



The

Small Business Voice

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May 2018

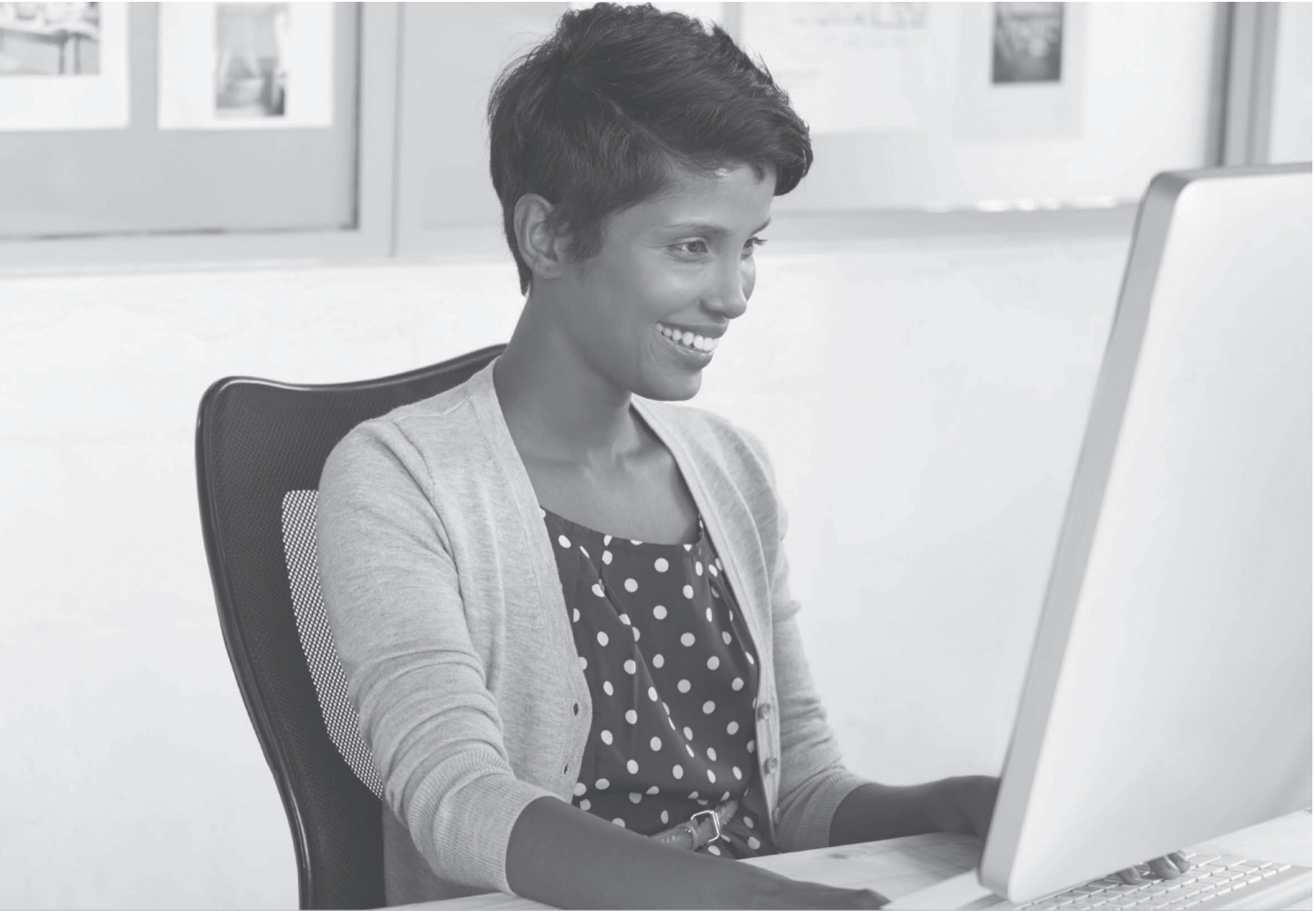
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VOLUME 18 May 2018

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America's Small Business Development Centers — New Jersey (NJSBDC)
 'Where Businesses Go TO GROW' ... BIG IMPACT



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 Business Action Center



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), America's Small Business Development Centers—New Jersey (NJSBDC) network is also funded by the State of New Jersey and is hosted by Rutgers Business School: Newark and New Brunswick. The NJSBDC network is an Accredited Member of America's Small Business Development Centers. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. All services extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.



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America's SBDC of New Jersey Champions Small Business across State

NJSBDC Clients Generated \$1.496 Billion in Revenues



The NJSBDC program, which is composed of 12 centers (statewide), provides services and comprehensive assistance to established small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in all 21 counties. Impact of the program is summarized below:



\$1.496 billion

NJSBDC clients generated an estimated **\$1.496 billion** in sales revenues, generating conservatively **\$60 million** in sales tax revenues to the State Treasury, notwithstanding additional business taxes paid to NJ.



\$126,854,350

The NJSBDC network facilitated **\$126,854,350** in total financing (loans & equity) for its clients.



14,848

The NJSBDC network helped small business clients create and save **14,848 jobs** (2,390 created/ 12,458 retained).



3,873

The NJSBDC network counseled **3,873** clients one-on-one.



60%

60% of all NJSBDC clients were **established businesses** (2,323).



630

630 NJSBDC clients started a new business.



19,284

The NJSBDC network delivered **19,284 total counseling hours** or on average **4.9 hours** per case.



7,658

7,658 attendees attended NJSBDC training seminars (on various business development issues).



541

The NJSBDC network sponsored **541 training sessions** statewide.

