

Southeastern MA Regional SBDC Newsletter

Contributing to the Economic & Entrepreneurial Growth in Massachusetts Since 1980

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SUCCESS STORY

Nancy Duncan came to the UMass SBDC in October of 2002 seeking some assistance to start a new business. She wanted to sell her delicious cookies.

After some further discussion it was discovered that she had spent the last decade as an audiologist and had a master's degree in the field. Cliff Robbins, the SBDC counselor, showed her how to draft a business plan to sell her cookies. Nancy returned a few weeks later with the first draft of her business plan. Cliff and Nancy reviewed and critiqued it. But Cliff asked her why she didn't want to start her own business helping people hear better.

Three months later Nancy came in with a draft of a business plan; but this time, it was aimed at opening a new hearing healthcare center in Fall River.

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The Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free and confidential one-on-one management counseling to the small business community in Southeastern Massachusetts in the counties of Bristol, Barnstable, Dukes, Nantucket, Plymouth and part of Norfolk.

SBDC assistance is tailored to the needs of individual clients. Our mission is to support the future success of your business.

Management Counseling Services include, but are not limited to:

- ✍ Start-up Businesses
- ✍ Business Plan Development
- ✍ Financial Plan Development
- ✍ Marketing & Sales Strategies
- ✍ Cash Flow Analysis
- ✍ Organizational & Personnel Issues
- ✍ Government Procurement Assistance
- ✍ Minority Business Assistance
- ✍ International Trade Assistance

Training

The MSBDC conducts low or no-cost seminars, workshops, courses and conferences addressing a wide range of concerns for both start-up and existing businesses.

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SUCCESS STORY (continued):

In September of 2003 Nancy opened for business. She borrowed some money on her home equity line, purchased the necessary equipment, rented office space in a commercial building with good accessibility and visibility and she was off and running. More importantly, Nancy understands that the most basic purpose of any business is to create a customer. Although she is professionally trained in hearing care, she is a born marketer. She joined the Chamber of Commerce and BNI and began networking. She held a seminar at a local restaurant and got great attendance because she offered a free lunch! She called on local physicians and asked for patient referrals.

FAST FORWARD...

Nancy recently came in to the SBDC office to review her 2004 financial statements. She had made a healthy profit, cash flow was good, and the balance sheet was even stronger. That's excellent for her first full year in business. And, she just opened a second center in Seekonk. Nancy has high goals for 2005. Cliff bets that she achieves them!

SBDC SPOTLIGHT

Clifford Robbins joined the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network as a senior management counselor in January 2002. He is a management professional and educator with functional experience in the fields of marketing, sales, strategic planning and e-commerce.

Prior to joining the MSBDC, Cliff worked for the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth as a professional lecturer and industry liaison teaching the principles of marketing, marketing research, sales management, strategic management, entrepreneurship, and organizational behavior. He was also a member of the Management Department's advisory board of directors.

Cliff was also managing partner at the Consulting Resource Group, a marketing research and behavior development firm assisting growth-oriented businesses with their strategic business planning and organizing. He was executive vice president of The Foxon Company and president/CEO of City Hall Electrical Distributors where under his leadership annual sales increased from less than \$1 million to over \$20 million and the company grew to be the 120th largest distributor in the USA.

Cliff received an MBA from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, a BS/BA from Eastern Nazarene College and a BS in electrical engineering from Northeastern University. He has written numerous articles on strategy and management development for professional and academic journals. He is a member of the Business Development Committee/Cape Cod Technology Council, the National Marketing Association and the Executive Circle.

FAQ's

Almost everyday someone calls SBDC to ask a basic question about starting a new business or running an existing business. We would like to use this column to provide answers to the most frequently asked questions. We'll start with **"Where do I get a small business grant so that I can start my own business?"**

Unfortunately, for most companies in Massachusetts there are no small business grants. That is, there are no grants available for start up costs, operating or other typical small business expenses for companies which are not "non-profit" or charitable organizations. Most grants are given by foundations or government agencies to provide money for charitable or social purposes and they are typically only given to organizations which have specific "non-profit" status [typically 501 (c) (3)]. This automatically excludes the majority of businesses which are operated for a profit, regardless of race or gender.

