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Press Release

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NON-PROFIT SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATE BOOSTING NJS ECONOMY

(Newark, NJ) - A Rutgers Business School MBA Consulting Team announced today that its survey of small businesses in New Jersey gives high marks to the non-profit N.J. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) for guiding little business people whose business operations provide the most employment to the states economy.

The good news came from Paul Belliveau, director of the Rutgers Business School MBA Team Consulting Program. The survey was commissioned by the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC), representing the states 750,000 small businesses the economic foundation of New Jerseys economy.

The survey was taking the pulse of small business owners: Identifying specific areas of interest, such as counseling/training needs of established small businesses so that NJSBDC can strengthen and redesign its counseling and training programs to meet new emerging and challenging ideas and tools to capture the market for small businesses.

The unique survey identified key public policy concerns that established small businesses now have so that this dynamic statewide network of small business centers can effectively support these growing businesses through its vast communications operations with public policy decision-makers.

The survey spells out the ranking indicators concerning business environment public policy concerns and problems, such as: affordable health insurance, ranked as the greatest concern of small businesses; tax rates at the federal and state levels; finding skilled workforce; availability of capital financing, state regulations, federal regulations, and affordable commercial space for their small businesses.

As the premier provider of comprehensive services and programs for small business, we are now escalating our efforts by expanding our current program offerings for established small businesses throughout the state, said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC state director. The SBDC is based at Rutgers in Newark, New Jerseys financial, insurance, academic, and commercial and transportation hub.

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Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.
Additional funding is provided through the New Jersey Commerce, Economic Growth and Tourism Commission and Rutgers Business School: Graduate Programs-Newark and New Brunswick.



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Were confident that the survey findings arm us with relevant data to ensure that our blueprint for change is on target and will have maximum value to growing small companies which provide our state with the most employment, Hopper noted.

We believe this survey will be really helpful for State Legislators, our States Congressional delegation, and the new Corzine Administration team in formulating statewide business strategic policies and initiatives, she added.

The nonprofit organization is now cosponsoring new second-stage growth training programs for its members in the upcoming months.

John Galandak, President of the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey (CIANJ), headquartered in Paramus, Bergen County, said he was glad his organization had the opportunity to participate in this vital survey, and we look forward to working with small development business centers in cosponsoring new second-stage growth training programs for CIANJs members.

Half of the survey respondents (51 percent) had previously used NJSBDC services. More than 80 percent were satisfied with the counseling services and found out about NJSBDC by word of mouth and its official website (www.njsbdc.com).

A vast majority of the business respondents are in the service sector and were concentrated in Bergen and Essex counties.

The survey findings are also helpful to us when we design our own membership and networking programs and lobby in Trenton on issues of importance to our members, Galandak said.

NJSBDC delivers its services at 11 centers on college and university campuses and 27 affiliate offices throughout all 21 counties of New Jersey.

Key survey findings and observations include:

- Business age is a poor indicator of revenue growth; business revenue is a more important factor when determining target market for established small business services.
- Larger revenue businesses generally have more employees while older businesses may not necessarily have more employees.
- Most businesses obtain their training via job and supplier/vendor training, E-learning and community colleges, where many SBDC locations exist. There is a tendency for established businesses (more than 5 years) to also attend training seminars and use self-study materials. However, for all businesses the preferred choices of education delivery were seminars/workshops and web based learning.

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- Respondents identified seven areas of need in ranking order: sales and marketing, accounting/other financials, regulatory/legal, computers, general management, personnel management, and international trade.
- Under the area of general management, assistance with strategic planning and project management were leading choices; under personnel management, employment policies and procedures, benefits, recruitment and training were rated high.
- Under the area of international trade, which ranked last in terms of interest in services, larger businesses sought help with overseas receivables insurance while smaller firms wanted help with international trade financing and doing business with foreign governments.

The greatest number of survey respondents in connection with the top 10 individual subtopic areas of need indicated government services to small business.

We believe that this is an interesting finding and needs further study. Despite State governments best efforts to develop one-stop shopping and assistance with navigating the government process for business programs, this finding may suggest there is a greater need for more business-friendly access to business program information, according to Deborah Smarth, SBDCs associate state director.

In addition to providing personalized one-to-one counseling, affordable training, loan packaging and other key services, the Small Business Development Centers throughout the state provide small business owners with information about the State Commerce, Economic Growth and Tourism Commission and other State agency programs impacting on small business and also acts as partners with these various agencies, including the NJ Economic Development Authority, the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the NJ Commission on Science and Technology, etc.

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The NJSBDC is a federal-state-educational partnership program that is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Additional funding is provided through the NJ Commerce, Economic Growth and Tourism Commission, and Rutgers Business School Graduate Programs - Newark and New Brunswick. SBAs funding is not an endorsement of any products, opinions, or services. All SBA funded programs are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information, visit www.njsbdc.com.