

Texas South-West  
Small Business Development Center Network



# 2022 Annual Report



**GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER**  
*Navigating a post-pandemic business climate*

## Message from the Executive Director



### Building the Texas Economy *One Business at a Time*

On behalf of the Texas South-West SBDC Network, it is my pleasure to present our 2022 Annual Report.

For over 35 years, this network of Small Business Development Centers has served small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs with high quality advising, training and research. During the pandemic, this was no exception. As we learned to immediately pivot our operations to a virtual environment, small businesses faced the same challenge.

In order to help our small business clients survive (and even thrive) our skilled and talented team facilitated over \$168m in disaster-related capital since March of 2020. Lessons learned enable us to offer SBDC services in a hybrid environment, and we continue to assist small businesses with our ever-changing marketplace.

The results of an annual, independent study of SBDC long-term clients indicates that for every dollar invested in the SBDC program, a return of \$4.41 is generated. I am proud to be a part of this amazing resource, making the dreams of our clients a reality while contributing to the economy of the Great State of Texas.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Salgado". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Albert Salgado  
Executive Director  
Texas South-West SBDC Network

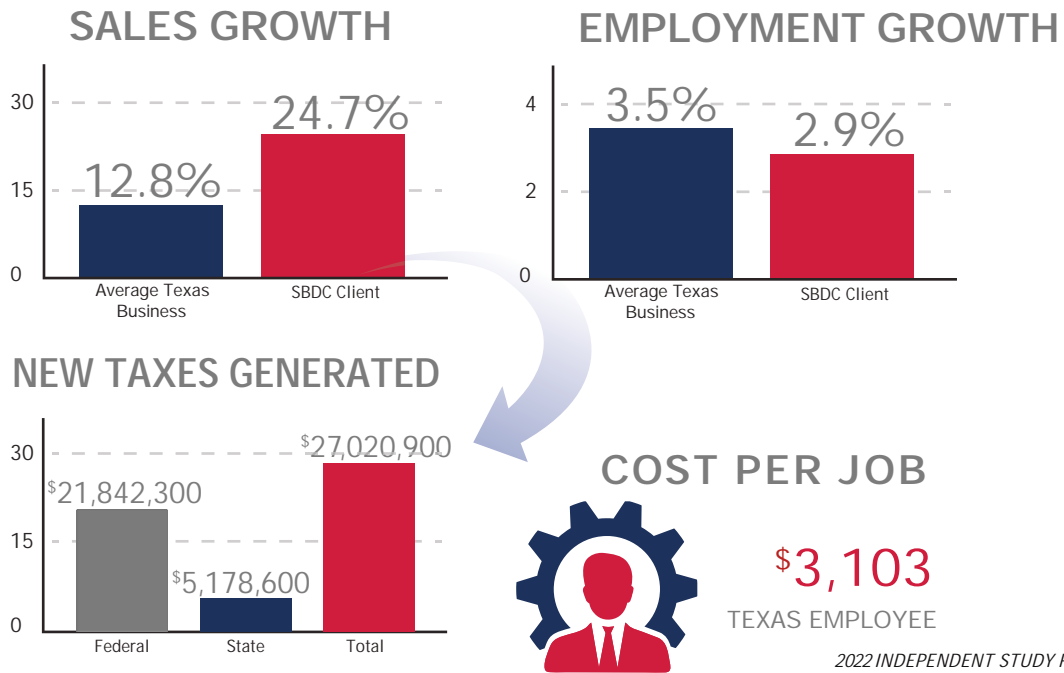
# Texas South-West SBDC Network FY 2022 Client Results

"SBDC long-term advising assistance is highly valuable from a public policy perspective because it returns tax revenues to state and federal governments, as well as value and capital to its clients, that are greater than the direct cost of providing the service. For every \$1.00 invested in the Texas South-West SBDC Network, a return of \$4.41 is generated."

— 2022 FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL INDEPENDENT STUDY BY JAMES J. CHRISMAN, PH.D.