Note:
Impact from core SBA grant, NJBAC funding, and additional grants activity; as of 2/21/18.

www.njsbdc.com

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, America's Small Business Development Centers - New Jersey (NJSBDC) network is also funded by the State of New Jersey and is hosted by Rutgers Business School, Newark and New Brunswick.

The NJSBDC network is an accredited member of America's Small Business Development Centers.



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Governor Murphy Proposes State Budget With Stable Funding for NJSBDC

Legislature to Introduce and Pass Budget Legislation in June

Gov. Phil Murphy's proposed state budget maintains stable funding for the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) program at \$500,000.

The Legislature has held budget hearings, and will introduce and is expected to pass a budget sometime in June.

Small business clients of the SBDC network, consisting of 12 centers across the state, met with new staff members of the Murphy Administration in February to provide them with first-hand experiences concerning the benefits of the SBDC program. They also shared how their businesses have grown with the assistance of NJSBDC's experts.

The clients included: **Helen Aviles**, owner of J & H Construction, LLC, located in Trenton, NJ; **Tom Olsen**, owner of Lobster Life Systems, Inc., a manufacturing company located in Lodi, NJ; **Charles Evans**, marketing vice president of Corporate Turnaround, a financial services firm in Paramus, NJ; **Brian McDonough**, partner in the IT firm of Technical Integration Services, located in Fairfield, NJ; and **Tawanda Jackson** of Tawanda Jackson Insurance Agency, Inc. (State Farm Insurance) based in Jersey City, NJ.

The clients were joined by NJSBDC Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director, **Deborah Smarth**, who provided economic impact statistics relating to the program's outcomes.



GOV. PHIL MURPHY

State funding is leveraged with other private sector sponsorships and non-federal grants to enable the SBDC network to obtain its full \$3 million in federal funding.

"Without leveraging funding

from different sources to meet the dollar for dollar match, our federal funding cannot be fully accessed," said Smarth. "The return on investment of the program has historically been high for each dollar invested, and it's all about helping create new businesses, grow businesses, and generating jobs for New Jersey."

According to a recent national survey by America's SBDC, a national network of SBDCs throughout the country, the average state investment in SBDCs nationally is \$1.252 million. This is up from a prior national survey.

"New Jersey is trailing other states' investments," said **Brenda Hopper**, NJSBDC network chief executive officer and state director. "We're counting on legislative support to restore increased state funding to where it was a decade ago at \$1 million."

U.S. Congress Passes Omnibus Budget Act

Includes a Small Increase for National Program of America's SBDC

Due to strong support of members of the House and Senate Committees that take up small business issues and the Appropriations Committee process, America's SBDC national program received an increase of \$5 million, which will be allocated among the national network of SBDCs based on population. The federal appropriation now stands at \$130 million. In order to receive full federal funding, state SBDCs must meet the match requirement.

"We are urging the Legislature to restore state funding to where it was a decade ago," stated **Deborah Smarth** of America's SBDC New Jersey. "Proper state investment can ensure the match necessary to receive any additional federal funding."

New Jersey receives far less than what it sends to Washington, D.C. If the program does not meet its match requirement, other states' SBDCs would receive any overage.



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Governor Signs Proclamation Designating March 21 As New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Day

America's SBDC New Jersey Collaborates with SBDCs Nationally

America's SBDC New Jersey joined with the other 49 states' SBDCs across the nation to celebrate "SBDCDay" on Wednesday, March 21. Nearly 1,000 offices nationally collaborated in promoting the core mission and successful outcomes of America's SBDC program via social media and live business events.



The official commemoration was organized under the #SBDCDay hashtag for easy dissemination of news via Twitter.

Gov. Phil Murphy and Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver signed a Proclamation acknowledging #SBDCDay on March 21 and the statewide influence of the SBDC program that follows in the footsteps of other state governors nationally.

America's SBDC New Jersey, also known as the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers, scheduled many events and open houses on #SBDCDay. The program has had a notable impact on the lives and direction of entrepreneurs and small business owners. SBDC helps clients generate jobs, create new businesses and catalyze economic development in communities across the U.S.

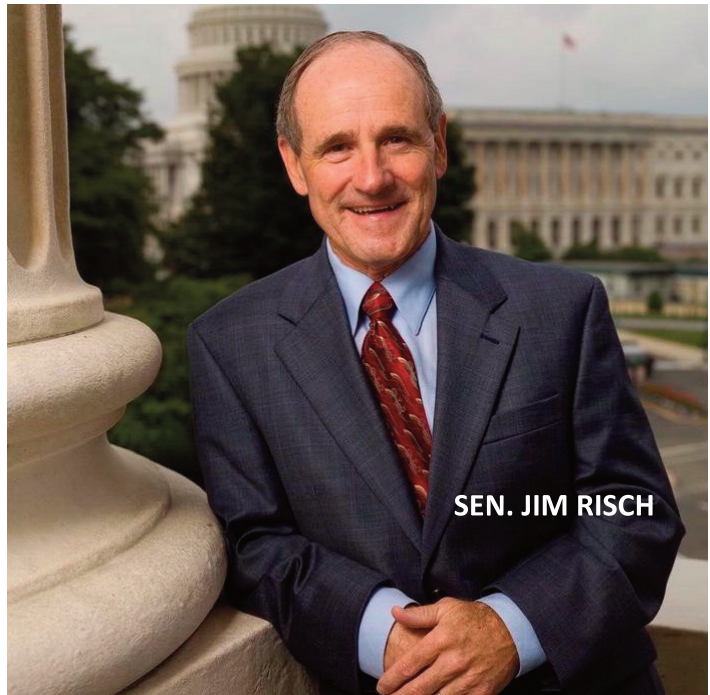


Risch Honors SBDCs in Congressional Record

Sen. Jim Risch (R-ID), chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, in a statement in the Congressional Record on Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Day – March 21, recognized the important work of America’s SBDCs.

