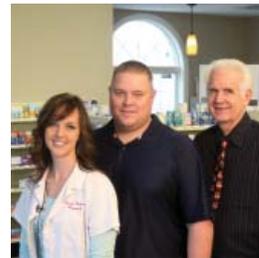


# 2014 Existing & Emerging Small Business Awards

Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) Network



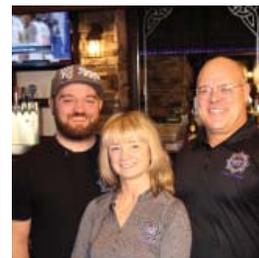
**30**  
years of helping  
small business



**\$60m**  
capital raised by  
clients in 2012



**\$107m**  
sales increase by  
clients in 2012



**2,826**  
jobs created/  
retained by  
clients in 2012



30th Anniversary Issue



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 KSBDC center locations...back cover

**11,974**  
 businesses and  
 clients served by  
 the KSBDC in 2012

**\$500m**  
 KSBDC client sales  
 in 2012

**\$16.30: \$1**  
 return on  
 investment in the  
 KSBDC in 2012

# Message from the Director

## Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) Network

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No one tells our story better than our clients.



Greg Panichello  
Kansas Small Business Development  
Center (KSBDC) Network

It's for this reason that we thought it would be most interesting for you, our reader, to hear our story in our clients' own words.

Sixteen businesses from across our state were chosen to highlight both the impact of small business in our Kansas communities and the impact of our collaboration with these same businesses. Since 1983, we've help tens of thousands of businesses just like these with access to capital, business plan development, and financial analysis, including cash flow projection and evaluation. In 2012 alone we helped more than 8,000 businesses and entrepreneurs reach their goals through effective one-on-one consulting at no cost to the business as well as low-cost, high-impact training.

By guiding small businesses through strategic planning, and marketing implementation planning, our clients have reported a significant impact on their business in the form of profitable business expansion, increased sales, and job expansion and retention – outcomes that show in their stories.

If you're unfamiliar with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) network and what we do you might wonder how we can provide this assistance to small businesses and not charge for consulting. That's a valid question. Your state and federal tax dollars, along with our local higher education hosts and other partners, make it possible for any Kansas small business to work with our team from across the state.

Think of us as the team that supports the job creators and the difference makers. The team that understands the importance of growing Kansas entrepreneurs here at home. As taxpayers ourselves, we work hard to make your tax dollars work. In 2012, we achieved a return of \$16.29 to the state and federal economy for every \$1 of state and federal tax dollars invested in the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) network.

We could talk all day about what we do, but we won't. Instead, we invite you to learn more about how we help small business by spending the next few minutes reading these inspiring stories from our Kansas entrepreneurs.

# Building Anew

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## Studio 54



**O**n May 4, 2007 an F-5 tornado struck Greensburg, Kansas destroying 90% of the community. For Scott and Susan Reinecke, this devastating storm provided them an opportunity to restart their lives, begin new careers, and pursue their dream.

As Scott, the owner and operator of the local body shop, took inventory one day he realized that this career was taking a toll on his health and felt he wouldn't have many years left to devote to this endeavor. Reinecke had always dreamed of a career in building and repairing stained glass windows and designing stained glass pieces. His wife Susan, owner of an antique store, had the passion to design slumped glass and glass jewelry.

The tragedy that their community had endured along with Scott's realization began what became their journey from dream to reality.

The Reineckes sought out the Kansas Small Business Development

Center (KSBDC) outreach center in Hutchinson. When they first approached the KSBDC their two concerns were financing and marketing. They knew two things. One that Greensburg was not large enough to support this type of industry. And two, since the town was destroyed it would be a challenge to find an affordable location.



Working with KSBDC consultant Mark Buckley, the Reineckes developed their financial projections. Buckley traveled with the Reineckes to the Kansas City Gift Mart helping them with their initial inventory purchase. He worked with them to secure a temporary studio through the City of Greensburg.

In May of 2009, two years after a tornado destroyed the city of Greensburg, the city opened a LEED Platinum retail business incubator and Studio 54 became one of the first occupants.

During their startup phase Studio 54 exceeded all sales expectations. Many supplied lines had to be reordered numerous times. As the business

continued to grow the Reineckes realized that the 792 square foot site in the incubator was not large enough to accommodate their sales. On May 1, 2010 Studio 54 moved directly across the street from the incubator to its current location to a 1,600 square foot space at 106 South Main.

National publicity has helped increase the store's customer base. Studio 54 has been featured on the Green Channel's Project Greensburg television show, and Susan has been interviewed by numerous magazines and newspapers.

When asked to divulge their secret to success, the Reineckes shared, "Hard work, follow your dream, be fair, be honest and do something you are good at doing."

---

studio54glass.com  
620-723-2511

Assisted by  
Mark Buckley, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at GCCC  
620.276.9632 | swksbdc.com | ksbsdc@gccc.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #4 – Mike Pompeo  
State Sen. Dist.#33 – Mitch Holmes  
State Rep. Dist.#117 – John Ewy



# It's About Education

Wasinger Chiropractic and Acupuncture, LLC

**G**rowing up with parents who were small business owners, the dream of owning his own small business began early in life for Dr. Blake Wasinger.

If he started a business, Wasinger wanted to know early on that the hours, sweat and money he put toward something would be all his in the end. He wanted to show everyone that he could not only do it, but do it

exceptionally well; and that he did. In 2011, Wasinger realized his dream and opened Wasinger Chiropractic and Acupuncture, LLC, in Garden City, Kansas.

## **Learning how to be a business owner.**

Wasinger had his dream and his health education still something was missing. He knew how to be a doctor but knew little about owning a managing a

business. "It wasn't even that I didn't know the answers to questions, it was that I didn't even know what questions to ask."

To develop his business acumen, Dr. Wasinger contacted the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Garden City Community College and began the business side of his education. Together, he and his consultant, Cheryl Schmale, discovered solutions that

would help him reach his business goals. Wasinger credits the assistance he received from the KSBDC in setting up computer-based accounting software to mesh with his practice management software as a big boost to his efficiency. “It makes the end of the year taxes a breeze. I am also able to stay on top of our budget and know exactly how the business is doing.”

“ It wasn’t even that I didn’t know the answers to questions, it was that I didn’t even know what questions to ask.

In addition to managing the accounting side of running a practice, Wasinger credits the guidance the KSBDC provided with helping him make better business decisions. “Asking for advice, good or bad, in the end, can help you make a decision. I had too many other things to worry and concern myself (with), I didn’t think I needed to stress over something that someone else can help me with.” The ongoing relationship Wasinger has with his consultant provided some valuable insight early on that would have been difficult to find on his own. According to Wasinger, “With past experiences my consultant was able to foresee problem areas I may or may not have.”

### Keeping costs low and working hard.

Starting off his practice Wasinger began with the basics. For him, a key to growing his small business was not buying the best or newest, but not cutting corners either. “If I could find something at a discount and it fulfilled my need, I bought it. I saved thousands

this way.” He also accredits his business success to his strong work ethic which has allowed him to be flexible with his schedule. “I know when to work but I also want to enjoy life and my family. Since beginning my practice I have been able to take time when it is necessary



so that I don’t miss opportunities that I hold near to my heart. By starting my own practice, I was also able to practice the way I see fit.”

Looking forward we asked the good doctor what advice he’d give to someone thinking about starting a business today. “Preparation and specificity are a must. Imagine everything in detail by observing others running similar businesses. Make notes on what you like/dislike. Ask questions, don’t be shy! It’s highly unlikely you are the first to have the same question.” And what’s his secret to success? “Taking care of your customers and patients can make or break the business. People are loyal if you give them a reason to be.”

Dr. Wasinger continues his education and recently earned his Certificate of Chiropractic Sports Medicine. Not only does he believe his continuing education is important, but the education of his patients is important as well. Wasinger Chiropractic and Acupuncture, along with chiropractic and acupuncture services, provides patient education on exercise, diet, and nutrition.

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gcchiropractic.net  
620-275-4325

Assisted by  
Cheryl Schmale, KSBDC Regional Director  
KSBDC at GCCC  
Garden City, GCCC KSBDC | 620.276.9632 |  
swksbdc.com | ksbdc@gccc.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#39 – Larry Powell  
State Rep. Dist.#123 – John Doll



# Despite Success, Business Can Still Face Challenges.

Sander Furniture & Gifts

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**B**radley Sander grew up in the furniture business.

His father owned and operated the furniture store in Arapahoe, Nebraska for many years. When the time came for him to be his own boss, his son convinced him that Norton, Kansas was the place to do his own thing. So he cashed in his retirement, rented a building and moved from Cozad, Nebraska to Norton, Kansas – 11 miles south of the Nebraska/Kansas state line.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

Sander and his wife, Kim, have owned and operated Sander Furniture and Gifts for ten years. In those ten years, they have opened and sold branch stores, expanded their retail offerings, expanded into a second location in Norton, and updated their recordkeeping system. Their second location, managed by their daughter, Star, houses their bed store while the main highway location focuses on gifts, dining sets, carpet selections, and living room sets.

Despite the business' success and growth, Sander says, "There were so many challenges. Still are." Finding a location that is large enough and in a convenient spot for shoppers has been a continued difficulty. Ideally they would like to be located in a large building that

could house their entire inventory. This could potentially reduce lost sales when referring customers to their second Norton location. And maintaining positive cash flow can be a challenge at times. In small towns, the volume varies so estimating needs and usage can be tough.

