their small business banking and to work together with the SBDC on SBA loans. They agreed to work with SBDC clients on funding Pre-Quails. Several of the banks refer their clients who need help to the SBDC.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Merriweather-Brown worked with the South Florida Regional Planning Council to assist members with their business financing needs. She also worked with several banks to develop relationships with banks in the community in assisting business loans.

- The U.S. Small Business Administration awarded \$364,434 to the Florida Small Business Development Center State Director's Office for a project titled SBDC Defense Economic Transition Assistance Program 2003. The purpose of the program is to provide management and technical transition assistance to four targeted Florida communities with defense-dependent populations adversely impacted by cutbacks in defense.

Recognizing and Rewarding Excellence

- Commerce Department's Deputy Director General Carlos Poza presented the Florida Small Business Development Center Network with the U.S. Commercial Service's Export Achievement Certificate. The award recognizes the SBDCs for helping local businesses make their first or a significant new-to-market export sale. This recognition was awarded to the following centers: FSBDC Network's Office of International Programs; University of West Florida SBDC; University of Central Florida SBDC; Seminole Community College SBDC; University of South Florida SBDC; Florida Gulf Coast University SBDC; Brevard Community College SBDC; and the Florida Atlantic University SBDCs located in Boca Raton and Miami.
- Victoria Peake, Director of the Brevard Community College SBDC, served on small business committees at both the Melbourne/Palm Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and the Cocoa Beach Area Chamber of Commerce to honor Brevard small businesses. The committees visited business locations and interviewed businesses regarding growth and innovative programs. Both Chambers named Businesses of the Year in numerous size categories. The BCC SBDC was gratified that several SBDC clients were honored.

The BCC SBDC participated in the NASA/KSC Business Opportunities EXPO 2002. Local contractors were honored for their excellent performance.

- The USF SBDC is currently interviewing and preparing information for our SBA awards submissions for 2001. Firmly committed to recognizing the efforts of our clients, the SBDC has carefully chosen local small business stars.
- Office Depot hosted a special ceremony to announce the trilateral agreement reached between Office Depot, the SBA and FAU's SBDC. The collaboration felt like recognition for the many years of commitment and services that the SBDC has provided to the community. The SBDC feels privileged to have the opportunity to work with Office Depot in this manner.

Demonstrating Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement Excellence

- The USF SBDC invited the USF Organizational Development and Training Department to train its staff on teamwork, attitude and customer service using the "FISH" program. The training session was fun and very well received. As a result, the SBDC will implement several ideas to make their work environment better and more enjoyable.

The USF SBDC sent all of its Certified Business Analysts to the ASBDC National Conference in Nashville, TN, to learn and network with other SBDC counselors from all over United States. The purpose of the conference is to keep their knowledge up-to-date and to exchange best practices with peers.

The USF SBDC is currently in the process of developing a strategic plan for 2003-2004. Committees have begun meeting and writing plans for specific topics such as providing better access to the SBDC in the community. By improving the center, they will be better able to serve their community.

Training Coordinator Ruth Trimarco is learning web design so the SBDC can keep its web page current. They are receiving in excess of 16,000 hits per month and want to keep the look and usefulness attractive and updated.

- The FAU SBDC underwent its FSBDCN Quality Improvement Review during the quarter, as well as an audit for Palm Beach County. Both the QIP and on-site review went well, and the SBDC received favorable reports.

This quarter, activity for FAU SBDC ISO registration reached a fevered pitch. All SBDC staff members attended several ISO related meetings during the quarter. Work was done on the training manual, training activities under new ISO procedures, and the fine-tuning of the ISO training procedures and ISO training forms. The development of a new "training team" concept was started. This training team will include various members assigned to specific functions that will help ensure training event quality and ISO compliance.

The FAU Festival Plaza SBDC had its first internal ISO Audit in September. The audit concluded with a short meeting between the auditors and all Festival Plaza employees, where everyone was notified that the audit was passed with an excellent performance.