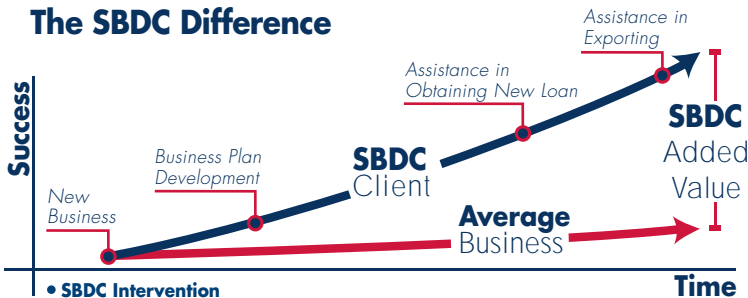
Return on Investment = Increased Jobs, Sales, Financing & Tax Revenues

**For every \$1.00 invested in Texas SBDCs, a return of \$4.41 is generated.**



## SBDC ASSISTANCE PRODUCES GREATER SUCCESS THAN THE AVERAGE TEXAS BUSINESS

### The SBDC Difference



## SERVICE RESULTS

<b>30,998</b> TOTAL BUSINESSES SERVED	<b>23,178</b> TRAINING PARTICIPANTS
<b>7,820</b> CONSULTING CASES	<b>1,355</b> TRAININGS / SEMINARS & COURSES

## IMPACT RESULTS

<b>1,975</b> JOBS CREATED	<b>6,576</b> JOBS SAVED
<b>483</b> NEW BUSINESS STARTS	<b>\$27,020,900</b> NEW TAX REVENUE GENERATED
<b>\$649,568,216</b> NEW SALES/ CONTRACTS & EXPORTS	<b>\$248,871,114</b> NEW FINANCING / INVESTMENTS



# FLOWAR CONSTRUCTION, LLC

## SEEKING CHALLENGES... SHE BUILT A COMPANY.

Patricia Flores Warnock accepted her life lessons growing up and used them to define her future. Growing up in Coahuila, Mexico, she supported her father's decisions and actions without question. She was encouraged to stay home, get married and take care of her family or find employment that was "para mujeres." (suitable for women). At 15, her father reluctantly let her work at his iron welding shop, where Patricia learned how to melt metal and create rustic pieces. Although she respected and loved her father deeply, she aspired to go out on her own and become an architect. She wanted to design and develop structures; and eventually open her own business.



In 2013, Patricia moved to the United States and began working at Starbucks as a barista. *Fast forward 8-years...* Patricia has "taken care" of a husband, 5 kids and entered the world of entrepreneurship as the co-owner of the Tropical Smoothie Café and Marco's Pizza franchise in El Paso. This experience ignited Patricia's ambition to enter the traditionally male-dominated industry of construction. Patricia worked with her El Paso Community College (EPCC) Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Business Advisor to learn about licensing compliance and requirements, to research industry data, pursue minority certification and effectively market the business.

Together they securely positioned FloWar Construction to compete in the marketplace. After its first year of business, FloWar has projected sales of over \$4 million annually. Patricia continues to work with the SBDC on marketing plans and expanding into government contracting.

<https://flowerconstruction.com/>

***"Working with the SBDC has been amazing. They answer every question I have and provide me with all the necessary information I need to grow my business."***

*—Patricia Flores Warnock, Owner*

## IMPACT

### Expanded Business

Increased Sales \$1,200,000

Owner Investment \$ 400,000

Jobs Saved 3



# SKELTON'S RUNWAY

## DRIVING THRU CHALLENGES

Marisol and Ryan Skelton are Alpine natives that had a dream of being small business owners. They settled on the idea of opening up a drive through barn with the feel of a convenience store. During the many hours of planning for this new phase in their lives, they decided they needed assistance with their project and they reached out to the Sul Ross State University (SRSU) Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

After many visits with their SBDC Business Advisor during the pandemic, the business plan for use as a financial proposal came together and the entrepreneurs were ready to go to their lender. Their loan for their dream business was approved and funded by TransPecos Banks and the Skeltons started construction. After some months, the clients returned to the SBDC for assistance with updating the original financial projections because the cost of building materials had risen. The lender was receptive to the request, construction was completed, and now Alpine has a new place for beverages and convenience items (and happy customers won't have to get out of their vehicles)!

<https://skeltonsruntime.com/>



*"We appreciate all the assistance provided by the SBDC. Thanks to the support of the SRSU SBDC and TransPecos Banks, our dream will come to fruition."*

—Marisol & Ryan Skelton



## IMPACT

- Business Start
- TransPecos Banks Loan \$900,000
- Owner Investment \$98,440
- 6 New Jobs Created



# IRON HORSE RV SPECIALIST

## TECHNICIAN TURNED ENTREPRENEUR

Raymond Lund had talent and passion in the recreational vehicle (RV) industry producing custom graphic designs and managing minor repairs. When the opportunity arose to purchase an existing RV shop, he chatted with the broker selling the business, but soon found that some deal structuring would be in order, so his lender at Texas Champion Bank referred him to the SBDC at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) for feedback on the possible acquisition of the business and assistance with the business plan development.