“Being honest and offering consistent good service that has helped us build rapport with our customers.”

To assist with some of his internal processes, Sander contacted the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Fort Hays State University. Megan Horinek, KSBDC consultant, assisted Sander with implementing

## Sander Furniture & Gifts

QuickBooks accounting software for the business. By using the software, Sander now has the ability to run reports and manage accounts more closely.

And the implementation has already proved to be beneficial. Because they are using QuickBooks the Sanders caught an error that may have otherwise been

overlooked, "The other day a credit card sale occurred with a limit on the customer's card. QuickBooks caught that the batch didn't match and we found that we still had \$200 due that we would have missed."

When asked about their secret to success the Sanders say they owe their success to "being honest and offering consistent good service that has helped us build rapport with our customers."

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Find Sander Furniture on Facebook  
785-874-4974

Assisted by  
Megan Horinek, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at FHSU  
Bird City, FHSU KSBDC Outreach |  
785.734.2592 | fhsu.edu/ksbdc | ksbdc@fhsu.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#40 – Ralph Ostmeyer  
State Rep. Dist.#110 – Travis Couture-Lovelady



# A Community Need

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## Cardinal Pharmacy, LLC

**C**ardinal Pharmacy, LLC was born out of community need.

In 2001, a tornado destroyed one of the two pharmacies in the city of Hoisington, Kansas. Not long after, the second store sold its records to a pharmacy chain, which relocated outside of the community. For over three years, there was a void in the market. A community task force was formed to regain a local

the KSBDC for the development of a business plan and assistance in starting the business.

Today Cardinal Pharmacy, located on Main Street in Hoisington, employs seven individuals and serves a community and surrounding area that has since recovered and rebuilt.

While building a pharmacy may sound simple, the Mooneys and Bieber admit

With hard work, dedication, and the support of staff, Cardinal Pharmacy has overcome the challenges it's faced and says it looks forward to serving the continued need in the Hoisington community.

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Find Cardinal on Facebook  
620-653-2200

Assisted by  
Ron Newman, KSBDC Regional Director  
KSBDC at FHSU  
Hays. FHSU KSBDC | 785.628.5615 |  
fhsu.edu/ksbdc | ksbdc@fhsu.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#33 – Mitch Holmes  
State Rep. Dist.#112 – John Edmonds

“Even though we are a small business we are still able to compete in today's market place.”

pharmacy and that is when Richard Bieber saw an opportunity. Bieber approached Marla Mooney, an experienced pharmacy employee in nearby Russell, Kansas, with an idea to build another pharmacy. After some consideration Mooney and her husband, Gene, along with Bieber, committed to the project.

Familiar with the story, Ron Newman with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Fort Hays State University reached out to talk with Marla about the venture early on. Engaged as a client, Mooney utilized

that it took a while for the business to build their database. And overcoming the time-intensive data entry for new prescriptions was a challenge. The business also had difficulties managing accounts receivable and inventory when it first opened due to insurance receipt of payment lags.

However, in time the business gained traction. According to Marla, the business is constantly trying to prove themselves. “Even though we are a small business we are still able to compete in today's market place,” she says.





## Location, Location, Location meets Expansion, Expansion, Expansion in Rural Kansas

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### 6th Street Fashions & Footwear

**S**hari Haug started with what she knew she wanted to do. She loved retail, and she wanted to find an opportunity to own her own business while living in a small community.

Haug lived in Concordia, Kansas, 53 miles north of Salina and 30 miles south of the Kansas/Nebraska state line. She grew up in Concordia learning about business from her family's grocery store. She had lived in the larger cities and worked for larger corporations in her adult life, but really wanted to find an opportunity to return to her entrepreneurial roots in her home town.

In the early 2000s, residents living in Concordia had to drive an hour or more to shop for fashion and footwear. While she could see that there was a potential need, could Haug find the right inventory mix and the best quality goods to offer at the right price for the area? Her challenge was a common one that many retailers still face. Some of the most intense competition for small business in rural communities is not against the store down the street, it's against large retailers in large metro areas that have the advantage of size when negotiating with vendors and suppliers.

In 2004 she had her answer and with it 6th Street Fashion & Footwear was open for business.

6th Street started as many small retail businesses do – as a sole proprietorship operating out of a leased location. In 2007, 6th Street capitalized on an opportunity to expand and purchase a previously unoccupied JC Penney building. With assets increasing, the sole proprietorship transitioned to a Subchapter S Corporation. In 2012, a second opportunity, this time in a new community 18 miles from the first, provided 6th Street the opportunity to expand once again.

While the expansion of this small business is not remarkable, what is remarkable, is the fact that 6th Street Fashions & Footwear did it all in rural America.

6th Street Fashions & Footwear capitalized on an identified need in the market for a local fashion and shoe store first in Concordia, and more recently with their latest expansion in Belleville, Kansas. And while the identified need was there, starting a business that will not only survive, but thrive, and expand

in a small community required some intensive team work to make the dream work.



Through the business life of 6th Street, Haug has worked with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) through Wichita State University's outreach center in Concordia. Haug

“ I love hearing my customers say, I would have never tried that on, I love it!

has worked over the years with Linda Sutton, KSBDC consultant to develop her business plan and funding as the business has grown over time. Sutton has worked with Haug on financial management, effective use of store space to appeal to customers, and advertising. Haug credits Sutton with

recommending that she work with another small business to develop the 6th Street brand which has paid off tremendously.

When Haug recently was presented with an opportunity to buy a shoe store in a neighboring town, Sutton helped her with the process. Together they worked on financial projections, inventory mix, and how to capitalize on larger quantity buys from Haug's vendors.

Haug highly recommends working with the KSBDC for anyone currently in business. When we asked what she believes is the secret to her small business success, she was happy to share. "Customer service, for sure! I love hearing my customers say, I would have never tried that on, I love it!" And what advice would you give to someone currently in business today? "Your customers should always come first!"

Following the good practice of excellent customer service as well as using sound principles to make good business decisions has kept this winner growing and going in North Central Kansas.

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Find 6th Street on Facebook  
785-243-9877

Assisted by  
Linda Sutton, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at WSU  
Concordia. WSU NCK Outreach |  
785.243.9913 |  
ncksbdc.com | ksbd@ncksbdc.com

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#36 – Elaine Bowers  
State Rep. Dist.#106 – Sharon Schwartz



# Pushing

After Hours Auto Repair Inc. —

**A**fter Hours Auto Repair Inc. in southwest Wichita is the life-long dream of Mark Guerrero.

Much like hurdlers, Guerrero and his wife and business partner, Summer, have learned to overcome each personal and business challenge that come their way.

## **Breast cancer. Iraqi War. And Funding challenges.**

Through it all the Guerreros pressed on to fulfill a shared dream – a dream that they realized when Mark was only 16, a dream to be in business for themselves while helping others.

Along the road, life and all of its challenges didn't deter the Guerreros. To turn their dream into a reality, the Guerreros started at the right place and began preparing their credit in advance for a business loan. They began watching their personal finances closely knowing they would need future credit. And to prepare them for the business plan they would inevitably need to write, they sought help from the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Wichita State University.

Summer took the first step on the business plan and attended *Meeting the 3Ms: Money, Marketing and Management Seminar* – an introductory

workshop offered by the KSBDC at WSU. After attending the workshop, Summer realized that she and Mark would have better results creating their business plan if they worked with one of the KSBDC consultants. As she jokingly shared with the consultant, "Do you really want a mechanic writing a business plan?"

Working with their consultant the Guerreros detailed out the specifics of their business plan and what they needed to guide their decisions moving forward. Just creating the plan was a learning process. Both owners (and marriage partners) learned that they not only had their own perspective, but that each perspective was valuable to the plan and the success of the business.

## **But sometimes even the best laid plans can go awry.**

Looking forward to applying for a business loan, Summer had already closed their credit cards to become more financially fit. However, with their startup date in March 2008, also came the disappointing news of not getting the funding on which they were counting. While they had closed some lines of credit, they learned that by not having enough available existing credit and adding another credit card to the debt would be considered a new source of debt, they weren't qualified for additional debt.

# Onward

## Persistence pays off.

After the loan didn't pan out, Mark began generating and saving money by working an additional 30 hours per week in his personal "After Hours Garage". By combining the new savings, along with their 401k, the Guerreros successfully opened their business to the public.

“Do you really want a mechanic writing a business plan?”

And while it took a while to get there, it didn't take very long until they were facing their next hurdle – rapid growth. Apparently, After Hour Auto Repair's quest for learning along with the focus on quality customer service and technical / mechanical expertise proved rather swiftly to be the right recipe for growth.

Quickly outgrowing their first location, the Guerreros sought KSBDC advice as they managed their growing business in the new, larger location.

As the business has grown, so has business ownership. Summer has continued to grow her own business knowledge and acumen through regular engagement with her KSBDC

consultants and KSBDC seminars. Additionally she tapped into industry resources by hiring an auto industry consultant. Summer continues to work with her team, seeking advice from her KSBDC



consultant prior to any major decisions. Working with the KSBDC as well as seeking advice from automotive industry experts has helped the Guerreros learn the specifics of their business that has in turn allowed them to continue to enhance their revenue and bottom line.