“I’d like to thank and congratulate America’s SBDCs for their efforts this past year,” Senator Risch said in the Congressional Record statement. “SBDC staff understand the unique local challenges of entrepreneurship specific to their area which is one of the many things that sets their services apart. This tailored approach benefits nearly 500,000 entrepreneurs a year and creates over 95,000 jobs annually. The support they provide to small businesses across our country is considerable, and it is my pleasure to recognize today, the 21st day of March, 2018, as SBDC Day.”

America’s Small Business Development Centers provide our country’s small businesses with high quality consulting and educational programs, at low or no-cost to the entrepreneur. With centers in all 50 states, this network supports both established small businesses and developing entrepreneurs alike. SBDCs help America’s entrepreneurs develop and execute in-



SEN. JIM RISCH

dividual business plans tailored to fit their needs, experience, and level of business acumen.

Last year, the Idaho SBDC achieved a return on investment of five to one, and created more than 1,300 jobs. Its network served in excess of 1,600 clients and helped start more than 100 businesses.



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Full text of the Congressional Record statement follows:

Mr. President, today I would like to honor the exceptional impact made by America’s Small Business Development Centers on the small business community. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I recognize the importance of the work done by the nearly one-thousand Small Business Development Centers across America. This SBA resource partner works tirelessly

to support the backbone of our economy, and we thank them for their significant contributions to our small business community.

America’s Small Business Development Centers, or SBDCs, provide our country’s small businesses with high quality consulting and educational programs, at low or no-cost to the entrepreneur. With centers in all 50 states, this network supports both established small businesses and developing entrepreneurs alike. SBDCs help America’s

entrepreneurs develop and execute individual business plans tailored to fit their needs, experience, and level of business acumen.

SBDC staff understand the unique local challenges of entrepreneurship specific to their area which is one of the many things that sets their services apart. This tailored approach benefits nearly 500,000 entrepreneurs a year and creates over 95,000 jobs annually. Additionally, sales growth in SBDC clients averages 13.6 percent, a

rate four times greater than the national average. These statistics demonstrate America's Small Business Development Centers' dedication to excellence, and I congratulate them on their hard work.

In my home state of Idaho, the Idaho Small Business Development Center is determined to help businesses grow with consulting and training. Last year, the Idaho SBDC achieved a return on investment of five to one, and created over 1,300 jobs. Their network served over 1,600 clients and helped start more than 100 businesses. One of these clients is House of Design, a robotics and systems firm located in Nampa. House of Design offers engineering consulting, robotic system, and machine vision integration services across a variety of industries. Shane Dittrich, the owner of House of Design, believes that his company would not be where it is today without SBDC assistance. Since its inception in 2008, House of Design has grown into one of the top engineering firms in the region and now partners with multiple firms across Idaho to produce high quality engineering and robotics products. House of Design is an example of both the unique entrepreneurial spirit of Idaho as well as the impact SBDCs have on small businesses across America.

I'd like to thank and congratulate America's Small Business Development Centers for their efforts this past year. The support they provide to small businesses across our country is considerable, and it is my pleasure to recognize today, the 21st day of March, 2018, as SBDC Day. I wish them the best of luck and continued success as they move forward in their work to enhance American entrepreneurs.

America's SBDC Network Held Annual Strategic Planning Retreat in Princeton

The statewide staff of the 12-center network met at the Nassau Inn in Princeton.

Staff members gathered on April 12-13 to review strategic planning priorities, objectives and goals, national accreditation standards, and key components in its operational activities.

"These comprehensive meetings centralize our activities to ensure maximum statewide identity and conformance with national accreditation standards and our network's strategic plan," said Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer and state director of NJSBDC. "Our professional development training is important for progress targets."

"There's always opportunity for enhancements to mold a stronger

and more forceful SBDC program," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC's chief operating officer and associate state director. "We're here to serve small businesses and entrepreneurs in New Jersey."

The network staff, 12 full-time regional directors at Centers located across the state and Specialty Program consultants for Procurement, International Trade, Technology Commercialization, E-Business, and Sustainability, reports to its headquarters or Lead Center, based at the Rutgers Business School.

Hopper and Smarth, the senior leadership team, work to ensure maximum compliance with Small Business Administration grant rules, fulfilling state goals, and integrating national accreditation standards throughout the program.

NJSBDC's Second Annual Women Warriors In Business Session Focuses on Empowerment

The Second Annual *Women Warriors in Business* is being held on Thursday, May 17, at the New Jersey City University School of Business, 200 Hudson St., Jersey City. This session starts in the morning and wraps up by mid-afternoon. Lunch is available. Like last year, this event serves as another rewarding networking venue.

The event will provide women entrepreneurs with insights about the challenges of managing and leading, access to financing, digital branding, and obtaining sales and contracts to grow business operations. Accomplished women entrepreneurs will discuss these issues and provide empowering insights and perspectives about the challenges and rewards of managing and leading business enterprises.

Key sponsors are **RBAC, JP Morgan Chase & Co.** and **Atlantic Stewardship Bank**. Event collaborators also include NJSBDC's primary funding partner the **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**, official state funding partner, the **New Jersey Business Action Center (NJBAC)** and **The American Legion**.

General attendance fee is \$25. No charge for military, veterans and military dependents. Seating is limited. Register at <http://njsbdc.com/womenwarriors> or <http://njsbdc-WomenWarriors.weebly.com>.