Since supplemental income was generating some revenue, Lund and his SBDC Business Advisor got to work on the financial projections, market research and documentation needed to win the lender's approval. Iron Horse RV Specialists can work on any brand of diesel or gas motorhome, 5<sup>th</sup> wheel, or travel trailer, has experience working with insurance companies and of course the sky is the limit when it comes to RV upgrades. They even offer a small RV campground for customers, and a full-service propane filling station.

<https://www.ironhorserv.com/>



***"I had no idea where to get the required info for my business plan in order to submit it to the bank. My SBDC Advisor walked me through everything. Far exceeded my expectations!"***

*—Raymond Lund, Owner*



## IMPACT

- Business Start
- \$1,400,000 SBA 504 Loan
- \$1,800,000 Commercial Loan
- \$ 400,000 Owner Investment
- 12 New Jobs Created



# CUTTING EDGE GAMER

## MAKING NEW RULES FOR THE BUSINESS OF GAMING

James Walsh created a new service category within the gaming industry when he established his graphic card leasing company about 10 years ago. During his first few years, he bootstrapped growth but by the end of 2013 was ultimately unable to scale due to an inefficient and maxed out capital stack. At that point he sought help from Texas State University (TSU) Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Since then, his SBDC Business Advisor has helped him clean up various company structure issues, while he implemented a company-issued debt instrument program to keep expansion funds coming in. Once impediments to SBA lending were removed, James secured \$1.5M in SBA funding. During and after the pandemic, he also secured a Paycheck Protection Program loan and an Employee Retention Tax Credit. These outside funds have been used to strategically reduce high-interest debt, improve cash flow, and purchase new assets.

Going forward, James and his trusted SBDC Business Advisor will work toward rebuilding COVID-impacted business revenues and processes. James is also in the market validation stages of vetting his best practices and online platform to support leasing in other industries.

<https://cuttingedgegamer.com/>



***“We have been working with the SBDC for over 8 years now, providing invaluable advice to support the million-dollar company it is today. Our SBDC Business Advisor has been a great sounding board, and has paired us up with the right resources at the right time ranging from HR, legal, financial, company valuation and many others.”***

—James Walsh, President & CEO

**IMPACT**

- Business Expansion
- Improved Management Ability
- Employee Retention Tax Credit



# CHRISTOVAL VINEYARDS AND WINERY

## BIG THINGS HAPPENING IN A SMALL TOWN

Christoval Texas, with a population of 500 more or less, is capitalizing on its historic role as a West Texas retreat. Christoval Vineyards grows a variety of grapes, including tempranillo, petite sirah, vermentino, petite verdot and sangiovese. The onsite chapel which hosts weddings and special events sits just inside the iron gate beneath a canopy of live oaks. It may not be Tuscany, but their tasting room, where visitors can sample some of the winery's offerings, offers a spectacular view of the vineyard through large picture windows.



In 2020, with less than a year of entrepreneurship under their belt, new owners Bart and Wendi Neff braced the harsh reality that the pandemic yielded on so many businesses, especially those involved in tourism. Fortunately, they had already established a relationship with the local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) office at Angelo State University (ASU) to address invoicing and human resource issues. Their SBDC Business Advisor proactively shared information and updates about the available SBA programs under the CARES Act, and the Neffs began their journey to apply for, receive, and implement the numerous federal funding programs. Day-to-day business operations continued with limited guests in their wine-tasting room and with the help of the SBDC and multiple SBA funding programs, they were able to maintain their employees' wages and continue the production of wine.

By the Fall of 2022, the business was back in full swing, hosting many events from casual wine tastings to the most beautiful weddings. The husband and wife team continue to take advantage of SBDC financial and marketing advising and training to support their continued growth.