All of their passion, drive, push, and perseverance paid off and their sincere desire to help others was solidified, night after night, as they watched adults, often hurting for transportation and fearing the possible outcomes, found a haven at After Hours.

To this day, Summer, an Iraqi War Veteran, breast cancer survivor and

active firefighter, along with her auto-mechanic husband, Mark, continue to work together to provide the leadership and vision for After Hours Auto Repair. By proactively watching the bottom line and segregating collected sales taxes and owed income taxes from their working capital, Summer and Mark have been able to steadily grow their business from the original dream they shared many years ago.

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afterhoursautorepair.net  
316-425-8684

Assisted by  
Alan Badgley, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at WSU  
Wichita. WSU KSBDC | 316.978.3193 |  
wichita.edu/ksbdc | ksbdc@wichita.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #4 – Mike Pompeo  
State Sen. Dist.#25 – Michael O'Donnell  
State Rep. Dist.#95 – Tom Sawyer

# Joining Forces. Merging Success.

Condray & Young Landscape and Professional Groundskeeping

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## **M**att Young's Story

With the housing market booming in 2002 and 2003 Matt Young was kept busy doing landscape designs and installations for his parents and many family friends.

As a new horticulture graduate from Kansas State University in December 2003, Young decided to explore starting a landscape design business in Topeka by writing a business plan. After several sessions with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KBDC) at Washburn University, Young's plan received bank financing for his business to start up in January of 2004. The business plan was key in helping Matt realize his business goals were achievable and instilled confidence to start his business.



## **Kelly Condray's Story**

An internship with Kansas State University K-State brought Kelly Condray to Topeka in 2003. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Landscape and Turf Management in 2005, Kelly began working for a landscaping company in Topeka as a Landscape Maintenance Foreman. In January 2008, Condray struck out on his own and founded Condray Landscaping. Over the next 12 months, Condray grew the business to 7 employees. He began subcontracting work with Matt and Michael Young for the completion of hardscapes, irrigation, and was then subcontracted by the Youngs for mowing, landscape maintenance, and fertilizing and spraying.

## **The Story of Condray and Young**

In 2009, after working successfully on a large project together, Young's Landscapes merged with Kelly Condray to form Condray and Young Landscape and Professional Groundskeeping. Michael Young joined the team as well adding his expertise in building hardscapes – stucco and stone wall designs.

During the past three years the company has grown over 60% in revenues with annual revenue increasing at least 20%



per year. The company employs six full time employees and over 20 seasonal employees.

The owners shared that the landscape business is extremely competitive in the Topeka area. They have been able to grow and maintain their success by attracting and retaining dedicated quality employees. These employees take great care in the professional service they provide and keep customers happy. Most new business is obtained through word-of-mouth advertising, and from prospects obtained at the annual Topeka Lawn and Garden show, held each spring at the Shawnee County Expo Center.

For Condray and Young, the keys to their success have been in developing trust –delegating/empowering their employees to provide great landscapes and professional groundskeeping. Great customer service and follow up have provided numerous new referrals. Their team approach to managing the business has proven successful in decision making and growth. After the businesses merged in 2009 Kelly says, “Since then we’ve continued to hire and acquired some very high quality employees. We take pride in our quality and our crew.”

Their advice to prospective entrepreneurs is to remember to focus

on working *on* the business not always *in* the business. They encouraged others to use a team approach in managing a business and to remember that customer service and satisfaction is critical to business survival.

---

condrayandyoungllc.com  
785-286-1563

Assisted by  
Les Streit, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at WU  
Topeka. WU KSBDC | 785.234.3235 |  
washburnsmallbusiness.com |  
ksbdc@washburn.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist.#18 – Laura Kelly  
State Rep. Dist.#50 – Joshua Powell

## Condray & Young By the Numbers

Washburn SBDC began working with Matt Young on a business plan and loan application in late 2003. Matt was a recent K-State Horticulture graduate and wanted to return to Topeka to start a landscape business.

- Young Landscapes obtained financing and started business in 2004.
- Matt Young and Kelly Condray worked with Washburn SBDC in late 2008 to discuss a business merger.
- Businesses merged in 2009 under the name Condray and Young Landscape and Professional Groundskeeping.
- Current business operation located at 414 NW 25th Street, Topeka, Kansas.
- Company employs six full-time and over 20 seasonal employees.
- Current annual revenues have increased over 60% in the last three years with 20% annual growth each year.
- Business provides landscape design and installation services, irrigation systems, hardscapes, and landscape maintenance services.

# Even Experience Can Use a Little Help Now and Then

Keltic Star Public House



**P**erry and Shirley McCall always wanted to own a business but it wasn't until their son, Darren, showed interest that their idea became the Keltic Star Public House.

Located at 1215 Moro St. in Manhattan's Aggieville Business District, Keltic Star has established a strong following in the crowded market of Manhattan eating and drinking establishments.

“We focus on great food and better service, things we've learned the value of through years of experience.”



While their business may be new, the McCalls were far from novices when they started Keltic Star. Shirley had over 20 years of restaurant employment and management experience. Darren brought in both front of the house and back of the house experience having worked in all aspects of the restaurant and bar business in Manhattan.

To get their idea open for business the McCalls sought out the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Washburn University's outreach center in Manhattan. Located with the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce the Manhattan center was close for the McCalls to get some quick assistance from consultant Daryn Soldan. Soldan worked with the McCalls assisting with business entity and state tax filings as well as the paperwork required to obtain state and local liquor licenses.

Since opening, Keltic Star has become a popular K-State game day hangout. Sports fans of all types come by to watch soccer and rugby matches direct from Europe's top leagues and enjoy the Keltic menu.

Menu items, drinks, and even booth upholstery – green for Ireland, red for Shirley's native Wales and Blue for Scotland – have strong ties across the Atlantic. However, the McCalls didn't stop there. They imported pub stools directly from England and had a 2,400 lb. red phone booth shipped over from a small town in Wales.

The public house, or pub, also connects with the local Manhattan community and Kansas State University. The McCalls chose the original spelling of Keltic, with a “K” as a nod to the university, and developed a logo that prominently features a purple “KS”. Purple upholstery can also be found throughout the interior.

When asked about their secret to success, Shirley McCall, Co-Owner shared simply, “We focus on great food and better service, things we've learned the value of through years of experience.”

---

Find Keltic on Facebook  
785-320-7456

Assisted by  
Daryn Soldan, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at WU  
Manhattan. WU KSBDC Outreach |  
785.587.9917 | washburnsmallbusiness.com |  
Daryn.soldan@washburn.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#22 – Tom Hawk  
State Rep. Dist.#67 – Tom Phillips



## Planning for Transition

Great Plains Quilt Company

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**K**athy Smith was a registered nurse. She'd watched first hand as the nursing and medical field experienced change after change and realized that it was time for a new path.

She was a quilter at heart and wanted to pursue her passion in Burlingame, Kansas, a small town of approximately 900 residents located half-way between Emporia and Topeka.

When Smith and her husband Larry were getting the business started they recognized that they needed some help so they sought out the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Washburn University. Together with KSBDC consultant Rick LeJuerrne, Smith credits LeJuerrne for helping her "stick with the process and complete the plan."

Staying on top of cash flow and planning ahead has helped Great Plains capitalize on opportunities as they arise in the market. Smith knows that if another area quilt shop decides to liquidate inventory, it becomes tough to compete on price. And she must pay attention to and participate in what's happening across the quilting network. "We have built a successful business by networking with other shops and working with other local businesses

to create synergy.” One tool she uses for marketing is the shop hop. “We participate in several shop hops (one brings in 800 people over 4 days) and work with other quilt shops on bus tours, retreats, etc.”

She credits understanding how important it is to create a destination shopping opportunity for your community. And not listening to the nay-sayers, but instead sticking to a well-laid plan.

“Everyone (especially my dad) thought the quilt shop was the worst idea ever,” says Smith. “I felt it would work if

I could get the people to come here and not rely on only local trade. Many times we have customers who want to eat at the restaurant next door or shop at the antique store, etc., so it is a big community benefit for all of us.”

### **Business Succession.**

As she nears retirement, Smith realized it was time to discuss the next steps in her established business. She knew she didn’t want to leave a hole in the community she loved and at the same time needed a plan to work out opportunities for her company’s future. Smith contacted the KSBDC to develop a succession plan. Tom Byler, KSBDC consultant who works with the collaborative Emporia State University and Pittsburg State University centers helped the Smiths develop their plan. Byler helped them assess their business using industry benchmarks and comparing their business to available industry averages.



Because of this analysis, Great Plains has applied the information to their business processes and realized a gain in profit. According to Byler, Smith has kept excellent financial records making it easier for the team to quickly determine how to further improve the business financially.

Tapping into the KSBDC network, Byler also brought in Will Katz with the KSBDC at KU to assist with business valuation. Katz is certified in business

valuation and added additional value to the succession planning process.

Smith credits the planning process she worked through with the KSBDC – both at startup and now transitioning to succession – as key to successful business operations and peace of mind. “These plans have made me pull things together and think through everything. It also has given me peace of mind that if something happens to me or when I am ready to exit my business, there are pre-determined steps to take.” Smith goes on to share, “Good plans make it easier to operate overall because you go through a valuable process before you get in the middle of everything and you already know what to do because you’ve already thought it through.”