NJSBDC's Technology Commercialization Program Offers Small Business High Value

Assists Science-Technology Companies to Bring Innovations to Marketplace

NJSBDC's Technology Commercialization program receives many referrals from higher education institutions and the technology community in general through various group collaborations and partnerships. Unlike sector-focused organizations and universities with which we partner, the NJSBDC network's Commercialization Program – like the SBIR and STTR federal grant programs – helps entrepreneurs to pursue opportunities and serves businesses across the science-technology spectrum.

While NJSBDC has continued to provide SBIR/STTR proposal assistance services – the sole provider of these services throughout the state – to help science-technology companies win federal grant awards that serve as seed capital for their advancement, much more can be done by NJSBDC for the sci-tech sector with proper investments.

According to recent SBDC survey results, **Matt Philbin** of **Shelter, Inc.**, who received SBDC proposal assistance for SBIR, indicated: "We applied for one Phase I SBIR grant with NIH. SBDC was instrumental in getting us through the application process."

In a February 25 letter sent to the State Treasurer and copied to Gov. Phil Murphy, **In Vitro Diagnostic Solutions (IVDS)** President and CEO **Robert Harper** stated that, "I'm writing to you to advocate for the importance of continued fund-

ing for the NJ Small Business Development Centers Technology Commercialization Program. This program has had a significant and positive impact on my business resulting in immediate hiring and revenue for the state of NJ." **IVDS** is developing the chemistry for a Point-of-Care test for the diagnosis of a rare metabolic disorder that affects 400 million people globally. Harper of IVDS added that, "A great deal of IVDS's success is thanks to the input and guidance of the NJ Small Business Development Centers Technology Commercialization Program. The people in this program have been extremely valuable in their input and guidance during the submission and review process...These professionals are currently positioning IVDS for the procurement of NJ Angel Investors...The efforts of this program directly translate into small business development and job opportunities for NJ residents."

The following are success stories of various NJSBDC science-technology clients that received special recognition from the NJSBDC program over the years:

2017 Award Winner

•**Arable Labs, Inc.**, founded by **Adam Wolf**, Ph.D., is a data and analytics company that helps farmers and agribusinesses to better assess crop status, forecast growth and make business decisions relating to managing food production systems. With the assistance of **NJSBDC's Technology Commercial-**

ization consultant, Arable received an NSF award of \$750,000 to further advance technology innovation. The company leveraged seed funding, attracting an additional \$2.6 million in venture capital. Wolf indicated that the "SBIR help (received through NJSBDC) was excellent and instrumental to that facet of our company success." The business has already generated revenues with some key customers. Arable has international sales and is on its way to becoming a global company. In 2017, the company employed 21 full-time employees, up from the company's 11 employees in 2016; the firm only had 3 full-time employees in 2015.

(Princeton, NJ)

2016 Award Winner:

•**Small Factory Innovations (SFI)**, founded and led by **Chris Dudick**, is developing an interactive, game-based learning product, SiLAS, providing critical social skills training to children with Autism disorders and other disabilities. This SiLAS curriculum places socialization at the center of social skills training, using avatars to facilitate safe interactions with other students and teachers. NJSBDC assisted with their grant proposal and Chris Dudick was notified of an award approval of \$225,000 from the National Science Foundation. **(Fair Haven, NJ)**

2015 Award Winner:

•**Grigore "Greg" Burdea**, Ph.D. founded **Bright Cloud International Corp.** This Rutgers professor is a



pioneer in the field of virtual rehabilitation combining custom hardware with therapeutic video games to supplement treatment beyond traditional care, benefiting victims of stroke, traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's disease, and cerebral palsy. With the SBDC Technology Commercialization program's assistance, the business received a \$1.3 million Phase II Small Business Innovation Research Grant. Bright Cloud then received a second \$224,500 SBIR grant for a new device, laying the groundwork for attracting further public/private investment. In addition to this, SBDC helped them win a similar size award to the \$1.3 million award in 2012. These grant award successes led to the \$1.3 million subsequently (Phase II and Phase IIB). The \$224,500 award came in between the two larger awards cited. **(Highland Park, NJ)**

2014 Award Winner:

•**Optimal Solutions, Inc.**, was founded by **Vijay Hanagandi**, Ph.D., CEO. The company was also NJSBDC's 2013 Technology Success Award Winner (*as noted below*). Since 2013, major strides have been accomplished. The firm delivers customized software applications that model, optimize and simulate industrial processes including manufacturing, supply chains, research and development projects to help companies optimize efficiencies and increase profitability. With assistance from SBDC Technology Commercialization Consultant Randy Harmon, Vijay won a \$225,000 National Science Foundation award in December 2013 for developing a "big-data" based demand forecasting application for consumer goods companies. Their customers include GE, US Air Force Research Labs, Morgan Stanley,

Merck & Co. The company (with SBDC's assistance) has submitted subsequent grant applications, including a \$2 million grant from the Department of Energy. Dr. Hanagandi says that SBDC's help has been invaluable to the company's development. NJSBDC helped the company transition from a consulting company to a more products-focused firm with greater opportunity for growth. **(Lyndhurst, NJ)**

2013 Award Winner:

•**Optimal Solutions, Inc., (OSI)** established by **Vijay Hanagandi**, Ph.D., CEO, started working with NJSBDC's Tech Consultant, Randy Harmon, on an array of grant proposals to help commercialize its products. The company delivers customized software applications that model, optimize and simulate complex industrial processes to help companies optimize efficien-

NJSBDC's Technology ...

