



2022
SUCCESS
AWARDS

Program and
Annual Report



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Mission Statement

We provide **high-quality, high-impact** one-on-one counseling, resource assistance and training to **preserve** and **create** small business **jobs** and **revenue** and to facilitate **capital formation** throughout Arizona.



Dr. Steven Gonzales, Ed.d
Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges

The accomplishments of the AZSBDC Network over the past year have been remarkable. On behalf of the Maricopa Community Colleges, I am pleased to honor outstanding small businesses as well as their contributions to our local communities.

AZSBDC Network is an integral part of the Maricopa County Community College District that improves Arizona's economy by helping small businesses achieve success. The exceptional work AZSBDC Network does in economic development in Arizona serves not only Maricopa County, but also the economic prosperity of small businesses and job growth in the state.

The Arizona community colleges are collectively the largest training providers in Arizona. They play a vital role in enhancing the region's occupational strength by connecting employers with the resources and training services of our colleges and skill centers. Our Colleges are growing talent and enhancing skills and abilities that bolster the economic output of our state. AZSBDC Network maximized that talent, providing invaluable assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs, leading to job creation throughout Arizona and contributing to the state's overall economic health.

The 2022 Success Awards are the result of the extraordinary commitment to helping drive our economy forward by helping our small business community grow. The AZSBDC Network truly impacts regional and state economic development providing services, support, and opportunities for our community and Arizona's families.

We are proud to support the AZSBDC Network. Please accept my warmest congratulations to all of the Success Award Winners.

Sincerely,



Steven Gonzales, Ed.D.
Interim Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges



Darcy Renfro, Vice Chancellor - Community, Government Relations & Economic Development, Maricopa Community Colleges

Small businesses continue to be the backbone of Arizona's economy, maintaining long-term economic growth and supporting good jobs across all Arizona communities. Arizona's Community Colleges are proud to support startup and small business growth as well as our state's largest workforce providers. We are committed to building on the entrepreneurial climate that has helped launch companies like those being honored today and equipping Arizona's innovators with the tools they need to start and grow their dream businesses. I am honored to be part of AZSBDC Network and congratulate all the 2020-2022 Success Award Winners and wish them success in the years to come.

"Arizona's Community Colleges are proud to support startup and small business growth as well as our state's largest workforce providers."



Robert J. Blaney, Arizona District Director & Project Officer,
U.S. Small Business Administration

The AZSBDC Network shares the strategic objectives of the U.S. Small Business Administration and we appreciate our partnership. By providing high-quality, high-impact, one-on-one counseling, resource assistance, and training to preserve and create small business jobs and revenue, the AZSBDC Network helps the Arizona economy continue to flourish. I congratulate the small business owners being recognized this year for their hard work and great success.

"By providing high-quality, high-impact, one-on-one counseling, resource assistance, and training to preserve and create small business jobs and revenue, the AZSBDC Network helps the Arizona economy continue to flourish."





Daniel Ayala,
Interim State Director,
Arizona SBDC Network

Reasons to Celebrate - America's SBDC Arizona Network

After a two year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is my pleasure to announce the Arizona SBDC Network's 2022 Success Awards celebration.

One of the best parts of our 2022 celebrations is the expanded reach of our renewed partnerships and integrated systems approach with college host administrations throughout the network to develop high performing business leaders. As Arizona's largest, most comprehensive and accessible statewide source of assistance for small businesses, the AZSBDC Network has reaffirmed the value of college partners working in tandem to serve clients and achieve economic impact in every stage of business

development among all Arizona communities - urban, rural, and along the highways in between.

While our focus and capacity grows, I'm happy to report that for the time period January 2020 through December 2021 our clients recorded more than \$276M in capital impact, supported just under 11,000 jobs in our state, and launched 639 new businesses among the 6,000+ clients served. Within the PTAC, for the same time period clients received more than 1600 prime and subprime contracts, totalling more than \$180M dollars; attended over 40 events; worked with 452 new clients, and recorded more than 2,300 counseling hours.

Although our numbers create a positive narrative, embedded within those numbers are individual stories of client persistence and endurance during unprecedented times. These stories speak to the trust our clients placed in SBDC business counselors to navigate turbulent market conditions and endure financial catastrophe. It has been a difficult time and for the businesses who have persisted, customer demand has been challenging given the shifting labor dynamics and continued impact of COVID-19. It is these inspiring stories that we honor and hope to remain a vital part of their journey to thrive in the future.

Amid the pandemic chaos, it is important to acknowledge the AZSBDC and AZTEC Network staff who continued to successfully engage small business owners in "virtual" environments, even as our physical center locations begin to reopen. This blended approach has helped SBDC counselors to understand the new operational challenges of business owners post-pandemic and devise better strategies to adapt to the changing labor market and digital customer experience expectations. While the virtual approach has also required SBDC staff to adapt to many new technology platforms, it has significantly improved the quality

of services being delivered while continuing to provide clients a robust community of practice, ripe with expertise and valuable training assistance.

In the spirit of team pride, I want to congratulate all of our AZSBDC Network staff on their excellent customer service and pandemic resilience as they continue to provide confidential, no cost one-on-one counseling and high-quality training. As we emerge from a challenging crisis, America's SBDC Arizona Network continues to help small businesses grow and launch their business ideas, create and sustain jobs, and identify fresh market opportunities in both urban and rural communities.

As we continue to help small business owners identify new opportunities, meet challenges, and manage growth to plan for a bright and sustainable future that embraces technology and responds to changing market needs, please join us in celebrating the passion and dedication that allows Arizona's small businesses to succeed in today's dynamic economic landscape.

Congratulations to the 2020 and 2022 Success Award winners!