We’ve asked Smith for some of her advice and insight in the form of a short Q & A that follows.

### **Q&A with Kathy Smith**

*What do you believe is the secret to your small business success?*

Sheer determination and stubbornness! Also, realizing that you can’t fall in love with your inventory so if it’s not moving you have to get it out the door.

*If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself before starting your small business?*

Realize that you have to keep investing in your business to keep inventory at an attractive level.

*What advice would you give to someone thinking about starting a business today?*

Plan. Plan. Plan. I knew the importance of planning but really learned from the process. I used the plan, but really didn’t have to pull it out and read it because I knew what I was doing because of the process I had already gone through.

*What advice would you give to someone currently in business today?*

You can’t sit back and rest on your laurels – keep driving forward all the time. Stay on top of current events locally and nationally.

**Planning is key to successful transition. Kathy, we couldn’t agree more.**

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greatplainsquiltcompany.com  
785-654-3303

Assisted by  
Tom Byler, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at ESU  
Chanute. ESU Outreach NCCC |  
620.431.2820x285 | emporia.edu/sbdc |  
tbyler@pittstate.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist.#19 – Anthony Hensley  
State Rep. Dist. #54 – Ken Corbett



# A Farmstead Reinvented

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Fulton Valley Farms LLC

**D**avid and Betty Corbin are long time farmers, stockmen, and commodity brokers in central Butler County, and own an original homestead passed down through David's family since the 1860's.

Farm uncertainties being what they are, they looked at creating secondary income to help retire farm debt and produce additional income with existing and new facilities. The Corbins developed the idea of having their hay barn used for weddings, group meetings, and celebrations, as well as building an adjacent new facility to house corporate meetings and catered dining events. These buildings were all on the family property south of Towanda where their commodity brokerage business and home were already located. All of the properties are in a wooded, streamed, rolling area with the Whitewater River as a backdrop.

The Corbins joined Kansas Agri-Tourism in 2005. They met with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Emporia State University through the outreach program co-located at Butler County Community College. Dean Claycamp, KSBDC consultant assisted with the development of their business plan and cash flow projections for the new

and existing facilities, and assisted with application for a Value-added, Agritourism loan from the Kansas Department of Commerce in 2009. The loan was approved, and their marketing plans to expand their wedding and gathering services were put in place. Since that time, their calendar bookings have continued expanding to where they now have all weekend dates (seasonal) consistently filled for over a year out.

The businesses are a family affair, with children and grandchildren now helping with the operations needed for each of these components.



In 2013 they came up with the idea to offer another tourism attraction, in the form of a large walk through Christmas lighting display in the wooded areas. They provide an overlook deck and limited transportation for customers who cannot walk through the area. A live nativity, concessions, and vendor sales booths are located in the barn and meeting areas, heated for cold weather events.

As part of their expansion, the Corbins have refurbished a five bedroom home and a small amphitheater adjacent to the wooded property for family reunions, concerts, dances and other group gatherings. This family farm is a work in progress and has helped the Corbins to capitalize on the assets of their family farm.

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[fultonvalleyfarms.com](http://fultonvalleyfarms.com)  
316-775-1894

Assisted by  
Dean Claycamp, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at ESU  
Andover. ESU KSBDC BCCC Outreach |  
316.218.6374 | [emporia.edu/sbdc](http://emporia.edu/sbdc) |  
[ksbdc@butlercc.edu](mailto:ksbdc@butlercc.edu)

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #4 – Mike Pompeo  
State Sen. Dist.#14 – Forrest Knox  
State Rep. Dist.#75 – Will Carpenter



# Technology, Timing, and Resources Working in Tandem

## Sunlite Science & Technology



“In 2014, you can say goodbye to the standard incandescent light bulb” according to a December 27, 2013 Web log post in USA Today. “Starting Jan. 1, the United States will no longer manufacture or import incandescent bulbs – although stores can still sell what they have in stock.”<sup>1</sup>

Light Emitting Diode, or LED lighting technology is part of the next wave of energy-efficient alternatives. LED lighting may be new technology to many, but this Existing Business of the Year award recipient has been working on it for almost twenty years.

Sunlite Science & Technology was founded in 1996 by Jeff Chen. Initially, the business was focused on the semiconductor wafer industry. In 1997, Hewlett-Packard introduced a commercial High Brightness LED, at which point Chen recognized an opportunity in LED lighting. Chen has spent much of the last twenty years designing application-specific LED lighting solutions. As a result, Sunlite has developed an impressive portfolio of intellectual property and LED products that are unlike anything else on the market. “We try to make products that are unique,” says Chen.

Fourteen years after they began, Sunlite Science & Technology took

advantage of the growing interest in supporting businesses focused on technology. From 2010 to 2013, Sunlite continued product development as a resident of the University of Kansas Bioscience and Technology Business Center in Lawrence. Graduating from the program in 2013, Sunlite began looking for resources to assist with their business growth.

“We try to make products that are unique.

After connecting with the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, Chen was introduced to the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at the University of Kansas by the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce as a candidate for an Economic Gardening project. The Lawrence Chamber of Commerce economic development team thought the resources provided by the KSBDC at KU would be a great fit for both. And that has proven to be the case.

“We are a technology-oriented company,” says Chen. “But sometimes we need help with the business side of things. We always feel comfortable calling our KSBDC consultant about anything related to strategy, mission, or business development.” Together Sunlite and their KSBDC consultant,

Will Katz, developed a set of business development and sales strategies that have already impacted sales growth. Chen and his team have learned the value of prospecting and have changed trade show strategy to improve their marketing effectiveness.

Add a growing market to twenty years of experience and multiply that by the assistance provided by the KSBDC, and

Jeff Chen and his team at Sunlite Science & Technology are well-positioned for success in 2014 and beyond.

<sup>1</sup> Lee, J. (2013, December 27). *Why people still use inefficient incandescent light bulbs*. [Web log post]. USA Today. Retrieved January 21, 2014, from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2013/12/27/incandescent-light-bulbs-phase-out-leds/4217009/>

sunlitest.com  
785-832-8818

Assisted by  
Will Katz, KSBDC Regional Director  
KSBDC at KU  
Lawrence. KU KSBDC | 785.843.8844 |  
[business.ku.edu/ku-small-business-development-center](http://business.ku.edu/ku-small-business-development-center) | [ksbdc@ku.edu](mailto:ksbdc@ku.edu)

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist. #19 – Anthony Hensley  
State Rep. Dist. #45 – Tom Sloan

# A Love of Sport. A Passion for Business.

Grip EQ

**A** love of the sport of disc golf is what inspired Justin Atwater-Taylor to start Grip EQ.

Atwater-Taylor has played disc golf across the globe and saw a hole in the market for the best way to transport the multiple discs that serious lovers of the sport carry with them. In 2010 he began manufacturing bags under the company name Grip EQ. Today, Grip bags are sold across the globe. A network of international manufacturing and distribution has helped make Grip the number one seller and designer of disc golf bags on the planet.

Thanks to an international increase in the awareness and participation in disc golf, Grip EQ has seen amazing growth since its 2010 inception. Over the last year Grip has been working with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at the University of Kansas to reduce debt and increase potential capital opportunities to allow for new lines of bags to be developed. Brian Dennis, KSBDC consultant leveraged several tools uniquely available to the KSBDC to assist with Grip EQ's development and growth.

Using market research as well as financial benchmarking and profit analysis, Dennis and Atwater-Taylor worked together to build a plan that would incorporate both traditional lenders and new equity partners. Atwater-Taylor credits the plan with laying the groundwork for a smooth transition as he brought in a new partnership team with backgrounds in

manufacturing and distribution. The new ownership team will help take Grip EQ to the next level.

Grip's five administrative and design employees are all located in Lawrence, Kansas.



Manufacturing takes place overseas as well as international distribution.

The company is excited about 2014 as it moves

to increase sales and product offerings.

When reflecting on how the KSBDC at KU has helped to change his business, Atwater-Taylor shared, "I certainly have a better handle on the financials. That was one of my obstacles in managing something that quickly became a multi-national company. Without much experience doing anything like that getting that down on paper really helped me organize my thoughts on where we were going."

[grip-eq.com](http://grip-eq.com)  
909-474-7835

Assisted by  
Brian Dennis, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at KU  
Lawrence. KU KSBDC | 785.843.8844 |  
[business.ku.edu/ku-small-business-development-center](http://business.ku.edu/ku-small-business-development-center) | [ksbdc@ku.edu](mailto:ksbdc@ku.edu)

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist.#2 – Marci Francisco  
State Rep. Dist.#10 – John Wilson



## Ask the Entrepreneur. A short Q&A with Justin Atwater-Taylor

*What inspired you to buy/start/expand your business?*

Insanity? Lunacy? Idiocy? I always wanted to do my own thing, ever since I was a little kid I dreamed of owning my own business. My grandpa was an entrepreneur as well. The opportunity presented itself to be a part of a sport that I was very involved in, I couldn't pass it up.

*What do you believe is the secret to your small business success?*

Working with talented and smart people who are good at the things that I'm not good at.

*If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself before starting your small business?*

I honestly wish I had been able to go to work for a big company who already had their stuff together, to be a sponge for a few years to learn the industry. And find collaborators early!

*What advice would you give to someone thinking about starting a business today?*  
Make sure you work with good people.