<https://www.christovalvineyards.com/>

***"The SBDC has been an incredibly useful resource to us in the process of purchasing, and ultimately running, a new business."***

*—Bart & Wendi Neff*



## IMPACT

SBA Loan  
COVID EIDL Loan  
Paycheck Protection  
Forgivable Loan  
10 Jobs Saved





# FREDDY'S WELL SERVICE, INC.

## SOARING WITH EAGLES

Freddy's Well Service, Inc. is a multi-generational oil and gas service company that has been in business since 1979. They specialize in oil and gas well plugging, vacuum and wireline services. The company's name is a tribute to a tragic oilfield accident that occurred in the late 80's, which claimed the life of the Flores family beloved brother and son, Freddy Flores, Jr. Their faith and company team members provided support during the difficult days ahead, and is the foundation of their motto "Soaring with Eagles". In memory of the late Federico P. Flores and Emma Flores who contributed to the success of Freddy's Well Service, Inc. and other companies that were established during their time. Currently, under the direction of Richard Flores, President additional services have been added for cost efficiency to operators and he has worked closely with employees to ensure the cost is in the best interest of the operator. Richard has dedicated a lot of time and effort to working closely with State Agencies to ensure proper plugging and abandonment and protecting the environment. This includes being the first oil & gas business to be awarded the Infrastructure Investment & Job Act a federal contract that was given to the State of Texas.



In 2018, owners Richard and Diana Flores reached out to the UH-Victoria SBDC to learn about and receive assistance with learning the ropes of state contracting. They collaborated with the Del Mar College PTAC and earned HUB certification. In 2019, the client attended a Quickbooks series to learn skills to increase their financial processes and decision-making. They had just submitted their first government bid with the Texas Railroad Commission, and then the pandemic hit. Shifting their focus, Flores and her SBDC Business Advisor began working on successful EIDL and PPP applications to sustain operations. With solid bookkeeping practices in place, the company also earned PPP forgiveness.



Today's environment finds Freddy's Well Service, Inc. transitioning back to working on expansion opportunities and working on their internal accounting dynamics with their SBDC Advisor.

[www.freddyswellservice.com](http://www.freddyswellservice.com)

***"The knowledge and guidance with all aspects of our business is appreciated. Our SBDC Business Advisor is very knowledgeable in all these areas—one-on-one and in the classroom setting."***

—Richard Flores, President

## IMPACT

- Saved and Expanded Business
- \$200,000 Owner Investment
- \$250,000 EIDL
- \$300,000 PPP
- \$750,000 Texas Railroad Commission Prime Contract
- 2 New Jobs, 18 Jobs Saved



# CHARLIE'S CIGAR LOUNGE, LLC

## HAVE A CIGAR!

After 20 years as an educator, Omar Ayala pursued his dream of opening “something different” in his community, and the cigar lounge environment was just what he had in mind. Charlie's Cigar Lounge provides a comfortable environment with a wide variety of handmade premium cigars, friendly music, and great drinks. Then the pandemic happened.

The growing business received an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) to support operations during a period in which public gatherings weren't occurring. But when he applied for an EIDL increase, his application was rejected. So he turned to the Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) SBDC to submit his application for reconsideration. Via several phone conversations, emails and meetings, his SBDC Business Advisor assisted him with the requested documentation. The EIDL increase pay down business debt and working capital. He and his SBDC Business Advisor were also able to work toward obtaining a grant from Liftfund/The City of Laredo, and are currently working on submitting a request for the Texas Travel Industry Grant.



<https://www.facebook.com/CharliesCigarLounge/>

***“Great help, very happy with the prompt services. My SBDC Business Advisor is well-informed, always calling back with updates, and is well-educated on resources to help my business. Very Happy Customer.”***

—Omar Ayala, Owner

## IMPACT

Saved Business  
Retained 8 Employees  
EIDL and EIDL Increases  
LiftFund/City of Laredo Grant



# THE VICTORIAN HOUSE

## EVERYTHING OLD BECOMES NEW AGAIN

A beautiful property known as the Victorian House was built in 1867 in Eagle Pass. The Rodriguez family purchased the property in 2021, which had belonged to the great uncle of Jose Jaime Rodriguez. It has been remodeled to showcase the history of the home and the era in which it was built, decorated inside to replicate the multiple eras of the Victorian period, and designed to serve as an event venue. It has already been a part of many different celebrations and events, including hosting local and state politicians. They have welcomed many brides, and greet each guest as they walk through the doors. The grounds have been improved to include rose gardens that will bloom every fall and spring, and a new, outdoor stage has been added to stage live performances or a focal point for events.