Daniel Ayala, *State Director*,
America's SBDC Arizona Network



ATTENTION Future Small Business Owners: Students interested in entrepreneurial programs at Maricopa Community Colleges are encouraged to apply for scholarships! Search for the Wells Fargo: Advancing Entrepreneurship scholarship via the Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation scholarships portal.

Apply Now! mccd.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com





Lisa Odle (Emcee), *Founder*,
Odle Management Group, LLC
and CEO, Odle Holdings, LLC

About Our Success Awards Emcee

Lisa Odle founded Odle Management Group, LLC on May 25, 2004. Ms. Odle is a 38-year veteran in the workforce development business and a recognized leader in the field of youth and employment training. Her notable work has been in support of the nationally recognized Job Corps Program. She has an extensive background and experience on workforce development services, employment skills training, marketing, academic and occupational training for youth, adults, and dislocated workers; contract administration, mentoring and regulatory assessments.

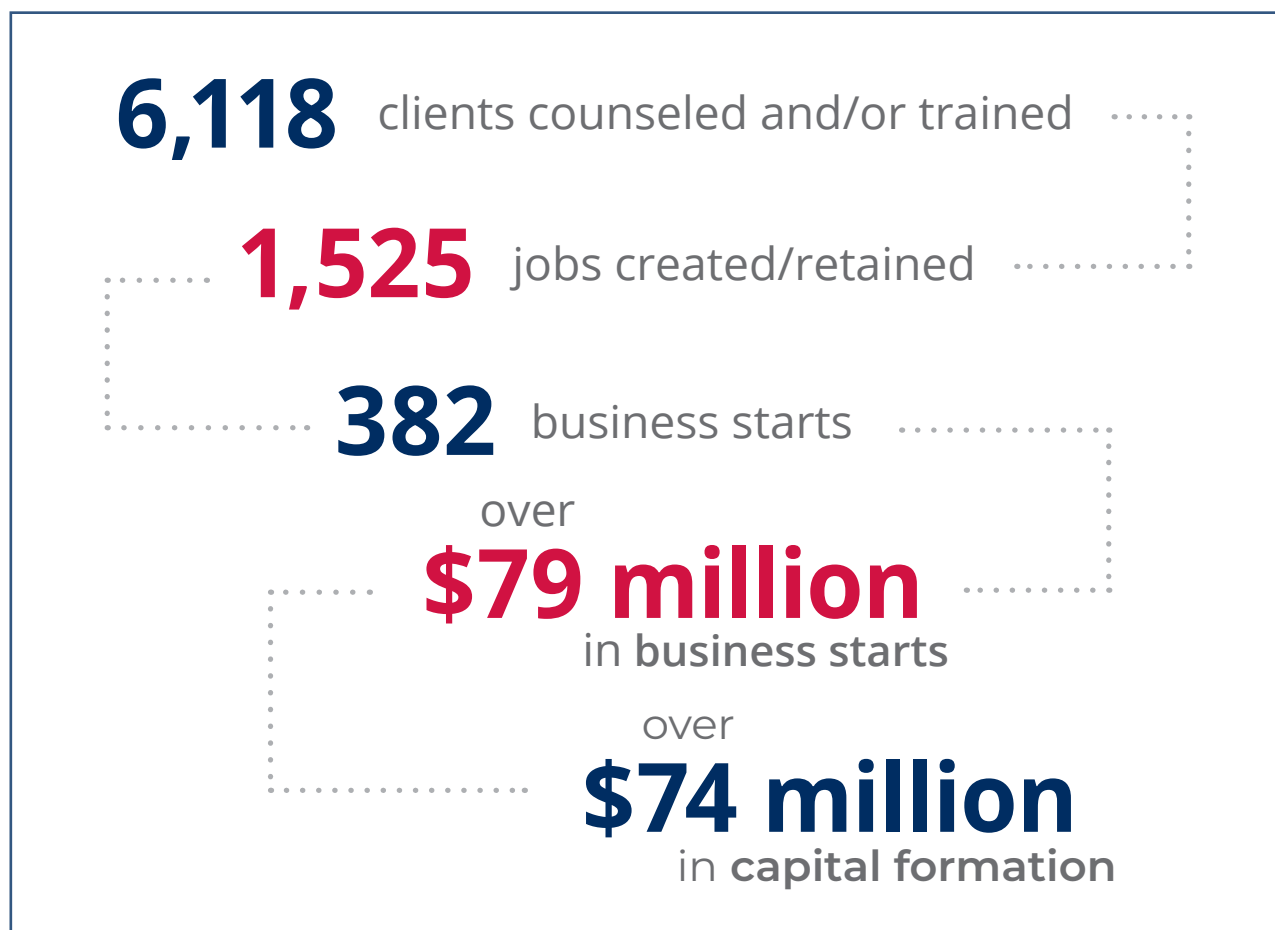
The United States Small Business Administration (SBA) has recognized her entrepreneurial accomplishments under the Small Business Development (SBA) and 8(a) Programs; and she also received numerous awards and recognition from the America's SBDC Arizona Network for her considerable business achievements.

On January 1, 2018, Odle Management Group graduated from small business to a large business, based on the Small Business Administration (SBA) size standard. Based on our operation of varied Job Corps contracts, our primary code under SBA's American Industry Classification System

(NAICS) is 611519, designated as "Operation of Trade and Technical Schools." ODLE surpassed the size standard of \$41.5M in a 3-year average (from 2015 to 2017).

2021 Facts at a Glance

“When you support a small business, you are supporting a dream.”



STRENGTHENING ARIZONA ONE BUSINESS AT A TIME.





About America's SBDC Arizona Network



We are Arizona's largest, most comprehensive and accessible statewide source of assistance for small businesses in every stage of development.