*What advice would you give to someone currently in business today?*

You'll be weighed down with problems, don't let them stop you. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other and move forward.



# From Hobby To Online Enterprise

## Hooked on Ornaments

**W**hen you find an untapped niche, a hobby can quickly grow into a profitable enterprise. That's what owner Nicki Pierce learned when she created Hooked on Ornaments. She started as many small business ventures do, "as a hobby, a fun activity and a learning experience," says Pierce.

Pierce kept the business home-based as long as possible to keep overhead low, but storage, shipping, bookkeeping, marketing, and all other facets of a small business soon outgrew her home. The first leased commercial location for the company was quickly outgrown, as well – in fact, they needed to double the space within three years and again three years later. At that time, Pierce decided that it was time to buy a building. Hooked on Ornaments, which has exceeded previous years' sales volumes every year since 1996, now occupies a 9,000 square foot building which includes an office, warehouse and shipping facility.

Hooked on Ornaments' success comes during a time when the overall collectibles market has been in decline, due to generational changes and the economy overall. The company sells Hallmark ornaments on the secondary market through its e-commerce site. They don't buy the ornaments directly from Hallmark, but instead specialize in discontinued, retired and collectible ornaments.

Pierce strives to keep up with market and technology changes and advises, "Always be looking for better, more customer-friendly, profitable ways to do things, especially important on the internet, as things change very quickly."

It was the challenge of an ever-evolving market that led Pierce to the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Johnson County Community College. Pierce values the time she spends working with her KSBDC consultant, John Addressi. "It's really important to have outside reviews and consultants to take a fresh and different look," says Pierce. Over time, the KSBDC has worked with Pierce on improving her web sites with tips for getting to the top of organic search engine results, which she says is critical to any internet business. This process "lessened the huge expense of pay-per-click advertising that Hooked on Ornaments once endured," says Pierce.

And not unlike many KSBDC entrepreneurs, Pierce is always looking for the next niche opportunity.

Occupying a largely seasonal market with Hooked on Ornaments led to further evolution. Pierce started a second e-business, Big Time Cruisers, focused on beach cruiser bicycles. It was a natural extension for the business playing off its current strengths. Pierce maintained a staff of exceptional full-time employees during the off season

for ornaments. The addition of the Big Time Cruisers product line offered seasonal synergy for year-round sales.

No matter how large the company grows, Pierce continues to follow the sound practice of doing business by the "old fashioned Golden Rule" and "delivering quickly and as promised." It's a solid set of rules to live by for a fun hobby turned profitable enterprise.

### “Quotes from the Entrepreneur

*Secret to Success: "Really pay attention to the market and always seek a better way to do everything that we do."*

*If you could go back in time: "Do your homework" and "start small, keep your overhead low."*

*Advice for starting a business/currently in business: "Be flexible, ever changing, always looking for new opportunities."*

hookedonhallmark.com  
866-219-9774

Assisted by  
John Addressi, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at JCCC  
Overland Park, JCCC KSBDC | 913.469.3878 |  
jccc.edu/ksbdc | ksbdc@jccc.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #3 – Kevin Yoder  
State Sen. Dist.#9 – Julia Lynn  
State Rep. Dist.#15 – Erin Davis



# Innovation and Inspiration

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notes to self, llc

“What if I put positive affirmations on the toes of socks . . . then at least twice a day, the person wearing them would see those words and improve his or her well-being without even trying?”

Always a believer in the power of positive affirmations, Laura Schmidt asked this question while on a family road trip with her feet on the car dashboard, and notes to self, llc was conceptualized. Through market research, Schmidt confirmed that the subconscious mind is most accessible first thing in the morning and late at night; she also recognized that these are the times when people put on and take off socks.

Schmidt started actively working on the sock line in April 2011. She designed her first prototype labeled “I am awesome” that summer, and the first pair was sold in August 2011. The growing sock line shares messages including “I am smart,” “I am awesome,” “I am strong,” and “I am perfectly me.”

The notes to self® line is currently sold in more than 1,000 retail locations nationwide plus online at [www.notestoself.com](http://www.notestoself.com). While notes to self®

notes to  
self, llc

socks are popular among students, athletes, and adults, Schmidt’s original goal has always been to get the socks on the feet of those who are not routinely guided by positive thinking coaches, such as at-risk and impoverished youth as well as those battling serious illness who need to rely on positive thinking. The company has had the privilege of partnering with and donating thousands of socks to nonprofit organizations.

The company has grown dramatically since 2011, and Schmidt has faced many tough business decisions along the way.

The operation started as a home-based business, but quickly outgrew the Schmidt household. Schmidt hoped that using a fulfillment company would allow notes to self® to remain in her home; after trying that option, she decided to bring daily operations in-house so that she could have more control and flexibility with order fulfillment. With orders increasing weekly, Schmidt opened “Socks Central,” a warehouse which employs seven people and allows Schmidt to offer unparalleled customer service.

Recognizing the need for a formal business plan and financial projections, Schmidt contacted the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Johnson County Community College in July 2011. Since then Schmidt has

met monthly with Elisa Waldman of the KSBDC at JCCC to review cash flow, quality issues, inventory questions, human resource challenges, marketing opportunities, and expansion. Schmidt explains that “there were many times when I was at a ‘Y’ in the road...and Elisa listened, asked questions, and helped me think through whether I should turn left or right. She has been, and continues to be, a huge help to me in my business growth.”

The company’s goal is to get 1 million pairs of notes to self® socks on people’s feet by the end of 2014. “Just think about all the power that could be unleashed by people who are thinking positively,” Schmidt says. While Schmidt’s mission to improve people’s lives through the use of positive affirmations began with socks, she is hard at work developing new positive notes to self™ product lines to be released in the near future.

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[notestoself.com](http://notestoself.com)  
913-384-1114

Assisted by  
Elisa Waldman, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at JCCC  
Overland Park. JCCC KSBDC | 913.469.3878 |  
[jccc.edu/ksbdc](http://jccc.edu/ksbdc) | [ksbdc@jccc.edu](mailto:ksbdc@jccc.edu)

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #3 – Kevin Yoder  
State Sen. Dist.#7 – Kay Wolf  
State Rep. Dist.#21- Barbara Bollier



## Patience and Perseverance

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### Independence Pharmacy

Independence, Kansas, not unlike many other rural Kansas communities, had a downtown pharmacy for as many years as the town is old.

As often happens in rural communities, businesses either close, or if viable, are sold to a company with no ties to the community. In this case, the pharmacy sold to a national franchise. And with the sale, DeFever Osborn Drug, an icon in Independence since 1937, was closed and a new facility was constructed outside the downtown area.

Terry Scott, who owned the downtown building that had previously housed the pharmacy, believed Independence still needed the services provided by a hometown pharmacy and by someone from the community who took special interest in keeping the downtown area vital.

In 2008, Scott approached B.G. Tucker to combine forces bringing Scott's chemistry education and Tucker's financial experience together to form Independence Pharmacy, Inc. As part of the startup process, the team approached a local lender, Community National Bank in Coffeyville to back their venture. Community National then recommended the resources of the

Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) at Pittsburg State University.

KSBDC consultant, Cindy Triplett, lent her expertise as a former commercial lender with exceptional SBA loan experience. Together the team began the exploration and discovery process essentially building the business from the ground up.



Pharmaceutical sales is a highly regulated industry at both

the state and federal levels. Medicare Part B had just undergone a regulatory change that was effective the day the Independence Pharmacy opened for business. Triplett worked with Scott and Tucker by literally spending a great deal

application process. Additionally, the team of Triplett, Scott, and Tucker worked through evaluation of several point-of-sale (POS) systems which owners Scott and Tucker credit with keeping their business going while complying with the extensive tracking and reporting they are required to provide to state and federal regulatory agencies today.

To help Scott and Tucker develop a viable business plan and projections that could be used to secure funding, Triplett tapped into KSBDC market research resources including potential in-depth customer demographics to develop accurate cash flow projections that were used to secure the loan and provide a compass for Independence Pharmacy as the business grows. Triplett also met jointly with a Certified Development Company and the clients to explain the loan process and how it was influenced by collateral, equity injection into the

“Surround yourselves with good people and have patience and perseverance.”

of time on the phone with the Kansas Board of Pharmacy/Kansas Pharmacists Association to gain enough information on the licensing accreditation process to help Tucker with contacts that could remove the bottlenecks in the

business, owner experience in the industry, and stability of the industry so the broader team could define the best asset management strategy for both start-up and future growth.

Fortitude, persistence, and team work paid off. On September 1, 2008, Independence Pharmacy opened their doors in downtown Independence.

Independence Pharmacy identified a hole and filled that hole in their community. They continue to compete against other independent pharmacies, mail order distributors, franchises, and the latest insurance health care contracts favoring the national chain stores. By defining their niche market and services, as well as the processes they need to have in place to better serve their customers, the company has found their place in the market.

As for advice for anyone starting a business, Independence Pharmacy advises, “Surround yourselves with good people and have patience and perseverance.”

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Find Independence on Facebook  
620-331-3784

Assisted by  
Cindy Triplett, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at PSU  
Pittsburg. PSU KSBDC | 620.235.4920 |  
pittstate.edu/bti/sbdc |  
ksbdc@pittstate.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist.#15 – Jeff King  
State Rep. Dist.#11 – James Kelly



## Relocation. Expansion. And Evolution.

### Bolling's Meat Market and Deli

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**T**he Bolling family's idea for the meat market and deli in Iola was a topic of discussion for a number of years before it became a reality. Their idea? To open a full-service meat market similar to something you might have experienced from the past – with a local butcher that knows you by name and where customers can buy every cut carved to their specifications.