(Continued from previous page.)

cies and increase profitability. **OSI** applied for and won a \$150,000 SBIR grant in 2012, and obtained another SBIR award for the same amount in January 2013. Then, in June, the business submitted two National Science Foundation grant proposals. The firm worked with NJSBDC on a Phase II SBIR proposal and commercialization plan for \$1 million, which they were subsequently awarded. With assistance received by NJSBDC and the Meadowlands Regional Accelerator, the company has succeeded in charting a course to become a products company while maintaining its steady consulting practice, too. Hanagandi noted that the SBDC assistance **OSI** received "has been invaluable."

NJSBDC was instrumental in getting small businesses through the application process to receive grants and get their science-technology innovations to market.

2012 Award Winner:

•**Sentinel Photonics**, led by Owner and President **Dr. Stephen So**, Ph.D., designed and developed a new class of low maintenance, high-precision chemical sensors based on laser spectroscopy, for use in wireless sensor networks. Key applications include air pollution, industrial and automotive exhaust monitoring. Joe Montemarano of the Mid Infrared Technologies for Health and the Envi-



ronment Center at Princeton University introduced Stephen So to NJSBDC consultant Randy Harmon. Harmon helped Stephen with budget questions regarding a \$150,000 grant which Sentinel Photonics received. SBDC assisted with the required 15-page technology commercialization plan for the Phase II proposal, making recommendations to strengthen **Sentinel's** plan. The proposal - submitted in late January 2012 - was approved for a \$500,000 Phase II award in August. Sentinel's Phase II project will result in the first portable carbon dioxide sensor capable of differentiating between manmade and naturally occurring emissions. In addition, NJSBDC's longtime sponsor/partner **Eisner Amper** - through its **Partner Anthony Faugno** - provided a complimentary review of Sentinel's accounting system to help ensure the company is compliant with government accounting standards under the Phase II grant award. **(Monmouth Junction, NJ)**

2011 Award Winner:

•**Brian Leuthner**, co-founder and CEO of **Edge Therapeutics Inc.**, first worked with the **NJSBDC Technology Commercialization program** in November 2008. **Edge Therapeutics** was launched in early 2009 and located at the NJIT Enterprise Development Center (EDC). The company has developed technology to produce products

that treat acute and debilitating neurological conditions. Assisted by the Lead Consultant for the **NJSBDC Tech Commercialization program**, **Edge Therapeutics** obtained a \$244,000 NIH/IRS qualifying Therapeutic Discovery Project grant in 2010. This grant coupled with a prior Edison Innovation R & D award, an NJEDA loan, and almost \$1 million in equity financing helped **Edge Therapeutics** get closer to the goal of changing the way that a brain hemorrhage is treated to improve a patient's outcome. After SBDC assistance in winning such grant award proposals and other equity financing, the company subsequently went public on NASDAQ. **(Providence, NJ)**

2010 Award Winner:

•**Next Specialty** is headed by **Dr. Namita Deo**, who was assisted by the **NJSBDC Technology Commercialization program**. As a result of the specialized counseling and training assistance Deo received with preparing proposals to compete for federal Small Business Innovation Research grants, the company received two grants totaling \$200,000. Those grants are helping to commercialize technology to develop new plant derived molecules for skin care, environmental remediation, the treatment of disease and other commercial applications. This female-owned company subsequently competed for a \$500,000 Phase II award. **(Newark, NJ)**

Fourth Cybersecurity Symposium Held at WPU

NJSBDC at WPU Collaborates with University in Holding Event

The importance of cybersecurity cannot be underestimated. Protecting against cyberattacks has become a big issue for small businesses. Several regional centers of **America's SBDC New Jersey** have sponsored educational conferences to share appropriate information with small businesses around the state as to how to guard against malware, data breach, etc.

In addition to **SBDC at William Paterson University (WPU)**, **SBDCs** located at **Kean University** and **Ramapo College of New Jersey** held similar events during the past few years.

NJSBDC at WPU launched a cybersecurity symposium a few years ago, and in partnership with WPU held its *Fourth Annual Cybersecurity Symposium* on April 6 on campus in Wayne, N.J. It was very well attended and the interest level was very high among businesses of all sizes. Verizon and IBM speakers explained to business owners and managers what they should know in order to stay current concerning the major trends and issues with cybersecurity. This type of learning leads to putting systems into place that protect against cybersecurity threats to business operations.

"Our Center appreciated the opportunity to work with our University in sponsoring such a high level symposium," said **Kate Muldoon**, regional center director of the NJSBDC at William Paterson University. "We are assisting small business owners to learn about



Attendees of NJSBDC at William Paterson University's Cyber Security Symposium listen attentively to expert presenters on the subject.

the strategies necessary to provide maximum protections against external technology threats."

Verizon Enterprise Solution's Director of Cyber Security Services, **Steve Lutinski**, discussed "*The Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report (DBIR)*" and pro-

vided insights about primary data issues facing businesses. An emphasis made at the conference focused on how big data analytics and cybersecurity are intertwined and the importance of business leaders, managers understanding how these issues interrelate.

Building a Strong System To Fight Cybercriminals

Seminar by NJSBDC At Rutgers-Newark

The **NJSBDC at Rutgers-Newark** sponsored a business seminar on Cybersecurity issues on April 19. The two-hour session was held at the Center's regional office on James Street in Newark, NJ. The training event focused on helping business owners to understand the fundamentals of executing a continuous and consistent cybersecurity system and action plan. The learning session showed individual small business owners and managers how to prevent cybercriminals from attacking business information and systems. The session also provided tips on what business employees need to know when accessing and dealing with a company's technology platforms.