America's SBDC Arizona Network (AZSBDC) is an innovative partnership between 10 community college districts, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD). Our Network has 10 SBDC Service Centers, plus additional satellite locations and operates in partnership with four Arizona Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (AZPTAC) statewide. AZPTAC is a specialty partner program of the AZSBDC Network.

AZPTAC program helps businesses explore government contracting opportunities at the federal, state and local levels. AZPTAC provides counseling, training, certification information and other services that connect business owners to potential government contracting opportunities.

AZPTAC is linked to the national APTAC organization which connects more than 300 offices across the country. The PTAC program was authorized by Congress in 1985 to help small business compete in the government marketplace and is administered by the Defense Logistics Agency.

The AZSBDC Network has been assisting small businesses in Arizona since 1988. Our Network is an accredited member of America's SBDC, a national system which connects 62 SBDC networks and more than 1,000 SBDCs across the country. America's SBDC is celebrating 40 years of driving economic prosperity for small businesses.

"Small business, big ambitions."



AZSBDC Strategic Initiatives

The AZSBDC Network focuses on high-impact strategic initiatives to provide local businesses and entrepreneurs with the core, and advanced level financial education services, tools and resources that they need to thrive, compete and succeed.

Supporting small business formation and growth moves our economy forward and makes local communities healthier.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Agriculture
- Business Incubators
- International Trade
- Manufacturing
- Procurement
- Veterans
- Technology and Innovation
- Underserved Populations



AZSBDC has launched the Small Business Growth program to help entrepreneurs start, grow, and match their businesses with resources they need. This program is provided with the help of the Wells Fargo Advancing Entrepreneurship grant with Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation and in collaboration with Maricopa Community Colleges. The Small Business Growth program has three unique pathways to help entrepreneurs:



START a business with advising and resources.

GROW a business by preparing for financial lending with assistance from the Money Team.

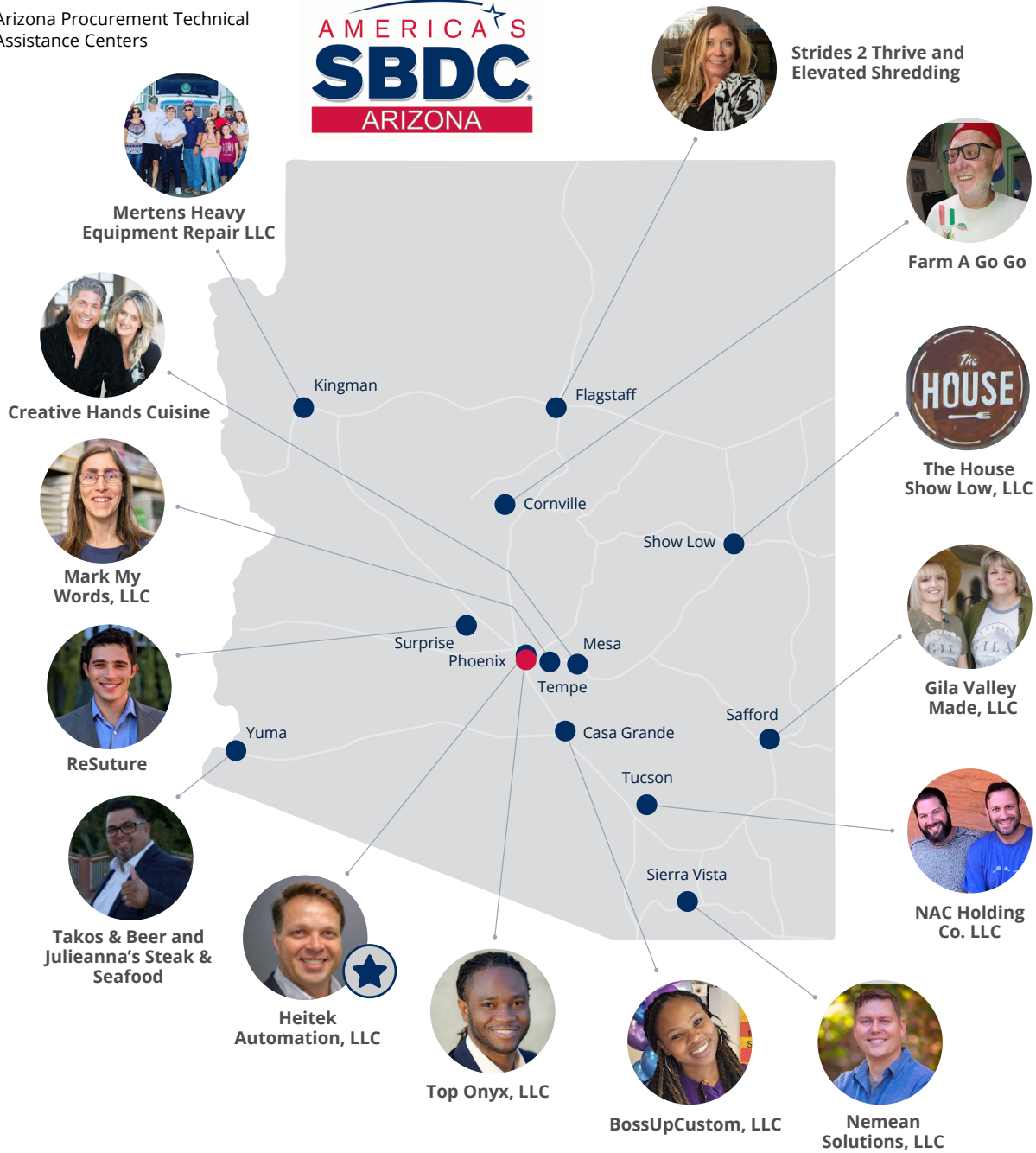
MATCH with other entrepreneurs through AERO. AERO helps small businesses turn their operational challenges into structured projects, then discover and collaborate with talented problem solvers eager to offer their expertise and build their visibility.