The Bollings were familiar with meat and the meat business. The family had owned a meat processing facility in Moran, a nearby community, for a number of years and had great success with the retail portion of the business. But over time they noticed their customer base was overwhelmingly from out of town. The question became, “Should we bring our business to our customers rather than relying on them to travel to Moran?”

Then in 2003 they thought they had their answer. The Moran meat processing facility burned. Destroyed by a devastating fire, perhaps this crisis

had provided the perfect opportunity to relocate. But you don't just pull up stakes and move a business. It's not that easy. After careful consideration, the family decided it wasn't the ideal time to assume the risk. The family rebuilt in the same location.

Over the years, the idea never died. In 2010, the timing was right, and they expanded their operations to Iola keeping the processing facility in place in Moran. To successfully operate two locations, the family divided location responsibilities. The Bolling's daughter, Cara Bolling Thomas, manages the Iola meat market and deli, while Mitch and Sharon continue to operate the Moran meat processing facility.

#### The Story Behind the Story

And while you can see two locations for Bolling's Meat operating today, what you don't see is the story behind the story. And this is where the Kansas Small Business Development Center begins to help.

Knowing they needed to expand, Cara began looking for assistance to improve operations of the business and explore ideas to expand the business. She received a recommendation from another business that had used the KSBDC at Pittsburg State University. Cara then contacted the center and began working with KSBDC consultant Tom Byler.

As Bolling Thomas and Byler worked together throughout the consulting relationship, they uncovered challenges that could be addressed to help the company reach its goals. While the business was a retail operation, they were not using a point-of-sale (POS) system. With an effective electronic system in place they could get a better grasp on sales, costs, or profits. A consistent accounting system could also reduce the guess work around inventory, cost of goods, and sales tax.

To help them achieve their goals, Byler researched several systems and provided them to the client for comparison. To nail down the market potential Byler used the KSBDC's extensive market research tools and provided data that the company could use to identify their market including what their market looked like, who their potential customers were, and how they could better market their base.

As a result of KSBDC assistance, the Bolling's have purchased a POS system, implemented accountability in their paperwork, re-worked their marketing strategy, and re-priced their product accordingly. Today, they readily admit their business is much more efficient. They have a firmer grasp on cash flow and profitability, and they have a plan in place to move forward with their business goals.

In Cara's view, their greatest successes in opening the Iola facility have been establishing a loyal customer base and experiencing the need to expand three times since opening. The greatest challenges they faced have been finding a reliable work force, managing pricing to be competitive with national retailers, and accounting.

When commenting on their success, Cara has some valuable advice that we believe is so powerful we'd like to share in its entirety.

### *In the words of Cara Bolling Thomas...*

The secret to success is not just one secret. It's many.

First, you must have a passion for what you do. You need to believe in your product and sell it as such.

After you firmly believe that you have the best available product in your market, you need to have the drive to sell it. You must be willing to put in the blood, sweat, and tears to make this viable.

You must also KNOW your product. You need to know everything about it, from where it was made, to how, to why.

Do not go into a business green. Get a mentor or some experience in the field.

And we know that her attitude, determination, and work ethic is without a doubt part of that secret. "I work every day at improving our product and our customer service. I talk and listen to our customers and



find out the reasons they spend money with me and how I can make sure that they continue," says Cara. "I know our product, I know our customers, and I know the work it takes to keep it that way."

Her advice to someone thinking about starting a business is to "know who your potential customers are, how to attain them, and how to keep them. Realize the people who work for you are a direct reflection on you, the owner. Never employ someone you cannot trust." For current business owners, Cara would recommend taking time "to stay on top on the ever-changing scene. A business will need to evolve through the years and the owner should embrace change or the business will not grow."

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Find Bolling's on Facebook  
620-331-3784

Assisted by  
Tom Byler, KSBDC Consultant  
KSBDC at PSU  
Chanute. PSU KSBDC NCCC Outreach |  
620.431.2820x285 | pittstate.edu/bti/sbdc |  
tbyler@pittstate.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #2 – Lynn Jenkins  
State Sen. Dist.#12 – Caryn Tyson  
State Rep. Dist.#9 – Kent Thompson

# About Us

## Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) Network



**O**ur small business clients' stories tell our story best. Without them, there is no story to tell.

As you can attest from the stories included in this annual report, we help our clients leverage a variety of resources - many of which we can access as an accredited member of the nation-wide small business development network known as America's SBDC.

While we are part of a group of 63 organizations across the U.S. that make up America's SBDC, our focus in Kansas is on **growing Kansas entrepreneurs**.

For the past 30 years we've served tens of thousands of existing businesses, entrepreneurs, and pre-venture clients by providing exceptional confidential consulting, education, and training to businesses just like those featured in this program.

Twenty-five consultants along with support teams deliver service from eight regional centers across the state. Regional centers are hosted on both university and community college campuses. Outreach centers can be found on community college campuses or co-located with economic development partners.

Since 1983, we've served as the driving force leading small business development in Kansas. Because our services are confidential, and to keep our focus on providing service, we do not actively advertise.

# 55%

jobs growth by  
KSBDC clients in  
2012 (year over  
year)

# 28%

sales growth by  
KSBDC clients in  
2012 (year over  
year)

### Who We Serve

We serve all small business across the state of Kansas including existing small business and individuals exploring pre-venture opportunities. (See *What Defines a Small Business* sidebar on the following page.)

### How to Access our Services

Any current small business owner or individual interested in pursuing a small business interest is encouraged to contact any center (see back cover) or to visit our website at [ksbdc.kansas.gov](http://ksbdc.kansas.gov) to learn more about our services.





## What Defines a Small Business?

The Small Business Administration (SBA) defines a small business concern as one that is independently owned and operated, is organized for profit, and is not dominant in its field. Depending on the industry, size standard eligibility is based on the average number of employees for the preceding twelve months or on sales volume averaged over a three-year period.

Examples of SBA general size standards include the following:

- Manufacturing: Maximum number of employees may range from 500 to 1500, depending on the type of product manufactured;
- Wholesaling: Maximum number of employees may range from 100 to 500 depending on the particular product being provided;
- Services: Annual receipts may not exceed \$2.5 to \$21.5 million, depending on the particular service being provided;
- Retailing: Annual receipts may not exceed \$5.0 to \$21.0 million, depending on the particular product being provided;
- General and Heavy Construction: General construction annual receipts may not exceed \$13.5 to \$17 million, depending on the type of construction;
- Special Trade Construction: Annual receipts may not exceed \$7 million; and
- Agriculture: Annual receipts may not exceed \$0.5 to \$9.0 million, depending on the agricultural product.

## Our Services

We provide no-cost one-on-one confidential consulting and low-cost education and training based on market need. Our consultants come from a variety of industries with expertise in management, operations, law, sales, marketing, and accounting. To keep up with the market demand we consistently train our team to meet our clients' needs. Recently we've added in-depth expertise and certification in the areas of business valuation, international trade, and deal financing.

### Access to Capital.

We assist business owners and prospective business owners by identifying a variety of internal and external funding sources for their needs. We assist with the development of the required documentation to obtain financing.

### Business Plans.

We help existing business owners and pre-venture businesses define and document potential business opportunity in order to help clients assess the feasibility of the business opportunity. Our goal is to position the business for future performance and profitability.

### Cash Flow.

We work to assess and educate business owners on the process of managing their organization's income and expenditures. We assist startups and existing businesses alike with developing viable cash flow projections to help with critical decision making.

### Financial Analysis.

We assist small businesses by both assessing and educating clients with the calculation and analysis of financial data. We help business decision makers understand financial reports, tools and ratios and how they can impact business operations. We use industry benchmarks and other financial data to accurately diagnose business conditions for more precise decision making.

### Product and Service Marketing Plans.

We assist clients with developing their marketing plan including formulation, implementation, evaluation, and control processes of the plan.

### Market Research.

We assist clients with valuable market research that small businesses cannot afford on the open market. We research the environment for feasibility and/or future business opportunities, and we collect and analyze existing information and trends that may impact an organization's performance – all at no cost to our small business clients.

### Strategic Planning.

We assist clients with the development of a long-term vision for their business. And we assist with determining the long-term objectives and tactics necessary to achieve the vision.

### Education and Training.

We provide small business owners with a variety of low-cost, high-impact education and training opportunities at our centers, at our clients' place of business, through economic development and other partners, as well as online 24/7/365.

# The Difference We Make



**W**hen we're asked about our impact on the communities we serve, we explain it in terms of a ripple effect.

We know that everything we do to grow Kansas entrepreneurs needs to make a difference in the short term, interim term, and long term. It needs to make a difference in the entrepreneur's life, in his business, in his immediate community/city/town, in his county, and beyond.

Each effect is different – some create waves and are more noticeable, and some provide a subtle spring, creating new energy, and some provide the momentum in the form of an undercurrent that keeps the water flowing for years.

Since each and every person that works at the KSBDC is a taxpaying citizen, we take a very concerned interest to ensure that the dollars invested in the KSBDC are well-spent, flowing back into our communities many times over. Why? Because we live and work and take our kids to school in these communities as well. We hold ourselves to the highest level of accountability and measure the difference we make in our clients' businesses every day.