Raritan Valley SBDC Collaborates With College's Career Training Facility

Program Teaches Entrepreneurship & Business Ownership Skills

Raritan Valley Community College's (RVCC) Workforce Training Center is located at the Branchburg, NJ, campus in a 47,000-square-foot building.

The recently opened Training Center was designed in partnership with local industries to enhance career training programs, placing them under one roof, to better meet the community's economic and employment needs. One of the 12 SBDC regional offices is also headquartered at the same location as the RVCC Training Center facility. Some of the career training programs include Automotive Technology, Advanced Manufacturing Technology (metal works fabrication), Cosmetology, Esthetics (skincare), Environmental Control Technology, and Commercial Energy Management. The training programs provide professional certifications for individuals starting or transitioning to these careers.

The state Higher Education Facilities Trust Fund invested \$8 million and New Jersey's Chapter 12 Community College Building Fund invested an additional \$3.5 million to make this Training Center at Raritan Valley Community College a reality. The state pays half of the cost of repaying the debt service and Somerset and Hunterdon counties pay the remaining 50 percent.

"Establishing the Training Center was a daunting and challenging process, but a rewarding one," said Jack Belin, vice president for strate-



RVCC Training Center in collaboration with the regional NJSBDC Raritan Valley teaches participants a host of essential, job-oriented skills.

gic programs and development, at Raritan Valley Community College. "We believe these career training opportunities will make a real difference, not only in people's lives but also in the community's economic health. We're also glad that the regional NJSBDC is co-located at the same facility as the Training Center to provide the necessary instruction for those who may choose to become entrepreneurs and small business owners."

The importance of such workforce training programs to future jobs and opportunities cannot be underestimated. For instance, the Automotive Technician's skills are important to innovations happening every day in this area with self-driving cars, electrics, hybrids, etc. *US News & World Report* ranked Automotive Technicians as one of

the "100 Best Jobs in America." RVCC's program not only teaches the skills but also local job placement assistance is available.

The Advanced Manufacturing Technology program offers hands-on training and industry-backed credentialing to help individuals master the machine basics and advanced skills required in this growing market. It allows program participants to pursue industry specialties that include industry-backed credentials in manual mill operator, engine lathe operator, manual machinist, and computer numerical controls (CNC) operator.

The College's Training Center provides educational opportunities on today's cutting-edge heating and refrigeration industry. Since homeowners strive for lower heating and cooling bills, this ca-

reer area offers immense opportunities. The Department of Labor forecasts that there will be an explosion of cost-effective HVAC Systems for homes and businesses. The DOL notes that the need will result in more than 90,000 new HVAC Technician jobs by 2020.

RVCC's Cosmetology curriculum was formulated in partnership with local employers that will help enable individuals wanting to become cosmetologists to prepare for the NJ state board exam. The curriculum also allows for a 100-hour practicum/internship and offers advanced training certifications and seminars. Participants are also provided job shadowing opportunities in local salons.

The New Jersey Small Business Development Center at Raritan Valley Community College (*Hunterdon and Somerset counties*) is planning to further collaborate with those individuals going through RVCC Training Center's career building programs by also providing one-on-one counseling and training for those individuals who choose to start a business. The Center provides counseling on business planning, accounting and QuickBooks, E-business, sales and marketing, procurement, and innumerable business topics essential to be successful at starting and/or growing a business.

"SBDC looks forward to working with these individuals going through career certificate programs," said Bill Harnden, SBDC regional director. "Entrepreneurship is always another option and that's where our expertise and assistance enter the picture."

While the 12 centers serve existing and established small businesses at all stages of growth in the state's 21 counties, about 40 per-

cent of the SBDC network's client portfolio focuses on pre-venture and small business start-ups.

"When I recently visited with Jacki Belin and Bill Harnden during one of NJSBDC network Headquarters annual center/host institution site visits, I was able to tour the entire Training Center building and see the different programs up close," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC network's chief operating officer and associate state director. "It was quite impressive and I immediately saw how our SBDC regional office could provide technical assistance for those enrolled in career certification programs

and vouching to start a business."

"By being hosted at higher education institutions across the state, our NJSBDC program has some amazing collaborations among higher education academicians, MBA and undergraduate students, and our NJSBDC clients who may need special studies," said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC network chief executive officer and state director. "This is just another example of another productive educational partnership."

Ten of the 12 SBDC regional offices are located at universities and four-year colleges, while two are located at community colleges.

Steve Bulger Named SBA's Region II Administrator

Steve Bulger was appointed U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Regional Administrator of Region II in early January 2018. In that capacity he will be in charge of managing and overseeing an array of SBA programs (lending, procurement, and economic development initiatives) in five districts and six branch offices located in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The agencies in this region total 64 employees and assist approximately 3 million small businesses that employ 6 million workers. There are 10 SBA regions covering the United States and the American territories.

Bulger, a resident of New York State, has a strong background in economic development, sales and marketing, and government relations. He spent 30 years in the private sector prior to his government service.

"I am honored to join SBA's team of talented individuals who are committed to the development of

small business across New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the USVI," said Bulger. "I look forward to leveraging SBA's tools and programs to help create more opportunities for small businesses to succeed, create jobs, and improve access to capital in order to drive local and national economic growth."

"We first met Steve at a January SBA-NJSBDC sponsored Lenders Luncheon event," said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC network chief executive officer and state director. "We look forward to working with Steve on small business initiatives in New Jersey."

"Steve has a strong background in government relations," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC chief operating officer and associate state director. "We are glad to engage with him on these important areas as well."