However, there are two exceptions for specific grants for which a small business could be eligible. The first is called an SBIR or Small Business Innovative Research Grant. To qualify for this type of grant a small business needs to have a unique technology which an agency of the government has an interest in developing through advanced research. This program requires a company to have qualified academic researchers and industry experts on its staff. Additional information on SBIR's can be found at <http://www.sba.gov/sbir>. The second type of grant is a Workforce Training Grant. This grant is available to existing small businesses that need to train their workforce to better perform their jobs. It is a fifty-fifty match between funds that the company puts up and funds that are available from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Additional information on Workforce Training Grants can be found at <http://www.detma.org/WorkforceHome.htm>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SBDC & SEED FREE ENTREPRENEURIAL WORKSHOPS:

SESSION I – LEARN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF PLANNING, PREPARING FOR & FINANCING YOUR BUSINESS

SESSION II – LEARN TO UNDERSTAND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & HOW THEY HELP TO DETERMINE THE HEALTH OF YOUR BUSINESS

8:30 am – 12:00 pm.

2005 Dates:

April 12th & 19th – Sandwich, Ma

May 18th & 25th – Foxboro, Ma

June 14th & 21st – Somerset, Ma

For reservations & directions contact Kathi Torres @

SEED 508-822-1020

FREE SBA TRAININGS:

OVERVIEW OF SBA PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Dates 2005:

March 29, April 26, May 31, June 28, July 26, August 30,

September 27, October 25, November 29, December 13

U.S. Small Business Administration in Boston

Reservations contact Anna Outerbridge 617-565-8510

LOW COST TRAININGS:

SBDC & FALMOUTH CHAMBER WINTER EDUCATIONAL SERIES

March 23, 2005 – **SALES & MARKETING INTEGRATION**

March 30, 2005 – **TECHNOLOGY & USING IT MORE EFFECTIVELY**

April 6, 2005 – **BRANDING & BRAND IDENTITY**

6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Falmouth Holiday Inn

\$29 for members/\$39 for nonmembers per session

Reservations please call 508-548-8500

EXPORTING 101

April 13, 2005 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. UMASS Dartmouth

\$20 per person (breakfast & materials included)

Reservations please call MA Export Center 508-999-1388

SBDC “WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER” FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS & MANAGERS (KEYS TO MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE)

April 25, 2005 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Bristol Community College

\$35 per person (includes continental breakfast).

Reservations please call Rose Paquette @ 508-678-2811 x2165

Many of these training programs are co-sponsored with local chambers of commerce, colleges and universities, community development organizations, banks and trade associations.

Staff Members

Melinda L. Ailes

Senior Management Counselor

Clifford Robbins

Senior Management Counselor

Daniel Lilly, Jr.

Procurement Specialist

Tammi A. Jacobsen

Client Service Coordinator

The SBDC office in Fall River is easily accessible from Routes 195, 24 or 6. Facilities are handicapped accessible.

To better serve the Massachusetts small business community, the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional SBDC has outreach sites in conjunction with chambers of commerce and economic development entities.

Attleboro Chamber	North Attleboro Chamber
Falmouth Chamber	Yarmouth Chamber
Plymouth Chamber	Tri Town Chamber
Cape Cod Chamber	Metro South Chamber
Fall River Chamber	N.B. Economic Develop. Council

For general information, training information or to make an appointment, please contact Tammi A. Jacobsen at extension 104.

“The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network is a partnership program with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Massachusetts Department of Business and Technology under cooperative agreement 5-603001-Z-0022-25 through the University of Massachusetts Amherst. SBDCs are a program supported by the U. S. Small Business Administration and extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. SBA cannot endorse any products, opinions or services of any external parties or activities. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made, if requested at least two weeks in advance. For further information, contact the SBDC office at (508) 673-9783.”