To learn more or to get started, visit maricopa.edu/growth.



“Winning is a team effort.”

- Small Business Development Service Centers
- Arizona Procurement Technical Assistance Centers



The AZSBDC is partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).
 SBA funding is not an endorsement of any products opinions or services.
 All SBA-funded programs are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.

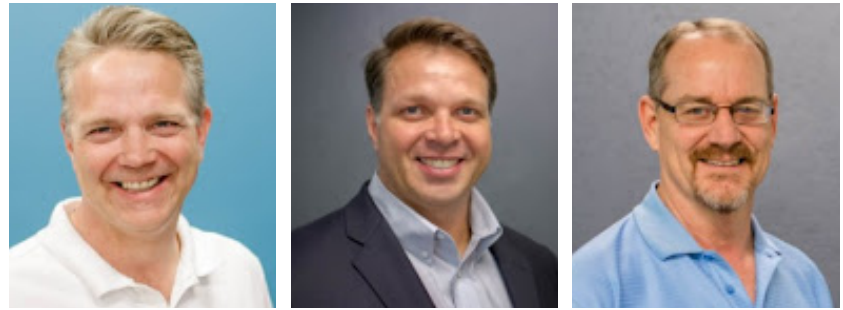


PLATINUM SUCCESS AWARD WINNER

**Heitek
Automation, LLC**



Phoenix, AZ



Assisted by:

Maricopa SBDC

www.maricopa-sbdc.com/

Business Analyst: Tom Fulcher

Director: Nancy Sanders

Owners: Scott Heiling and Dan Heiling

Address: 2102 W Quail Ave, Suite 4 Phoenix, AZ 85027

Host: Maricopa Community Colleges
Dr. Steven Gonzales, Interim Chancellor



"The SBDC has been instrumental to our growth by helping us maintain a healthy financial standing through rapid growth in our sales. Cash flow tools, sound forecasting tools, and help in partnering us with the right bank to support our growth. The SBDC has been a trusted advisor to us and a strong partner we could lean on as we grew our business over the past 21 years."

Heitek Automation provides a consultative approach to supplying their customers with solutions that improve the efficiency, productivity, and profitability of their automated processes in manufacturing, assembly or distribution.

Heitek Automation first approached the SBDC in 2001 for assistance seeking financing to support expansion and acquisition activities. They have remained an SBDC client for over 20 years.

Most recently, the SBDC helped the client with COVID disaster relief, helping them navigate program options, eligibility and process questions. Through this assistance, they were able to secure PPP and EIDL funds.

Additional capital assistance was provided and resulted in securing a new Line of Credit that provided needed funds for their expansion and acquisition. As the company continues to grow, like many during the last year, they faced increasing supply and worker pressures requiring them to re-evaluate capital needs. An improved capital position enabled them to meet the customer, supply and market needs through improved inventory and flexibility. It also allowed for continued expansion to meet new customer needs.

The efforts outlined contributed to client sales growth of over \$9 million, and employee growth over 40, since last reported. In addition to these efforts, the SBDC also supported the client with financial tools and training.



Employees at Start-up: 3



Capital Formation: \$4,484,000



Employees in 2021: 80



First Year Revenue: \$0



Business Began: 2000



2022 Revenue: \$27,642,090



BossUpCustom, LLC

Casa Grande, AZ



Assisted by:

Central Arizona College SBDC

www.cacsbdc.azsbdc.net/

Business Analyst: Kevin Connors

Director: Vacant

Owners: Ciera Scott

Address: 1269 N Promenade Pkwy,
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Host: Central Arizona College
Dr. Jacquelyn Elliott, President/CEO



"The SBDC teamed me with an amazing Advisor, who has given me the guidance I needed to start my business, and is still there for me when I have questions on my continued growth."


Boss Up Customs, LLC creates customized pillows with photos and quotes, customized wine glasses, tumblers, photo mugs and custom printing on t-shirts.


Ciera is a single mother of four young children who also works full-time at the Banner Casa Grande Medical Center as a nursing assistant. She started making custom pillows in 2019, and by early 2020, was ready for the next big step with her business. Ciera sent in her Request for Counseling the day she signed a lease for a space at the Casa Grande Promenade Mall. The SBDC provided access to LivePlan and provided guidance as she developed her business plan. Obtaining working capital was a challenge, without any collateral, she needed to bootstrap the business immediately. The SBDC helped her develop revenue projections and set priorities. Ciera opened her shop on September 7, 2021. Her Grand Opening was attended by the Mayor of Casa Grande, whom she met at a Biz Outlook luncheon presented by the Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce, an event she attended as the invited guest of her SBDC counselor.

 **Employees at Start-up: 1**

 **Capital Formation: \$46,000**

 **Employees in 2021: 2**

 **First Year Revenue: \$1,000**

 **Business Began: 2019**

 **2022 Revenue: \$5,000**



Creative Hands Cuisine

Mesa, AZ



Assisted by:

Maricopa SBDC

www.maricopa-sbdc.com

Business Analyst: Yolanda Facio

Director: Nancy Sanders

Owners: Camey and Doug Brochu

Address: 3035 N Maple Unit 1,
Mesa, AZ 85215

Host: Maricopa Community Colleges
Dr. Stephen Gonzales, Interim Chancellor



"We can wholeheartedly say, without the SBDC, we don't know if we would still be in business with the impact the pandemic had on our business. After losing 100% of our foreseeable income on March 15, 2020, there was nothing but panic and worry. But through the assistance, referral, and business resources provided through SBDC, we knew there would be a future for us. Words cannot even begin to describe how grateful we are to Yolanda, our rep, and the SBDC and their work to keep small businesses, like ours, open."