STEVE BULGER

NJSBDC Looks Forward to Collaborating with New NJEDA Chief and NJBAC Exec Dir to Enhance Entrepreneurship

Welcome to Tim Sullivan of NJEDA and Melanie Willoughby of NJBAC

The Senior Leadership Team of America's SBDC New Jersey welcomes Tim Sullivan as the new chief executive officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) and Melanie Willoughby as the new executive director of NJBAC.

"Since we have the broadest infrastructure across New Jersey in delivering technical assistance for small businesses and entrepre-

**"Economic development is not a one-note symphony of lavish tax breaks, but a multi-faceted effort to leverage everything we have to offer."
— Gov. Phil Murphy**

neurs, we look forward to collaborating with NJEDA and NJBAC in a proactive way," said Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer and state director of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) network.

"Our counterparts in Connecticut, who oversee Connecticut's SBDC network, know of the good reputation that Tim Sullivan has as prior Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development," said Deborah Smarth, chief operating officer and associate state director of the NJSBDC network. "We look forward to our future collaborations."

Willoughby, who now heads the New Jersey Business Action

Center (NJBAC) formerly served as a lobbyist and chief of government affairs at the New Jersey Business and Industry Association (NJBIA). She was president of the New Jersey Retail Merchants Association, also.

"We look forward to working closely with Melanie, who has been a collaborator with NJSBDC in her prior professional roles," observed Smarth.

"Melanie knows the important business issues and we welcome her to this position as a real supporter of the small business sector."

During 2015-16, the national network of SBDCs in 50 states and the American territories provided one-on-one counseling, training, and additional technical assistance to more than 953,000 small businesses at all stages of growth and individuals starting new businesses.

The national network of SBDCs provided 1.24 million total hours of consulting services. The program regularly produces a high return on investment. According to national association statistics, in 2015-16, for clients receiving five-plus hours of counseling, the following national results were attained:

For every dollar invested \$2.13 was returned in federal revenue, \$2.73 was returned in state revenues, and \$43.50 was returned in new capital; small businesses assisted under this program had an



TIM SULLIVAN



MELANIE WILLOUGHBY

average 14.8% rate of job growth as compared to the national average of 1.8% for businesses not receiving SBDC assistance; \$5.16 billion was facilitated in financing for clients; 96,095 new jobs were created; and almost 20,000 new businesses were started.

TheBottomLine

An Observation that Resonates! Do the Right Thing Again

By Deborah K. Smarth

At a March 18, 2015, Assembly Budget Committee hearing, former Chairman of the Assembly Budget Committee, **Assemblyman Gary Schaer**, had made a remarkable observation. Then Chairman Schaer seemed to be amazed that despite NJSBDC's "BIG" impact and a wealth of client success stories, the state's investment remains stable only. So, he rightfully observed and questioned "Why?" How can an organization with this kind of impact not receive a restored state funding increase? Schaer's poignant way of raising that question actually stirred some thinking. That year, the final state budget restored increased funding from \$250,000 to \$500,000!

Schaer's observations still resonate. We're hoping that the Budget Committee remembers his insights when it starts formulating this year's budget under **Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin's** leadership.

It is the year when the Legislature and the **Murphy Administration** should restore funding to where it was a decade ago before former Gov. Jon Corzine reduced NJSBDC's \$1 million allocation to \$250,000 where it stood during the Christie administration until June 2015, when the Legislature allocated \$500,000. Following the lead of the Legislature, Christie finally proposed \$500,000 in 2017. Murphy's proposed budget maintains NJSBDC's allocation at that level.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman **Sen. Paul Sarlo**, a longtime advocate of America's SBDC New Jersey, and **Assemblyman Schaer**, led the charge to restore state funding for this program in 2015. Other Budget Committee members from both parties joined like **Assemblymen Gordon Johnson, Raj Mukherji**, Budget Committee Vice-Chairman **John Burzichelli**, **Benjie Wimberly**, **Troy Singleton** (now senator), **Declan O'Scanlon** (now senator), **John DiMaio**, **Anthony**

Bucco, Jr., Budget Committee Vice-Chairman **Sen. Brian Stack**, Sens. **Linda Greenstein, Sandra Cunningham, Anthony Bucco, Steve Oroho, Sam Thompson**, etc. Half of the Legislature has signed on as sponsors/co-sponsors of a budget resolution calling for a restored increase over the years.

Why should New Jersey's investment pale in terms of other states' investments in SBDC? With similar populations, North Carolina invests \$2 million and Georgia invests \$3 million. Connecticut, with a population less than half of New Jersey's population, invests \$1.3 million. A recent 2017 survey of state SBDCs indicates that the average state investment nationally in SBDC programs is \$1.252 million. Can't New Jersey's Legislature and Governor, restore state funding, to catch up to other states' investments?

If business expansion, new business start-ups, jobs, and economic growth are such high priorities, then restoring \$1 million for NJSBDC should be easy. Small business owners pay their fair share of taxes, so the services they receive back through this program are pre-paid by them. If small business owners had to pay accounting and marketing firms for these types of services, it would be cost prohibitive! The request for a restored increase isn't asking for new, additional tax dollars. Just reallocate existing budgetary dollars to a high return on investment (ROI) program. For every \$1 dollar invested, more than \$2 dollars is returned. A recent study shows our network's cost per created and retained job is far less (\$1,150/\$1,204) than the past, average cost associated with jobs created and retained under the state's business grant incentives program aimed at larger companies.

Our thousands of small business clients depend on the Legislature's leadership in this budget cycle. This year is the year to **DO THE RIGHT THING, AGAIN.**



Deb Smarth

Deborah K. Smarth is Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Network

From the Centers ...