As a result of a referral from the owner at the time, Mr. Rodriguez reached out to the SBDC. Mr. Rodriguez already had an impressive business savvy, having been an integral part of his family's retail business. SBDC was able to offer new insight on the event venue industry and technical guidance on local and state registrations and regulations, including the required Food Managers and Food Handler's certification. SBDC assisted Rodriguez with the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission requirements. Marketing was another area of discussion and planning, including social media for a property that has come full circle back under the ownership of the Rodriguez family more than a century and a half later.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaqIZqmVH1s>

***"I am extremely thankful with all the assistance during the whole process. I will definitely continue to be a regular client since my second project will start soon and I plan to seek an SBA loan with the help of the SBDC."***

—Jose Jaime Rodriguez, Owner



## IMPACT

Business Acquisition and Startup

Owner Financing \$450,000

Owner Investment \$190,000

5 Jobs Created/Retained



# CCC SERVICES

## SPOTLESS SUCCESS

CCC Services is a commercial cleaning company in Edinburg, Texas. The business offers janitorial contract services to construction-related companies in the Rio Grande Valley, bidding on projects that require final cleaning, post-construction cleanup, and floorcare. During the COVID pandemic, CCC Services also added electrostatic disinfecting services to its offerings. This critical service aids in infection control and in reducing the spread of viruses. CCC Services began as a home-based business, employing only family members to service two commercial locations. Today, the company has an office in Edinburg, employs over 40 trained and skilled workers, and services multiple public contracts in the area. CCC Services is an active member of the McAllen Chamber of Commerce, the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, and the Rio Grande Valley Chapter of Associated General Contractors, as well as a proud supporter of charitable causes in the area.

Claudia Muñoz, the owner of CCC Services, has been a client of the UTRGV Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for over 10 years. She has received assistance with various aspects of her business operations, including growth planning, financing resources, licenses, permits, and compliance. Munoz views the SBDC as a trusted resource as her business continues to grow.

[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057631591476&paipv=0&eav=Afa0Zj72QsFbSF1fvHli7Jkfl-k\\_1GgBnKBpMckzniaQX0s-FuFQcjkgtwRvOzCoQA](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057631591476&paipv=0&eav=Afa0Zj72QsFbSF1fvHli7Jkfl-k_1GgBnKBpMckzniaQX0s-FuFQcjkgtwRvOzCoQA)



***“The SBDC continues to be my go-to resource when I need business guidance on just about anything, from funding options to certifications!”***  
*—Claudia Muñoz, Owner*



**★ IMPACT**

- \$100,000 Contract Award
- 25% Sales Increase
- 10 Jobs Created
- 35 Jobs Saved



# SOUTHSIDE PAINT AND BODY

## NO STRANGER TO OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Raised in Monterrey, Mexico by a single mom and having only a junior high school education, Jesse Trevino Villarreal started working at a very young age. Delivering newspapers, cleaning car parts at a junk yard, followed by working in a restaurant until midnight left little time for Jesse to attend school. At age 19 Jesse came to Corpus Christi, Texas and began his career in automotive and collision repair.

After many years of working hard for others, Jesse leased a one-bay automotive repair shop and opened his own collision repair shop. His reputation and new business expanded so rapidly that he purchased property in 2007, and in 2009 built the present-day Southside Paint and Body Shop.

In 2021, Jesse needed guidance to buy out his business partner, and he turned to the Del Mar College (DMC) Small Business Development Center (SBDC). He and his SBDC Business Advisor balanced writing a business plan to support the buyout and identifying a new lender, all with an associated court date looming.

Jesse was successful in obtaining a commercial loan and subsequently remapped the shop space, adding two more technicians and increasing shop revenues. Jesse continues his SBDC relationship by learning how to use accounting software and even hired a Del Mar College intern as a full-time bookkeeper. The sky's the limit as SBDC continues to offer marketing guidance to help his business grow.

<http://southsidepaintandbodyllc.com/>



***“Just like what I do with a car, I can figure out how to fix about any system that needs repairing. And I’ve learned that you need to find the right people for your team to turn your business dreams into a reality – thank you, SBDC!”***

—Jesse Trevino Villarreal, Owner/President

**IMPACT**

- \$1,400,000 Commercial Loan
- 14 Jobs Retained
- 1 New Job Created



# TEXAS BLACK GOLD GARLIC

## MADE IN TEXAS! BLACK GARLIC. YOU SHOULD TRY SOME.

Stephen Paprocki discovered his love of cooking watching his grandmother cook from scratch. This had a massive impact on him as a chef and entrepreneur in the culinary industry. While working as an Executive Chef he was inspired to start Texas Black Gold Garlic, a company that heat-ages standard garlic grown by independent farmers in Texas and throughout America. The result? The strong flavor of raw white garlic melts into a mellow, caramelized sweetness, ready to be eaten straight from the bulb or incorporated into any dish. And it is “beyond organic” because the garlic is grown without fertilizer or pesticides and are naturally non-GMO.