Creative Hands Cuisine was a successful fine dining catering business before the pandemic hit. But, due to COVID-19 restrictions, they went from fully booked to no gigs at all. When Camey reached out to the SBDC, she had to lay off employees and move others to part-time.

SBDC first helped Creative Hands Cuisine apply for an EIDL loan. Camey worked diligently to fill out applications and forms as we continued to work to get Creative Hands Cuisine as much disaster relief funding as possible to keep their business afloat and to help them begin to build back when restrictions started to lift. No matter the program and work involved, Camey stepped up to get things done.

The SBDC assisted the client in the acquisition of \$1,144,292 disaster relief funds in the form of EIDL, EIDL Advance, PPP, Debt Relief, and RRF, not including PPP forgiveness. Assistance included timely program information updates; keeping the client informed of deadlines; review of applications and attachments; providing answers to program questions; providing press releases, applications, and program documents for both SBA programs and CARES Act grants.


Creative Hands Cuisine is now building back their business, booking events regularly, and treating clients to creative culinary experiences.

 **Employees at Start-up: 0**

 **Capital Formation: \$1,144,292**

 **Employees in 2021: 45**

 **First Year Revenue: Unknown**

 **Business Began: 2002**

 **2022 Revenue: \$1,148,153**



Farm A Go Go

Cornville, AZ

Farm
a GoGo



Assisted by:

Yavapai College SBDC

www.yc.edu/v6/small-business-development-center/

Business Analyst: Ruth Ellen Elinski

Director: Ruth Ellen Elinski

Owners: Bryan and Lema Nowicki

Address: 10990 E Cornville Rd,
Cornville AZ 86325

Host: Yavapai College

Dr. Lisa Rhine, President

”

*“From day one, SBDC treated us with kindness and reassured us that we had just as much of a chance to run a successful business as the next person and that it was ok to have a learning curve navigating the challenges of running a business. They answered our calls in our greatest hour of need during the shut downs and continued to tell us **WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T STOP TRYING!**”*


Farm A Go Go owners Lema and Bryan Nowicki started their business in March of 2018, both transitioning from other positions to building their business full time. The business was started as a simple gourmet food truck and catering service, functioning out of a branded food truck and a small commissary kitchen and market in Cornville, Arizona. Bryan is a lifetime chef that has worked in several area establishments and wine tasting rooms, and has a long history cooking and prepping in fine dining restaurants and kitchens. Similarly, Lema has a history in the guiding and tourism industry and had 15 years of experience in bars and restaurants.


In the fall of 2018, Bryan and Lema approached the Yavapai College SBDC to seek assistance with a microloan from the Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization (VVREO). The loan would ultimately support some initial startup costs, repairs to their food truck, and equipment needed to travel to events more efficiently on the road. In 2018, SBDC assisted Farm A Go Go with professional accountant recommendations to help clean up their bookkeeping. The SBDC continued to offer advice and help to streamline the company's business plan over the past three years, and answered questions as they evolved the business. When the Pandemic hit, the client attended the SBDC classes offered by zoom with a favorite being the topic of how to use social media to your advantage post pandemic. The SBDC assisted the client to obtain a \$400,000 EIDL loan. After a tumultuous 18 months, Farm A Go Go is now in growth mode.

 **Employees at Start-up: 2**

 **Capital Formation: \$500,000**

 **Employees in 2021: 9**

 **First Year Revenue: \$185,000**

 **Business Began: 2018**

 **2022 Revenue: \$482,000**



Gila Valley Made, LLC

Safford, AZ



Assisted by:

Easter Arizona College SBDC

www.eac.edu/sbdc

Business Analyst: Kevin Peck

Director: Kevin Peck

Owners: Patricia Garrett and Taylor Ludwig

Address: 526 W Main Street, Safford, AZ 85546

Host: Eastern Arizona College

Todd Haynie, President



"The SBDC has had a great impact on Gila Valley Made. When our crazy idea to open a store front became a reachable dream, Kevin Peck was one of our first phone calls. Before Gila Valley Made was in the works, we both had our own small businesses and had the pleasure of working with the SBDC. Opening a boutique in town was a dream, working out the kinks, the legalities and paperwork was a daunting task, but Kevin and the team at the SBDC made it a breeze. We are forever grateful for the relationships we have gained through and with the SBDC. The future is ours and we wouldn't want to do it without the SBDC on our team."

Gila Valley Made was an idea created out of the darkness of the pandemic. With shutdowns starting, markets closing and the future being unknown, Gila Valley Made was an idea to inspire and create an income for local businesses during the holiday season. They started with 900 square feet of rental space, just in time for Christmas, but soon after needed to find a permanent location. The shop local experience was well-received by the community and with the help of families, vendors, and the community, they found a new building, on Main Street in Safford, and raised the funds to build-out the new space in the store. They have grown from 46 vendors to 87.

The EAC SBDC worked closely with Tricia and Taylor in idea development for the original store and how to set up vendor tracking and accounting. The SBDC assisted in the identification and set up of the POS system and how to best utilize it for sales tracking. We also worked closely with them as their Christmas shipment was stuck on a ship off the coast of California and they were in need of finding quick financing to get product in as fast as possible before the holiday season started. SBDC counselors provided significant assistance in sales tax payment assistance and business expansion.