The NJSBDC at The College of New Jersey, Ewing, NJ, held an interactive Spanish-language workshop (above) for Hispanic small businesses on how to build a website last February. A few weeks later it held a session called “Sea un Gerente Eficiente” – Be an Efficient Manager. No one is left behind in Mercer County.



The NJSBDC at Stockton University, Hammonton Campus, last month held a networking event attended by area business people, SBDC clients and professors. Photo above shows Carol Waties, regional director, and Pamela Fields, adjunct professor of business. The center also held a seminar on web design and development conducted by NopeWorks 'N Camden, a non-profit that helps with those projects.



NJSBDC of Brookdale Community College, serving Monmouth and Ocean counties, held a “Meet the Lenders” event (right) for its small business clients. A few dozen people attended to learn about the services. Above: Michael Forcella, manager of business engagement, CPE, Jackeline Mejias-Fuertes, regional director, NJSBDC at Brookdale, and Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling.



Brenda's Letter



Reaching Expectations And Going Beyond



Expectations were more than met in 2017 with our NJSBDC network helping clients create and save more than 14,500 jobs and helping them access \$126.8 million in equity and loan financing. Beyond those strides, 630 of our SBDC clients started new businesses. Sixty percent of all of our clients in all 21 counties were established and existing businesses in all stages of growth. Our 12 centers, with their expert business practitioners, delivered more than 21,000 service hours – including one-on-one management consulting and training in every business topic imaginable. We have a large footprint in counseling and training thousands of small business owners each year.

So, NJSBDC is on the move and we expect to blaze a trail, achieving another high impact year in 2018. With the Legislature's funding support and the Governor's commitment to small business, we expect to have the proper level of resources so we can best match the federal funding that comes back to New Jersey on the basis of population. Our congressional delegation has supported annual congressional appropriations for the program that is then channeled to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to be allocated to SBDCs nationally. That enables us to provide the comprehensive assistance small businesses deserve. We deliver services for the taxes these small business owners pay to our state. They deserve even more!

Our 12 centers and the network's specialty programs such as International Trade, Procurement, Technology Commercialization, E-Business, and Sustainability are assisting clients throughout the year to increase their sales and attain fiscal health and success. The services of our network empower our small business clients to develop and grow in domestic and international markets as well as obtain federal, state and commercial procurement contracts. We also provide very specialized services for firms and start-ups in the science-technology sectors to help them commercialize their technology and products in various fields.

We thank our funding partners and collaborators including **PSEG, Bank of America, PNC Bank, Eisner Amper LLC, City National Bank, Peapack-Gladstone Bank, NJIT, UPS** and all of our educational host institutions that provide brick and mortar and support for our small business assistance services in their regions.

This program, part of the national America's SBDC, has amazing opportunities as we move ahead. We look forward to working with all of you to maximize resources for the small businesses and entrepreneurs around the State.

Brenda B. Hopper is the Chief Executive Officer and State Director of America's Small Business Development Centers — New Jersey Network.



IN THE NEWS



• In its April 2018 magazine issue, *New Jersey Business* published an article about NJSBDC's **New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry** for businesses that implement sustainable practices. NJSBDC's program recognizes sustainable businesses and promotes sustainable practices that realize business cost savings and measurable environmental benefits. **Ed Kurocka**, senior consultant and manager of NJSBDC's Sustainability program, was quoted in the article. **Kurocka** stated that, "The registry is one of two components that NJSBDC is using to entice, inform, educate and help small-and-medium-sized businesses either start or expand sustainable practices."

• *New Jersey Business* magazine's March 2018 issue published an article by Editor-in-Chief **Antho-**

ny Birritteri titled "Assistance from the Board." The article underscores the difference between boards of directors and advisors and how they can assist a business. **Al Izzi**, a former chief financial officer at a Fortune 500 company, who now oversees operations at New Jersey City University's regional SBDC office, was quoted in the article. **Izzi** stated, "You want to pick a team that will supplement what your level of experience and education is. . . For example, if you are weak in finances or marketing, you want someone who could help you in those areas."

• On March 20, *New Jersey Business* electronic issue published information about **#NJSBDC DAY** and **Governor Phil Murphy's** Proclamation commemorating March 21 as NJSBDC DAY. The national

event was recognized with small business social media rallies and events planned around the state. It was part of a national America's #SBDCDay where SBDCs around the country joined in celebrating the success stories of their clients.

• An article by correspondent **Erica Lamberg** about **Tim Smeltz**, small business client of NJSBDC at Raritan Valley Community College, appeared on *MyCentralJersey.com* on February 7. **Smeltz** was an NJ-SBDC success award winner at its Annual Business Growth Awards Luncheon in December 2017. **Smeltz** owns two businesses, Great American Sealcoating, and Christmas Décor. He was a chef, who traveled to New York City for 29 years, but then decided to go into business with the assistance of the NJSBDC program.

SBDC Day on NJTV

NJTV, New Jersey Public Media, provided coverage of Small Business Development Centers Day – #SBDCDAY – on March 21 by interviewing **Tendai Ndoro, Ph.D.**, of NJSBDC at Rutgers-Newark. The national day committed to client success stories and more learning opportunities were fully explained during the segment dedicated to this news report.



Passaic County Freeholder Terry Duffy and the Board of Chosen Freeholders recognized Kate Muldoon as "Passaic County Irish-woman of the Year" on the occasion of St. Patrick's Day. Muldoon was cited for her "hard word, dedication, exemplary service and many achievements." Photo shows Muldoon holding certificate with members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

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