In less than five years, the business has grown into a chef-driven national brand with products that can be found in stores across the U.S., with over a dozen chef ambassadors who love cooking with one of the most unique ingredients a chef has at their disposal. It’s been exciting for him to see renowned chefs like Thomas Keller use his products. Additionally, Paprocki launched another company, Pharma From the Farm, which sells black garlic, black ginger, and black shallot in capsule form as a health supplement. He has also spearheaded a single-clove garlic seed program to further support Texas farmers.

Business was going well in Canada and Mexico before the pandemic, but like so many other small businesses, it took a hit. Paprocki turned to the UTSA SBDC International Trade Center (ITC) for valuable, in-depth marketing data and is now anticipating expansion into Greenland and Iceland. Currently, Texas Black Gold Garlic is heavily pursuing additional wholesale accounts and is honored to work with other businesses that wish to incorporate the taste sensation into their own unique and delicious products, such as Bravado Spice Co.’s Black Garlic Hot Sauce, McCormick Black Garlic Sea Salt, and Dr. Mercola supplements.

To learn more about Texas Black Gold Garlic., visit <https://www.texasblackgoldgarlic.com/> and/or check out the Texas Country Reporter interview at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ur7TVOKDloQ&list=TLGGdaa8oMJupE4xNjExMjAyMg>



***“With the help of the SBDC, wholesale sales have increased by 10 percent; retail sales have increased by 200 percent, and product-to-product sales have increased by an outstanding 900 percent! We look forward to our continued relationship and growth.”***

—Stephen Paprocki



# YUMLISH

## *Yumlish Takes Nutritional Therapy for U.S. Air Force Recruits to New Heights, Improving Force Readiness*

Yumlish was founded to address the high prevalence of diet-related chronic conditions in the U.S., such as diabetes, and growing concerns over its significant impact on communities of color and the workforce. The digital technology platform improves nutrition literacy in an engaging and uniquely accessible pathway. The innovation was birthed as a result of the founder, Shireen Abdullah, being advised by her physician to better manage her chronic diagnosis by “eating healthy”. Shireen realized the gaps in her understanding of nutrition, especially as it applied to her ethnic South Asian foods and cultural heritage. Yumlish’s dietary curriculum soon received approval from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) for its targeted approach to nutrition therapy.

The UTSA SBDC Technology Commercialization Center (TCC) team engaged with Shireen, by providing information on federal grant writing resources. She was also introduced to early stage capital access opportunities, venture competitions and technology showcase events, and the non-equity dilutive America’s Seed Fund™ (SBIR/STTR) program, which provides seed capital for early stage product research and development.

The growing company was coached to participate in the center’s 2021 Texas Encountering Innovation program, introducing her innovation to Department of Defense’s panel of science and technology advisors. A recent Pentagon study had indicated that as much as roughly 27% of young Americans were too overweight to enlist. Taking advantage of TCC’s strategic guidance, expert network and proposal assistance programs, Yumlish submitted their innovative technology proposition to AFWERX, a Technology Directorate of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and the innovation arm of the U.S. Air Force SBIR program. Yumlish was awarded Phase I funding, and subsequently an AFWERX Phase II award to help Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS) turn the tide and meet its force numbers for fiscal year 2023.

TCC also coached Shireen for the recent 2022 Texas State (TXST) New Ventures competition, where Yumlish was a finalist. Shireen continues to work with TCC to raise additional federal SBIR funding, commercial contracts and a \$4M Seed round to accelerate ongoing product development and commercialization.

<https://yumlish.com/>



***“We at Yumlish are incredibly thankful to the SBDC TCC team for all the technical guidance, SBIR award success and support provided to our small, minority and woman-owned Texas business.”***

*—Shireen Abdulla, CEO*

## IMPACT

- Over \$1.625 million in awards, grants and contracts
- 5 full time and 3 part time jobs created



# RC4VETS, LLC

## VETERANS ON THE MOVE

RC4Vets, LLC which stands for Really Care for Veterans, founded in 2019, is a certified Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) providing agile information technology support services. RC4Vets provides Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) development, Systems design and Architecture, Legacy IT modernization, IT training, Desktop support and Program & Project management. RC4Vets, pushes the limits of performance and is committed to provide untapped levels of success via hands-on experience, skills, and knowledge. The company differentiates itself by listening to specific customer needs, designing innovative solutions that translate into repeatable positive experiences, and weaving cybersecurity strategies in their methodology.