Employees at Start-up: 3



Capital Formation: \$32,000



Employees in 2021: 6



First Year Revenue: \$0



Business Began: 2021



2022 Revenue: \$430,000



The House Show Low, LLC

Show Low, AZ

Assisted by:

Northland Pioneer College SBDC

www.npc.edu/sbdc

Business Analyst: Richard Chanick

Director: Richard Chanick

Owners: Chris Corbin & Matt McGowen

Address: 1191 E Hall St, Show Low, AZ 85901

Host: Northland Pioneer College

Dr. Chato Hazelbaker, President



"Working with Richard and the SBDC has been an invaluable experience. Richard started by simply listening to us ramble about where we were, and where we wanted to be. He then began to help us lay out a plan to get there and helped us prioritize the steps needed to accomplish our goals. We knew we had a strong company but we didn't know where to start or how to package and present it to a potential lending institution. Richard and the SBDC helped us do exactly that, they not only helped us prepare our resume but helped identify strengths and weaknesses within the company so we would be better informed/prepared. Whether looking for start-up/expansion capital or simply needing a sounding board from people who know local business, the SBDC is a great asset to any Company."



The client set out to establish a family friendly indoor-outdoor experience where kids could run on the grass and adults could play corn-hole and listen to live music all while enjoying great casual food. Both Chris and Matt are excellent "restaurant people" but as their dream expanded exponentially they were faced with more and more sophisticated business decisions. The problem was not that they couldn't figure out these decisions, the problem was to balance all of the new business aspects of the operation with the most important aspect of keeping the guest facing experience positive. The owners decided to purchase the property (which they were previously renting), buy some additional contiguous property and remodel the kitchen and other parts of the facility.


The SBDC assisted them in prioritizing the projects they wanted to accomplish and facilitated the introduction to a financial institution. As the project was kicking off last summer, Show Low experienced a "100 year flood" and The House was filled with 3 feet of water, forcing a closure for almost two months of their busiest season. The SBDC facilitated a \$10,000 grant from the Governor's office, which the SBDC helped develop and organized a community-wide "Welcome back to the House" campaign when they reopened. Purchase and renovation plans are now back on track and moving forward.

 **Employees at Start-up: 2**

 **Capital Formation: Unknown**

 **Employees in 2021: 45**

 **First Year Revenue: \$215,000**

 **Business Began: 2015**

 **2022 Revenue: \$1,800,000**



Mark My Words, LLC

Tempe, AZ

Assisted by:

Maricopa SBDC

www.maricopa-sbdc.com

Business Analyst: Jeff Swenson

Director: Nancy Sanders

Owners: Susan Walker

Address: 1104 W Geneva Dr. Tempe, AZ 85282

Host: Maricopa Community Colleges

Dr. Stephen Gonzales, Interim Chancellor



"The SBDC was invaluable to us. Without them, getting our first SBA loan would have been impossible at the worst, or at best would have taken years longer to obtain. They helped us draw up our business plan and loan package in a way that assured our success. They offered us critical guidance about which bank to approach and how to present our case for success, despite some past challenges that may have kept us from being approved. They helped us get past these hurdles so that we had a chance to expand and succeed at a higher level. I can't begin to express my gratitude for what they have done for us."



The client, Mark My Words, aka Walker Bookstore, provides quality books to schools, teachers, students and parents around the world.

The client came to the Maricopa SBDC in 2014 for help in securing an SBA loan needed for operating capital to expand operations. The SBDC helped to guide the client with the development of their business plan. The counselor shared expertise on how to substantiate the business value, given they are a seasonal business with few hard assets, thereby increasing the chance for loan approval. The SBDC also helped the client find the right lender for their business and unique situation. In 2020-2021 during the COVID pandemic, the SBDC also provided assistance with disaster relief funding programs, sharing updates on new developments and process related questions. The client obtained both PPP and EIDL loans which allowed them to maintain operations in preparation for the anticipated order volume increase after COVID.

The client has experienced growth from \$1 million gross revenue to \$3 million in 3 years, has been able to hire key staff, and purchase software that contributed to their expansion and current success. They are positioned to gain market share in the coming years through the strategic partnerships built, key employees hired, and the original SBA loan secured.



Employees at Start-up: 1



Capital Formation: \$2,825,500



Employees in 2021: 14



First Year Revenue: \$7,728



Business Began: 2008



2022 Revenue: \$3,200,000



Mertens Heavy Equipment Repair, LLC

Kingman, AZ

Assisted by:

Mohave SBDC

www.mohave.edu/about/SBDC

Business Analyst: Jeanette Pigeon & Lisa Card

Director: Jeanette Pigeon

Owners: Robert Mertens

Address: 3660 E Martin Ln, Kingman, AZ 86409

Host: Mohave Community College

Dr. Tracy Klippenstein, President



"Lisa Card was very helpful. She came to my office on a number of occasions to finalize the business plan along with following up through emails and phone calls. Lisa was very responsive and is a pleasure to work with. You can tell she really cares."



The client has primarily operated their heavy equipment sales business in the Kingman area since 2000, starting out with just two employees - Robert Mertens and his wife Patricia. Robert had 30 years experience as a heavy equipment mechanic and he and his wife decided it was time to start their own business. The company evolved from owning one field service truck and working out of a small office off the garage at the back of their house, to the booming business it is today.

In 2021, Robert became aware of a Bobcat franchise in Lake Havasu City, AZ that was up for sale. He contacted his attorney who referred him to the Mohave SBDC. The client needed assistance in developing a concise and accurate business plan. One that would detail his business experience and spotlight the business' strategic expansion plans in order to secure the commercial loan needed to buy the franchise. The SBDC helped the client with their business plan development, which led to a loan approval! The loan enabled the Mertens to expand their business into the Lake Havasu City area, retain employees, and add additional employees.



Employees at Start-up: 2



Capital Formation: \$500,000



Employees in 2021: 32



First Year Revenue: \$100,000



Business Began: 2000



2022 Revenue: \$7,500,000



NAC Holding Co., LLC

Tucson, AZ



Assisted by:

Pima Community College SBDC
pima.edu/business-industry/small-business.html

Business Analyst: Karen Burns

Director: Sue Oliver

Owners: Suzanne Kaiser

Address: 4020 N Via de Cuerns,
Tucson, AZ 85718

Host: Pima Community College
Dr. Lee Lambert, Chancellor



"We felt like we had nowhere to turn. We had been promised (told it was approved) a SBA loan for \$400,000 and proceeded with construction using our capital reserves. By the time we were informed the lender changed their position, we were out of all our reserves and using our LOC. If Karen Burns had not advised us, I am not sure that we would have been able to stay in business."