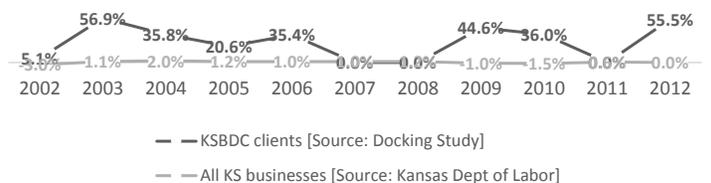
## Ripple effect in the tax base.

Each year we conduct surveys to measure impact. Clients have the option to participate and are asked to only report the difference that the KSBDC has made on their business. Through these surveys we've found that in 2012, for every \$1 invested in the KSBDC network \$16.30 was generated in new taxes at the federal and state levels.

Return is measured by calculating sales and income tax on client revenue, jobs created, and jobs retained. Numbers are calculated based on self-reported and affirmed client surveys, independent scientific study, and legislative audit.

## DO WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN JOBS GROWTH? KSBDC CLIENTS V ALL KANSAS BUSINESSES

NOTE: FOR THE SURVEY YEARS 2007, 2008, 2011, ADEQUATE DATA WAS NOT COLLECTED BY THE KSBDC SURVEY INSTRUMENT.

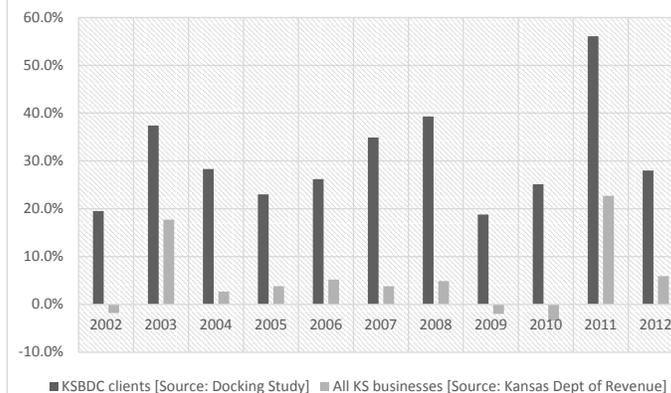


And even though our return on investment is impressive, keep in mind that our impact is a conservative estimate with 40% of our clients completing survey requests in 2012.

Additionally, we compare the performance of our business clients with all of Kansas businesses. Since we've started measuring this in 2002, our clients have consistently outperformed all Kansas businesses when comparing average annual sales growth.

These numbers really come to life when we can convey them in the stories told by our small business clients. On the following page you'll read one story of impact felt in western Kansas.

## Do we make a difference? Average Annual Sales Growth KSBDC clients v. Kansas businesses



# Ripple Effect Improves Quality of Life

Liberal, Kansas Community



In the City of Liberal, Seward County, Kansas, it's critical to have adequate health care. Without adequate health care facilities and individual physicians and providers the city's infrastructure suffers. With health care providers, cities bring in dollars from beyond their borders. In rural Kansas this is especially true, often drawing local spending on health care services from neighboring counties, and even neighboring states.

In Liberal, Kansas, the KSBDC has played a critical role over the past few years in retaining health care providers and building additional health care services and facilities. Please note, names have been omitted to protect client confidentiality except where granted by the client.

## **First Ripple. Request and research.**

Physician #1 approached Mike O'Kane, KSBDC consultant with the Kansas Small Business Development Center outreach center at Seward County Community College. The Seward County center is an outreach of the KSBDC at Garden City Community College.

The physician asked O'Kane to help him explore the feasibility of starting his own private practice. The big question was, "Could the physician afford to go out on their own and still live and work in Liberal? Or would it take leaving the market to make the business a success?"

O'Kane conducted a market study (free of charge to the physician) to measure market potential as well as provide the groundwork for a loan request. The study was positive. Physician #1 secures the loan, pays it off ahead of projection, and is still practicing in Liberal today. O'Kane continues to work as needed counsel with this physician.

## **Second Ripple. Referral and growth.**

Physician #2 is an existing practice. He receives a recommendation from Physician #1 to work with the KSBDC. Physician #2 reaches out to the O'Kane. O'Kane works extensively with the existing practice to help them develop a solid business plan that can be used to manage and grow the business. The physician invests personal capital into the business and grows. Physician #2 has since hired additional employees and continues to provide health care service in Liberal today.

## **Third Ripple. Referral and new business.**

Physician #3 is referred by Physician #2 to the KSBDC. Physician #3 is interested in starting his own practice. O'Kane assists by providing solid start up advice. Physician is still practicing and providing health care to Liberal citizens and community members today.

The three health care providers assisted by the KSBDC serve as an example of

how far and wide the ripple effect is felt in our communities when businesses seek out the assistance of KSBDC.

## **Lasting Effect.**

The residents of Liberal have benefitted by having much-needed health care providers (like the ones provided in our example), retailers, manufacturers, and other service providers building and growing viable businesses in their community – all with the help of the KSBDC. This is true across many of our communities. There are stories just as relevant making ripple effects every day in Kansas – stories like those included in this program and on our website. We hope you enjoy the stories and more importantly the benefits that you receive from being a small business and doing business with small business in Kansas.

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Assisted by  
Mike O'Kane, KSBDC Consultant  
Liberal. GCCC KSBDC SCCC/ATS Outreach |  
620.417.1955 | swksbdc.com | ksbdc@sccc.edu

Represented by  
Senator Pat Roberts  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Fed. Dist. #1 – Tim Huelskamp  
State Sen. Dist.#38 - Garrett Love  
State Rep. Dist.#125 - Reid Petty

# Partner Support

Our services wouldn't be possible without the ongoing support of our partners at the federal, state, and local levels.

Many of our university partners have been with us since our network was created in 1983 - Emporia State University (1983), Fort Hays State University (1983), Garden City Community College (1991), Johnson County Community College (1983), Pittsburg State University (1983), University of Kansas (1984), Washburn University (1983), and Wichita State University (1983).

By providing on-campus facilities and access to support resources the network keeps overhead low and funding focused on providing free consulting and low- and no-cost workshops, classes, training, and seminars.

We work in sync with our partners to ensure we are filling the need for support in the communities we serve. We often combine forces to offer seminars and workshops to our partners' membership, clients, and their immediate geographic markets.

In addition to partners we greatly depend upon the support of our Advisory Board.

The Board consists of members who possess outstanding qualifications and are known to be familiar with the needs and challenges of small businesses. A majority of the members are from the private sector, small businesses, associations representing small businesses or other organizations concerned with small businesses.

## 2013 Partners

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Bird City Century II Development Foundation  
Butler Community College  
City of Concordia  
City of Lawrence  
City of Wellington Economic Development Department  
CloudCorp  
Cowley College  
Cowley County Economic Development Partnership  
Douglas County  
Emporia State University  
Fort Hays State University  
Fort Scott Community College  
Garden City Community College  
Glacial Hills RC&D  
Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce/ GO Topeka  
Harper County Economic Development Council  
Johnson County Community College  
Junction City Geary County Economic Development Commission  
Kansas Department of Commerce  
Kingman County Economic Development Council  
Lawrence Chamber of Commerce  
Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce  
Neosho County Community College  
Pioneer Country Development, Inc.  
Pittsburg State University  
Pottawatomie County Economic Development  
Seward County Community College/ATS  
Sumner County Economic Development  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
University of Kansas  
Washburn University  
Wichita State University

## 2013 Advisory Board

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Chair, Fred Willich, President, Hi-Tech Interiors, Inc.  
Vice-Chair, Senator Tom Holland  
Linda Adams, President, Cherry Pickers, Inc.  
Karin Brownlee, Public Policy Leader  
Tony Dellasega, Branch President, Community National Bank  
Linda Fund, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community Colleges  
Representative Don Hill  
Justin Holstin, Attorney, Holstin Law Office  
Galen Huffman, Owner/CEO, Formation Plastics, Inc.  
Joe Jindra, President/General Manager, KNCK/Kiss-FM KCKS  
Senator Larry Powell  
Judy Transue, Co-owner/Business Manager, CHC Creative Remodeling  
Shirley Voran, Founder/Co-owner, The Kansas Wheat House, Inc.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***In what areas of my business can you assist?***

KSBDC counseling services cover every aspect of owning a small business. Some of the primary reasons clients contact us include:

- Business plan assistance
- Financial projection development and analysis
- Cash flow analysis
- Marketing plan development
- Human resources
- Sources of capital and financing
- Inventory control procedures
- Product costs analysis and pricing
- Market research assistance
- Advertising strategies
- Sales techniques
- Selling to the government/procurement
- Investor assistance
- Patent process
- International trade
- Buying or selling a business
- Business valuation

## ***How do I use your services?***

Start by contacting the center nearest you. A map can be found on the back cover. If you want to take advantage of online training without contacting your local center first, visit us online at [kansassbdc.net/business-training](http://kansassbdc.net/business-training).

## ***Why do you provide consulting for free? Why don't you charge?***

Free is required by federal statute. Free also reduces any barriers that businesses may have for using our services. Because we assist our clients with all aspects of their business - from marketing to finance to operations management - it would be cost-prohibitive for a small business to pay for this level of service.