Beck began working with the UTSA SBDC Center for Government Contracting (CGC) to complete several government contracting certifications, including SBA 8(a) and Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOB) certifications. As a result of their quality work, RC4Vets was awarded a subcontract with the Veterans Administration worth over \$1 million. Then in 2021 he and his SBDC Business Advisor worked to obtain an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) to weather uncertain and changing economic conditions.

<https://rc4vets.com/>

**IMPACT**

- Business Expansion
- Federal Small Business Certifications
- SBA EIDL
- Veteran's Administration Subcontract







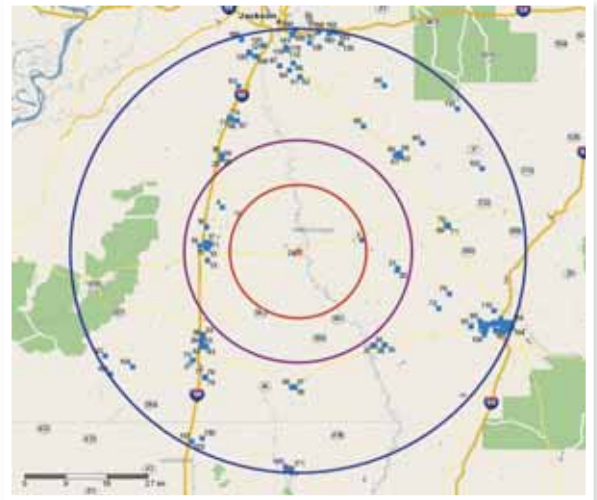
The SBDC National Information Clearinghouse (SBDCNet) is the official business research and support program for the national SBDC network. For 24 years, the SBDCNet has been dedicated to meeting the information and resource needs of the small business community and working in partnership with SBDCs to ensure their clients' success. In 2022, the Center continued its record of accomplishment by building on the over 105,000 projects completed to date for SBDC small business clients. The national Center continued to leverage its vast expertise, experience and specialized resources to help SBDC clients in Texas and across the country succeed in the face of the evolving pandemic, whether they were striving to recover, become more resilient or capitalize on new opportunities.

While SBDCNet has helped SBDCs and their small business clients navigate myriad challenges over the last several years, the uncertainty ahead as we emerge from the pandemic continues to underscore the often-underestimated value of market research and business intelligence – which, according to SBDCNet Director Matthew Jackson, “enables clients to make better business decisions.”

Utilizing its specialized resources, including GIS market analysis, the Center provided SBDCs and their clients with the kinds of powerful information and resources that are often out of reach for most small businesses. “Thank you for your astonishingly thorough and granular report for our client who is working on a business expansion. This data is crucial as we work so diligently to focus on our client’s best opportunities after two years of COVID,” said Rita Mitchell with the Mississippi SBDC network. “My deep appreciation for the depth of this report and your dedicated work.”

Hosted at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), SBDCNet also provides meaningful experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. UTSA students research real-world business challenges and hone their professional skills, which makes them increasingly more marketable to Texas employers upon graduation.

For 24 years, the SBDC National Information Clearinghouse has continually strived to develop new solutions to the changing information needs of millions of small businesses. SBDCNet’s team is honored to serve clients across Texas and the nation, helping entrepreneurs make better business decisions for a more resilient tomorrow.



*Matthew Jackson*

Matthew Jackson  
Director – SBDCNet



## YOUNG SBDC LEADERS HONORED WITH NATIONAL "40 UNDER 40" AWARDS

*America's SBDC recently recognized its annual "40 Under 40" national award recipients at its annual conference held in San Diego, California. The Texas South-West SBDC Network is pleased to announce two of its team members are award winners: Matthew Jackson and Dezaray Johnson.*



**Matthew Jackson** has been director of the SBDC National Information Clearinghouse (SBDCNet) since 2016. The program delivers advanced market research to SBDC advisors nationwide to support small business feasibility analysis, business planning, financial proposals and other entrepreneurial projects. The function supports America's SBDC mission of promoting and informing the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) network.

The community shutdown and travel restrictions caused by the pandemic meant that a pivot would be required to fulfill their mission. Throughout the course of his career, Matthew has been keenly adept at utilizing technology. The pandemic led Matthew to implement the use of videoconferencing to launch "Lunch and Learn" webinars, and SBDCNet service delivery was enhanced to allow for virtual consultation sessions to new and existing SBDC business advisors.