The family-run business first approached the SBDC in 2016 when in expansion mode. A SBA loan was promised in May for the buildout of their own building. The company proceeded with the construction as plans had already been finalized. The company was using its own capital in the meantime and had put out quite a bit of money when in September, the lender finally denied the SBA loan because the bar was next to an auto repair shop. The same auto repair shop that was there when the lender approved the purchase loan the year previous. SBDC intervened with the lender and finally helped the company obtain a commercial loan to complete the project. The company operated the bar until it sold on March 3, 2020 for \$1.2M. The owners paid off all debt at that point and have run debt free ever since. The SBDC assisted again, in 2021, to assist the company with their PPP applications and loan forgiveness.



Employees at Start-up: 6



Capital Formation: \$642,000



Employees in 2021: 150



First Year Revenue: \$500,000



Business Began: 2006



2022 Revenue: \$6,057,500



Nemean Solutions, LLC

Sierra Vista, AZ

Assisted by:

Cochise College SBDC

www.awc.azsbdc.net

Business Analyst: Mark Schmitt

Director: Mark Schmitt

Owners: Simon E Ortiz and Craig Mount

Address: 500 E Fry Blvd, Ste M14-D,
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

Host: Cochise College

James D. Rottweiler, Ph.D., President



"Mark Schmitt and the Cochise College SBDC were our first mentoring partner when we started Nemean Solutions - they have remained a constant and interested partner through our growth. These days we have a number of up and coming entrepreneurs asking for our advice and we tell them to start with Mark and the Cochise College SBDC."



Nemean Solutions, LLC provides a variety of professional services to their customers from cybersecurity to intelligence operations support and mission assurance. The company is certified SBA 8(a), certified service disabled veteran owned (SDVOSB), as well as a Hispanic owned company that works with government customers on a regular basis.

Nemean Solutions, LLC was a start up company that needed direction in business plan development and financing. The business plan was a requirement for the company for a number of SBA related certifications - notably the 8(a) certification. The company's business plan was crucial, and the SBDC directly mentored and guided the owners of Nemean as they put this document together. The SBDC also helped with identifying financing partners as the company grew and required more capital. With these two areas addressed, Nemean was able to grow substantially over the next four years and is set to have its largest growth in 2022.

The SBDC provided, and still provides, direct mentoring and advice on both company growth, financing, and acts as an impartial check and balance on the company's business plan direction. In short, the SBDC helps identify if the company is following its own plan or does it need to adjust? These independent mentoring capabilities have allowed unfettered decisions to be made, and subsequently, Nemean has grown from a small start up to a multi-million dollar business operating in fourteen states in just a few years.



Employees at Start-up: 2



Capital Formation: \$10,000



Employees in 2021: 61



First Year Revenue: \$61,032



Business Began: 2017



2022 Revenue: \$4,524,568



ReSuture

Surprise, AZ

Assisted by:

Maricopa SBDC

www.maricopa-sbdc.com

Business Analyst: Lou Farina

Director: Nancy Sanders

Owners: Benjamin Knapp and
Hannah Eherenfeldt

Address: 12425 W Bell Rd., STE 110,
Surprise AZ, 85378

Host: Maricopa Community Colleges
Dr. Stephen Gonzales, Interim Chancellor



"Working with the SBDC has been an absolute pleasure. They have been an excellent resource for us as we grow our business in Arizona and were instrumental in helping us craft a strong commercialization strategy. They continue to be a source of support for ReSuture as we refine our business model and scale our company's capabilities."



ReSuture is a medical tech startup that builds a 'portable simulated operating room'. They create realistic models of surgical procedures that simulate a variety of clinical scenarios – allowing training surgeons to perfect their operative skills and learn how to properly use new medical devices. Hannah Eherenfeldt and Benjamin Knapp co-founded ReSuture after working as engineers at a medical simulation center, where they discovered just how antiquated the current state of surgical training and evaluation is. The pair set out to develop products that could realistically replicate surgical procedures for safer medical training and medical device development.

Initially, the team was referred to the SBDC by the AZ TechCelerator to obtain support for creating an SBIR proposal. With the assistance of the SBDC, ReSuture recently earned a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the National Science Foundation that will help the company develop sensing technology in their models that will allow for the quantification of surgical skill. As part of the SBIR proposal submission, the SBDC helped with the business plan including overall business model validation, market opportunity,

competitive landscape as well as the commercialization plan and timeline. The SBDC also was able to review and provide guidance regarding equity funding strategy.


ReSuture has raised \$625,000 in startup capital to date with \$425,000 injected in 2021. They have added a full-time employee as well as three part-time employees and realized their first revenues of \$42,000. ReSuture was recently recognized as part of the AZ INNO Under 25 group and was awarded the competitive Arizona Innovation Challenge grant from the Arizona Commerce Authority.

 **Employees at Start-up: 2**

 **Capital Formation: \$425,000**

 **Employees in 2021: 6**

 **First Year Revenue: \$42,000**

 **Business Began: 2019**

 **2022 Revenue: \$42,000**



Strides 2 Thrive and Elevated Shredding

Flagstaff, AZ

Assisted by:

Coconino Community College SBDC

www.coconino.edu/SBDC

Business Analyst: Gina Couillard

Director: Cindy Scott

Owners: Jennifer Vance Green

Address: 1306 E Dunroven Court,
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Host: Coconino Community College
Dr. Colleen A Smith, PhD, President



"As a woman-owned small business in Northern Arizona, I cannot imagine a better partnership than with the AZSBDC at Coconino Community College and with Gina Couillard and her team. The experienced, knowledgeable and dedicated business counselors at the SBDC have worked countless hours with me to help create growth, expansion and development of my businesses. Gina and the team at SBDC took time to deeply understand the operations, goals and needs of my companies and have celebrated my successes and supported me with my challenges. I am looking forward to continuing my business counseling relationship with the AZSBDC with future business endeavors."