## ***Why don't more people know about your services?***

- We are a confidential service.
- Confidentiality eliminates a big barrier for small businesses, entrepreneurs, startups, and innovators that want to test their ideas.
- We operate on a limited budget.
- Our operating money goes straight into our consulting - consulting we provide for free.

## ***I already own a business. Can I still use the KSBDC?***

Yes, our KSBDC consultants have extensive professional knowledge and expertise in many areas of business operations such as marketing, management, operations, expansion, cash flow analysis, inventory control, strategic planning, and pricing your products and services. If your business meets the size standards of the SBA (see page 24), you'll be able to access the free and confidential business consulting offered by the KSBDC. If your issue is outside the scope of your KSBDC consultant's expertise, he/she will tap into a large network of business experts across the country to assist your company.

## ***Does the KSBDC loan money for my business startup?***

The KSBDC does not provide loan or grant money. The KSBDC will assist you in developing your business plan and financial projections and identifying potential sources of capital. The planning work the KSBDC can help you with is instrumental in obtaining capital. Additionally, KSBDC consultants are well-versed in various sources of capital.

## ***How do I find a center in my area?***

Look on the back cover or visit us online at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net).

## ***How many KSBDC locations are there?***

There are eight regional centers and nine outreach centers. See *locations on the back cover*.

## ***Is there a charge for KSBDC services?***

No, KSBDC consulting services are provided at no cost to our clients. Workshops, seminars, and online training are offered at low- cost or no-cost to clients as well.

## ***Will a KSBDC consultant provide assistance in writing a business plan?***

The KSBDC will provide resources and guidance in the process of writing your business plan. Many centers have accelerated business plan training courses that can help as well.

## ***I can't get away from work. Do you have any online help?***

Yes. The KSBDC can consult with you via email, phone, or video conferencing. Additionally, several online training classes are available for anyone that needs help in your business. Learn more on our website at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net).

## ***I'm concerned that people will know that I'm getting help and lose confidence in my leadership. How confidential are your services?***

Our services are highly confidential. We cannot even confirm with your business partners if you are our client without your written permission. Information is only shared with your written permission.

**How many businesses do you help?**

In 2012, we supported more than 11,974 businesses and entrepreneurs living the American Dream.

Through free one-on-one consulting, training, and education, the small businesses we supported increased sales by \$107m over 2011 sales levels, invested \$60m in new capital, and created/retained 2,826 jobs.

From 2010-2012 we provided more than 50,401 hours of free consulting, assisted more than 14,271 small business clients through training, and provided strength to our economy by helping small business create/retain more than 8,851 jobs.

**What if I refer someone to you? How will I know that you've helped them?**

You won't unless they share that information with you. Our services are highly confidential. Confidentiality eliminates a big barrier for small businesses, entrepreneurs, startups, and innovators that want to test their ideas in a protected environment.

**With whom does KSBDC work or partner?**

The KSBDC network partners with many players across the economic landscape including Chambers of Commerce, economic development professionals, universities, community colleges, and lending institutions as well as federal, state, and local governments. The goal of the KSBDC is to work with all players interested in supporting entrepreneurship in our communities; because of this, we excel at providing a comprehensive service through many important partnerships.

**You say you help small businesses, and small businesses are important to the economy. What kind of impact do you have on our state economy?**

A huge impact. For every \$1 that was invested in 2012 by the state and federal governments as well as our local funders, we returned \$16.30 to the tax base. How? By helping our clients increase sales more sales tax was paid. By helping our clients grow to hire more employees more federal and state employment tax was paid. We know this information is accurate because each year we measure our impact by asking our clients directly how we've helped their business. Additionally, we use a survey firm to help us collect this information.

**Do your centers have contact information for local attorneys and accountants?**

Yes, each office does their best to maintain a local list of contacts for attorneys and accountants and other for-profits that work with small business.

**Can I see a consultant without an appointment?**

We would suggest scheduling an appointment to meet with a KSBDC consultant. Additionally, if you are a new KSBDC client, there are some helpful forms you can complete before you meet with a consultant to make the most of your time together. To learn about how to become a KSBDC client, visit our website at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net).

**Do I have to become a client to attend one of your online classes?**

No, you don't. Online classes as well as on-the-ground classes, workshops, and seminars are open to anyone that is interested in improving their business performance, starting a business or exploring a business idea. Learn more on our website at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net).

**How do I learn more about a class I might be interested in taking?**

Visit our website at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net) or visit the website of the center in your area. All websites are listed on the back cover.

**What if I'm interested in selling my business? Can you assist with that?**

Yes, we can. We have consultants that are certified in business valuation as well as consultants that can help you prepare to sell your business. We've helped many small businesses with successful transition and succession plans.

**What if I'm interested in buying a business? Can you help with that?**

Yes. We have consultants that can help you evaluate the existing business, your ideas, and the market so you can make an informed decision. Certified consultants can assist with a business valuation as well.

**What if I have more questions?**

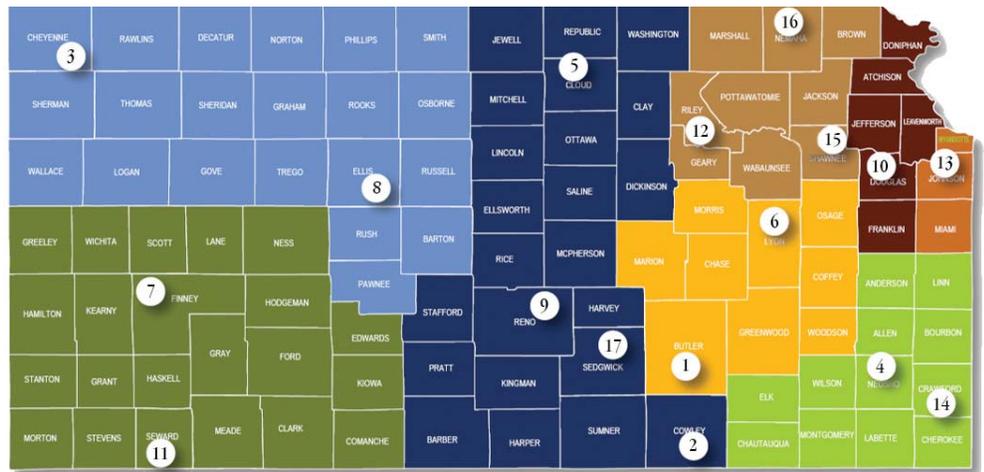
Call your local center listed on the back cover, visit our website at [kansassbdc.net](http://kansassbdc.net), or email [info@ksbdc.net](mailto:info@ksbdc.net). We'll be happy to assist.



Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBD) Network  
Topeka. Administrative Office

ksbdc.kansas.gov  
214 SW 6th St, Ste 301, Topeka, KS 66603  
Toll Free 1.877.62K.SBDC (877-625-7232)  
785.296.6514  
info@ksbdc.net

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.



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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Andover. ESU KSBDC BCC Outreach   316.218.6374   emporia.edu/sbdc   ksbdc@butlercc.edu</li> <li>2 Arkansas City. WSU CC Outreach   620.441.6523   cowley.edu/ksbdc   Jason.cole@wichita.edu</li> <li>3 Bird City. FHSU KSBDC Outreach   785.734.2592   fhsu.edu/ksbdc   ksbdc@fhsu.edu</li> <li>4 Chanute. PSU KSBDC NCCC Outreach   620.431.2820x285   pittstate.edu/bti/sbdc   tbyler@pittstate.edu</li> <li>5 Concordia. WSU NCK Outreach   785.243.9913   nksbdc.com   ksbdc@nksbdc.com</li> <li>6 Emporia. ESU KSBDC   620.341.5308   emporia.edu/sbdc   ksbdc@emporia.edu</li> <li>7 Garden City. GCCC KSBDC   620.276.9632   swksbdc.com   ksbdc@gccc.edu</li> <li>8 Hays. FHSU KSBDC   785.628.5615   fhsu.edu/ksbdc   ksbdc@fhsu.edu</li> <li>9 Hutchinson. GCCC KSBDC Outreach   620.474.6100   swksbdc.com   mbuckley520@sbcglobal.net</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Lawrence. KU KSBDC   785.843.8844   business.ku.edu/ku-small-business-development-center   ksbdc@ku.edu</li> <li>11 Liberal. GCCC KSBDC SCCC/ATS Outreach   620.417.1955   swksbdc.com   ksbdc@sccc.edu</li> <li>12 Manhattan. WU KSBDC Outreach   785.587.9917   washburnsmallbusiness.com   Daryn.soldan@washburn.edu</li> <li>13 Overland Park. JCCC KSBDC   913.469.3878   jccc.edu/ksbdc   ksbdc@jccc.edu</li> <li>14 Pittsburg. PSU KSBDC   620.235.4920   pittstate.edu/bti/sbdc   ksbdc@pittstate.edu</li> <li>15 Topeka. WU KSBDC   785.234.3235   washburnsmallbusiness.com   ksbdc@washburn.edu</li> <li>16 Wetmore. WU KSBDC Glacial Hills Outreach   785.866.2095   washburn.edu/sbdc   maryann.riederer@washburn.edu</li> <li>17 Wichita. WSU KSBDC   316.978.3193   wichita.edu/ksbdc   ksbdc@wichita.edu</li> </ul> |
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KSBD Network Host  
Fort Hays State University

