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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Amy Keth of the Clarion University SBDC Awarded 2016 Pennsylvania State Star

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. – The [Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers](#) (SBDC) are pleased to announce Amy Keth, business consultant with the Clarion University SBDC, has been awarded the 2016 State Star for Pennsylvania. Keth was honored during the America’s SBDC Annual Conference in Orlando this September.

SBDC Locations

Bucknell University
Clarion University
Duquesne University
Gannon University
Indiana University
of Pennsylvania
Kutztown University
of Pennsylvania
Lehigh University
Lock Haven University
Penn State University
Saint Francis University
Saint Vincent College
Shippensburg University
Temple University
University of Pittsburgh
University of Scranton
The Wharton School,
University of Pennsylvania
Widener University
Wilkes University



“Amy Keth has been an exemplary member of the SBDC team at Clarion University for more than 12 years. She has demonstrated a consistently strong commitment to assisting entrepreneurs and small businesses in the region,” said Pennsylvania SBDC State Director Christian Conroy. “She has fostered the development of strong collaborative relationships with a range of stakeholder groups including lenders, economic development professionals, and Clarion University personnel and students,” added Conroy.

“She consistently and effectively maintains a large client case load that contributes to the center’s consulting hours, capital formation, and milestone metrics performance,” said Clarion University SBDC Interim Director Cindy Nellis. “Amy continually works to build solid relationships with clients through her work, which results in high customer satisfaction ratings and client support letter response,” added Nellis.

Amy has also established and maintained many relationships with resource partners and stakeholders in the many counties she has served. Through her work she has connected many clients with organizations such as the county economic development organizations, local development districts, recreational and tourism organizations such as the PA Wilds, financial institutions, legislators, and the many experts and business organizations representing the energy industry.

Amy has coordinated a number of small business Grand Openings for her clients and participated in many business and community events that have resulted in excellent visibility for the center. Over the past two years, Amy has worked with a number of clients participating in the *Get On the Trail* Business Plan Competition focusing on building businesses around the Erie to Pittsburgh bike trail and area tourism attractions. Amy’s clients have been among the top three winners in the competition each year. Her assistance has been and continues to be publicly acknowledged and promoted by her clients.

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During her time at the Clarion University SBDC, Amy earned her MBA. Her school work included a report on the Marcellus Shale industry, which has been posted to the SBDC's knowledgebase blog and shared with many clients, partners and stakeholders. In addition, Amy developed the Marcellus Shale Resource Guide to help both new and existing entrepreneurs pursuing work in this industry. Not only was this guide extremely valuable to the many clients assisted by the Clarion University SBDC, but it is now a resource that is used in the Pennsylvania SBDC statewide network. Amy received the Pennsylvania SBDC Initiative Award in November 2014 for her work on this guide.

Amy became a member of the Marcellus Task Force Committee due to her focused work in this emerging industry. Over the last few years, Amy has sought out events and professional development opportunities to stay abreast of the updates and changes in the industry as well as to connect to key partners and stakeholders. Through her work, she has guided the center in their work to best serve businesses working or pursuing work in this industry and its supply chain.

Amy has spearheaded the development of the "Resource Guide for Starting a Business." This guide was developed to easily provide information needed by new entrepreneurs with detailed information to answer most questions asked by those looking to start a business. Also, she and a Clarion University student worked together to update and enhance the curriculum taught at the center's five monthly First Step seminars.

Amy has always stepped forward when it comes to bringing new training to the region. After receiving training on the Affordable Care Act, Amy was the first consultant to coordinate training in her designated counties. She secured speakers and co-sponsors for a seminar that attracted almost 100 people. This seminar received the highest attendance of any SBDC seminar offered by the center.

In response to the Jobs 1st funding, Amy actively participated in the development of a financial management training series. This two day seminar was offered in three locations through the North Central region and together had an attendance of almost 150 people. The response to this series came primarily from existing business owners and their key management personnel assisting the Clarion University SBDC with outreach and promotion to many new potential clients.

Every year, one top performer from each state within the national network of SBDCs is recognized for his or her contributions to his or her SBDC program. Each top performer is awarded the "State Star" designation for his or her state at America's SBDC Annual Conference. Employees are chosen for their exemplary performance, making a significant contribution to their state or regional SBDC program, and for showing a strong commitment to small business.

About Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)

The Pennsylvania SBDC network is the only statewide, nationally accredited program that provides high quality one-on-one consulting, training and information resources to empower new and existing businesses. SBDC consultants work with entrepreneurs in confidential, individualized sessions to help them with a range of business issues including testing a new business proposition, shaping a business plan, investigating funding opportunities, and much more. The SBDC program is a public/private partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and 18 universities and colleges across the Commonwealth. For more information on the Pennsylvania SBDC services and impact, please visit www.pasbdc.org.