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Small Business Development Centers

Helping businesses start, grow, and prosper.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers Receives National Accreditation *Program Recognized for Its Impact and High Quality Services*

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. - The Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) have been awarded full accreditation from the Association of Small Business Development Centers, the national accrediting body for Small Business Development Centers under contract from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Pennsylvania SBDC also received supplemental accreditation for its specialized technology services. The Pennsylvania SBDC is one of only eight SBDC programs in the country to earn this supplemental technology accreditation.

The accreditation review process, mandated by Congress, is based on the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Program developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology to assure that SBDC programs operate efficiently and effectively. Failure to achieve accreditation can result in the loss of federal funding.

A seven-member team composed of the leaders of SBDC programs in Arkansas, California, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Maine and Michigan conducted the Pennsylvania SBDC review. The team assessed several areas of the program, including leadership and organizational management, the strategic planning process, client and stakeholder focus, service delivery, and program performance. These standards ensure that the public investment in the program from the federal government, the state government, and the host institutions results in strong returns for Pennsylvania's economy.

“The review team was very impressed with the program and operation,” said Mark Petrilli, state director of the Illinois SBDC program and leader of the review. “We found a program that develops and deploys strong performance expectations, is constantly reviewing performance, and pursuing continuous improvement in all areas. The Pennsylvania SBDC is noted as a high performing program by its funding partners, clients and peers.”

The team also detailed several commendations in its report, including:

- “Strong fiscal and programmatic management and oversight,” to ensure the network is in compliance with all laws, regulations and guidelines governing the program.
- “High level of engagement with key stakeholders,” in particular state legislators.
- The extensive engagement of students and faculty.
- “Energetic, motivated, engaged and passionate” staff.
- A “multitude of strong” and “strategic partnerships that are well aligned” and compliment the SBDC’s services.
- The “structure, talent and scalability” to “play a key role in advancing the state in technology commercialization.”
- “An active, results-oriented technology initiative that is serving businesses across the state.”

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary C. Alan Walker echoed the team’s findings. “Clearly, the SBDC is held in high esteem throughout the country,” he noted. “We are pleased to have one of the most well respected SBDC networks call Pennsylvania home.”

Since its inception, the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers has provided over 2.5 million hours of consulting to more than 216,000 entrepreneurs and offered over 14,000 courses, workshops and seminars attended by 334,000 Pennsylvanians. SBDC services have helped small firms throughout the Commonwealth raise more than \$2.5 billion in start-up and expansion capital, start more than 24,000 new companies, and sell \$10 billion worth of Pennsylvania products and services throughout the world. As a result, SBDC clients have created over 120,000 new jobs and generated more than \$5.68 million in new state income tax revenue.

“As a strong advocate for Pennsylvania’s small business sector, I am pleased with the accreditation team’s findings,” states U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey. “The SBDC program provides tremendous services in all 67 counties in Pennsylvania that enables entrepreneurs and their businesses and to start, grow, and prosper.”

This is the fourth time the Pennsylvania SBDC program has been awarded accreditation. The review process occurs every four years. “We are thankful for the efforts of the review team and appreciate the opportunity this allows us to examine our capabilities,” Pennsylvania SBDC State Director Christian Conroy commented. “The recommendations we receive out of this process will enable us to better serve small businesses and continue to grow the economy of Pennsylvania.”

As the largest statewide provider of entrepreneurial services, the SBDCs play a unique and vital role in the Commonwealth's economic development initiatives as the

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only organization that, in utilizing the expertise and resources of 18 of the best colleges and universities in the state, assists entrepreneurs in all stages of business and all industry sectors. Funding support from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the SBDC host institutions enables consulting services to be provided at no charge to the client.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers' services and impact, visit www.pasbdc.org.

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