Strides 2 Thrive
An Opportunity For Everyone



Jennifer Vance Green and her husband Joe Vance owned two businesses Strides 2 Thrive and Elevated Shredding which were designed to work together. These two businesses had been operating out of rented space, were not connected geographically, but both were expanding. Jennifer and Joe had a vision to create a campus like facility where the two businesses could sit side by side, yet have separate and independent operating space, and from there this project was born.

They secured a 1.0-acre commercial zone lot with the help of a family member, but needed to refinance the project once complete. This is when they reached out to the SBDC. The SBDC helped Jennifer with business and strategic planning, financial forecasting, risk management and worked with her CPA to ensure she was in the prime position to obtain lending. The effects of the pandemic created additional complexities both in terms of revenue implications but also the need for detailed financial forecasts to submit to lenders. With ongoing guidance and support from the SBDC counselor, Jennifer and Joe were successful in finding the right lender and obtained a loan for \$1,700,000 in 2022.



Employees at Start-up: 2



Capital Formation: \$1,360,000



Employees in 2021: 14



First Year Revenue: \$0



Business Began: 2014



2022 Revenue: \$2,000,000



Takos & Beer and Julieanna's Steak & Seafood

Yuma, AZ

Assisted by:

Arizona Western College SBDC

www.awc.azsbdc.net/

Business Analyst: Armando Esparza

Director: James Schuessler

Owners: Eddie Guzman

Address: 1951 W 25th St, Yuma, AZ 85364

Host: Arizona Western College

Dr. Daniel P Corr, President



"SBDC has helped me achieve positive results, during such a difficult time in our Country. I have been able to grow the business despite the hardship's others have faced. I am nothing without the wonderful employees I have employed and have been able to keep them employed. While other businesses have failed in the current conditions, I have been able to keep growing with the assistance from the SBDC. Without the SBDC I would not have been able to achieve my goals."



Chef Eddie Guzman has cooked and worked in many restaurants across the country. Now, as owner and executive chef, he operates two successful restaurants in Yuma, Takos and Beer, and Julieanna's Steak and Seafood.

Eddie Guzman started volunteering in the restaurant industry to get experience. As he grew from volunteer to executive chef, he wanted to own his own restaurant. The SBDC met with the client before the opening of his first restaurant, Takos and Beer. We helped him through the feasibility of his idea, reviewing the business model, as well as budget allocations, marketing, and branding.

As the Takos & Beer business grew, the client explored expansion concepts and the acquisition of another restaurant. Opening a second restaurant presented ongoing challenges with technology, marketing, and staffing. The SBDC assisted Eddie with support and advice.

The client now has two successful operations and a catering business as he continues to grow in the Yuma market.



Employees at Start-up: 10



Capital Formation: \$75,500



Employees in 2021: 60



First Year Revenue: \$-30,000



Business Began: 2006

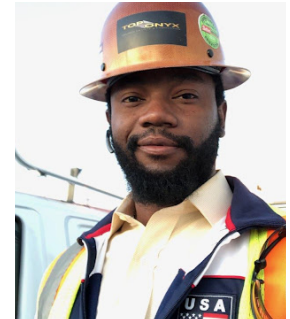


2022 Revenue: \$320,000



Top Onyx, LLC

Phoenix, AZ



Assisted by:

Arizona Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

www.azptac.com/

Business Analyst: Lori Haozous

Director: Program Manager (Interim)

Owners: DeWayne Lewis

Address: 2214 N 24th St Phoenix, AZ 85008

Host: Maricopa Community Colleges

Dr. Stephen Gonzales, Interim Chancellor



“Working with Lori and the AZPTAC team was the biggest relief and experience in exploring the government contracting arena. With guidance and support from AZPTAC I was able to market my business successfully at Small Business events, ADOT DBE, NASA Small Business Conference, and various small business expos. The growth of my company has directly contributed to the knowledge and usable information provided by Lori and the AZPTAC program.”

Top Onyx is a one-stop shop for granite countertops and fabrication. DeWayne brings his past NFL career philosophy to his business. “Quality is key” understanding the customers needs and wants, help Top Onyx bring the best “Craftsmanship” to their consumer.

When DeWayne and Top Onyx first showed interest in the assistance of AZPTAC services, it was to help the business gain momentum in their industry in 2018. The PTAC counselor discussed issues the company was experiencing that hindered his desire to enter the Federal market. Challenges that Top Onyx needed guidance on were: the explanation of government contracting steps, state certifications, SAM registration, Federal Small Disadvantaged Business and Federal - HUBZone Certification, bid match services and capability statements. PTAC also provided assistance with events and networking, teaming and partnering training, market research, advice on bids, proposals, and documents pertaining to contracting, and Mentor-Protege qualifications.

After spending months sorting the importance for Top Onyx, DeWayne was able to find three areas on which to focus in government contracting. First to update company information and NAICS codes in all databases. Second, to work on state certifications, DBE and SBE. Third, to purchase commercial property for his office located in a HUBZone area and two additional properties for the manufacturing needs of the business.



Employees at Start-up: 1



Capital Formation: \$0



Employees in 2021: 09



First Year Revenue: \$282,167



Business Began: 2017



2022 Revenue: \$2,385,112



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Many Thanks!



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