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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**With utmost reverence, the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) network salutes those who served the USA this Veterans Day.**

Millions of brave Americans have continued to make a difference as small-business owners: Nearly 1.8 million veteran entrepreneurs generate approximately \$1 trillion annually and employ nearly 4 million people across the nation, according to the Small Business Administration (SBA).

Veteran-owned businesses comprise a significant percentage of the clients Pennsylvania SBDC helps to start, grow, and prosper. For service year 2019, the PASBDC provided 5,773 client hours to 813 veteran clients – nearly 15 percent of its client base – resulting in 65 business starts, nearly 5,800 jobs created, and \$6.5 million in revenue growth.

We celebrate the resilience and strength of the #VetBiz community by hosting free events, training and resources. Veteran entrepreneurs looking to start, grow, or buy a business are invited to attend our PASBDC free virtual entrepreneurship programs. Existing business can explore options to grow through government contracting, improved marketing, certifications, and more.

“The SBDC filled the gap between a dream and the reality of business ownership,” said Carlos De Osambela, a Navy veteran of five overseas deployments who opened Deo’s Kitchen in Selinsgrove, Snyder County. Carlos and wife Wendy wanted to bring Latin cuisine to the community, which sorely lacked those types of dishes, but needed guidance to make it happen.

Enter the Bucknell University Small Business Development Center, which aided the couple in their business plan and financial projections. In addition, the Bucknell SBDC advised them on their social media presence and referred them to legal assistance.

Other success stories among veteran-owned businesses include:

**PASBDC Locations**

Bucknell University  
Clarion University  
Duquesne University  
Gannon University  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania  
Lehigh University  
Penn State  
Saint Francis University  
Saint Vincent College  
Shippensburg University  
Temple University  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Scranton  
Widener University  
Wilkes University

- Robin Gilmore Media Creations Professionals, led by Air Force Veteran G. Robin Gilmore, a client of the Kutztown University SBDC.
- Clothing and accessories store Retrah, founded by Connie Harter who served as an RN for the US Navy during the Persian Gulf War, and Attain Consulting, started by James Kazakavage, a former operations specialist for the U.S. Navy, both clients of the Bucknell University SBDC.
- Shared Submissions, led by Army veteran Timothy Kim, a client of the University of Pittsburgh SBDC.
- UpClose-RV, founded by Army veterans Michael and Kim Lockwood, clients of the Shippensburg University SBDC.
- Zero Eyes, a company using artificial intelligence to help detect threats and save lives, whose co-founders include five former Navy SEALs, clients of the Temple University SBDC.

The PASBDC doesn't just consult with veterans, they also employ them, including PA Army National Guard and U.S. Air Force Reserves veteran Gordon Manker, Management Consultant at the University of Pittsburgh SBDC, and Winifred McGee, who rose to the rank of captain during her seven-year stint with the U.S. Air Force, a Business Consultant at the University of Scranton SBDC

Read about our PASBDC clients/consultants and others of America's SBDC who have served our county at [americassbdc.org/veterans/serving-veterans/](http://americassbdc.org/veterans/serving-veterans/).

***About the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Center (SBDC)***

*The Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) supports the economic development of Pennsylvania by providing entrepreneurs and small businesses with individual consultations, comprehensive education, and information necessary to help their businesses start, grow, and prosper. SBDCs deliver consulting services and educational programs through a network of 16 locations across Pennsylvania SBDC. Consultants work with entrepreneurs in confidential, one-to-one sessions to help them with issues including new business development, shaping a business plan, investigating funding opportunities, and much more. SBDCs also address concerns about navigating and recovering during the COVID-19 crisis. Additional services*

*include helping with disaster loan applications, long-term planning, economic loss estimations, and business preparedness. For more information on the Pennsylvania SBDC services and impact, please visit [www.pasbdc.org](http://www.pasbdc.org).*

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