USU EXTENSION IMPACTS: SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Winter 2016

Small businesses in Utah create most of the jobs and economic growth in the state. The SBDC program was created to help increase the rates of new small business growth and decrease the rates of their failure. The centers provide management assistance and training to new or existing business owners in such critical areas as marketing, planning and financial management. They also provide entrepreneurs access to capital by helping them work with banks and lending institutions as well as modified e-station or incubator facilities for fledgling new businesses. In addition, most centers are connected to the Governor’s Office of Economic Development program for rural business outreach, which helps local officials direct resources to local business owners.

USU has SBDCs at central campuses in Logan and Price and at regional campuses in Brigham City, Tooele, Vernal, Blanding and Moab.

— Marion Bentley, USU Extension business and economic development specialist

SBCD IMPACTS

Small Business Development Centers

SBDCs provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners. Counseling and training are provided to clients, generally free of charge. The program at Utah State University is a cooperative partnership of the private sector, USU Extension and federal, state and local governments. The seven USU Extension SBDC offices are part of a larger network of 12 SBDCs located at colleges and universities throughout Utah. SBDCs have become valuable resources for local economic development initiatives.

Business Resource Centers

BRCs provide coordination of business support, education, tracking of clients, access to sources of funding, training, technical expertise, talent and networking for new and existing businesses. Most BRCs are co-located with SBDCs and provide support to rural business development programs. Start-up and small business assistance is provided to international refugees through a joint USU Extension and International Rescue Center project in Salt Lake County. This partnership includes the Microbusiness Connection Center and small business curriculum development and training.
Through the Area Sector Analysis Process (ASAP), rural communities receive assistance in achieving targeted, sustainable economic development. This is done by identifying several things, including community goals and priorities for economic development; community assets that will help achieve the community’s goals and priorities; industry needs and factors important for locating operations in a community; and businesses that are compatible with the community’s goals and priorities.

**ASAP ASSISTS BY IDENTIFYING:**
- Community Goals
- Industry Needs
- Priorities for Economic Development
- Community Assets
- Compatible Businesses

"ASAP is designed to help guide community change in a way that is positive and reflective of the community values."

The Governor’s Office of Economic Development recently awarded USU-Moab a grant for local economic development, which gives local leaders in Moab City and Grand County the opportunity to create a “community driven” economic development plan using ASAP.

**MICROBUSINESS CONNECTION CENTER**

The Microbusiness Connection Center (MCC) is a partnership of Salt Lake County Extension, the USU Salt Lake City Regional Campus, International Refugee Center and Extension Business and Economic Development. The MCC provides training to refugees primarily from Northern and Central Africa and the Middle East in starting and running their own Utah business. A refugee training center with computer labs, a kitchen incubator and technical training provides assistance for startups in food production, child care and other ventures.

**Beatrice, Congo, Best African Boutique**

“Being a business owner changed my life. It was hard to begin, but now I’ve had it for four years. I am a single mother. My business helps Africans feel comfortable, and feel like they are back home. I appreciate the refugee community for shopping at my store and helping build my business.”

**FOOD BUSINESS PROGRAMS**

Food quality and entrepreneurship activities focus on helping consumers, entrepreneurs and existing businesses with food production and quality of start-up food businesses throughout the state. They include training and hands-on counseling to understand and apply state and federal food quality regulations. Activities also include product labeling and packaging, the use of kitchen incubator facilities in Cache and Salt Lake counties and marketing through Utah’s Own and other retail and wholesale outlets.

**MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP**

The Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Utah (MEP) is the affiliated center for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for the state of Utah. MEP is a partnership and joint venture of USU and Utah Valley University. USU houses and is responsible for the operational component of MEP, a network of circuit-riding engineers that provides assistance statewide to small and medium-sized manufacturing firms and helps employers modernize their operations and become more competitive, productive and efficient. Impacts collected from clients include such outcome factors as increased sales, cost savings, plant equipment investments and job creation.