This pivot provided the opportunity to continue serving SBDCs with advanced market research services throughout the U.S. in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Matthew expanded the training sessions by partnering with subject matter experts to deliver specialized webinars to include a series on employee ownership, productivity, and a well-received digital marketing series.



**Dezaray Johnson** is a certified business advisor and training coordinator for Angelo State University (ASU) SBDC. Her technical skills and passion for client service yield successful small business clients that eagerly refer other entrepreneurs. Dezaray is seen as a leader among her training professional peers in the Network and serves as a member of the network's Professional Development and Certification Committee. She is also an accomplished administrator— she is proficient with SBDC systems and procedures and can expertly navigate her way through the client management information system.

Dezaray also serves as the coordinator of a robust paid student employee staff made up of graduate and undergraduate students. These student employees work behind the scenes along with professional SBDC staff members to assist with client work, research, projects, events and the training programs. The student receives tremendous service/experiential learning opportunities.

During the onset of COVID-19 Dezaray was instrumental in establishing a connection between the various centers in the network's 79-county service delivery area in order to leverage resources to reach more small business owners with timely and relevant information, including disaster funding sources and pivoting services to meet customer needs.



# “THREE-PETE” SBDC STATE STAR HONOR EARNED

*Over 40 SBDC Business Advisors from throughout South, Central and West Texas compete in the annual SBDC State Star competition. Ten field SBDCs nominate its top advisor based on economic development goals such as client-attributed job creation and retention, business start-ups and expansions, capital access, the advisor’s productivity, and the number of long-term clients served.*

**Cynthia Gómez**, a 17-year veteran of the Sul Ross State University (SRSU) Rio Grande College (RGC) Small Business Development Center (SBDC), earned the 2022 State Star award. Notably, this is her third career win, which also earned Cynthia the coveted **Lifetime Achievement Award**. Gómez produced amazing client results, including 345 jobs created retained, 63 total businesses started and grown, and \$3,858,033 of new business capital for the economy of Eagle Pass and the surrounding communities.



A native of Eagle Pass, Gómez started working for Rio Grande College as an adjunct instructor in the Business Department after earning a BBA in finance and an MBA, both from Texas A&M International University in Laredo. In addition to working full-time as an SBDC Senior Business Advisor, Gómez is also a realtor and helps her husband with his business. With three children under the age of 10, the family enjoys ball games, dance recitals and school events. Cynthia stays centered by setting aside an hour every day to exercise and work off stress.

SRSU Rio Grande College SBDC Director Elizabeth Peña said, *“Business advising is not always easy, but Cynthia always makes it look that way. The success of her clients is an indication of her technical ability and passion for her work.”*

Texas South-West SBDC Network Executive Director Al Salgado adds, *“I want to thank Cynthia for living our values of Integrity, Excellence, Service and Innovation. This dedication and technical ability will keep Cynthia achieving on a high level, meeting her goals and supporting her co-workers. Congratulations, Cynthia!”*

# Texas South-West Small Business Development Center Network Field Centers and Specialty Resources

## FIELD CENTERS

### Alpine

Sul Ross State University SBDC  
432.837.8694 | [sbdc.sulross.edu/alpine](http://sbdc.sulross.edu/alpine)

### Austin

Texas State University SBDC  
512.420.9379 | [sbdc.mccoy.txstate.edu](http://sbdc.mccoy.txstate.edu)

### Corpus Christi

Del Mar College SBDC  
361.698.1021 | [delmar.edu/sbdc](http://delmar.edu/sbdc)

### Eagle Pass

SRSU Rio Grande College SBDC  
830.758.5022 | [sbdc.sulross.edu/rgc](http://sbdc.sulross.edu/rgc)

### Edinburg

UT Rio Grande Valley SBDC  
956.665.7535 | [utrgv.edu/sbdc](http://utrgv.edu/sbdc)

### El Paso

El Paso Community College SBDC  
915.831.7743 | [elpasosbdc.net](http://elpasosbdc.net)

### Laredo

Texas A&M International University SBDC  
956.326.2827 | [sbdc.tamui.edu](http://sbdc.tamui.edu)

### San Angelo

Angelo State University SBDC  
325.942.2098 | [sbdc.angelo.edu](http://sbdc.angelo.edu)

### San Antonio

University of Texas at San Antonio SBDC  
210.458.2460 | [sasbdc.org](http://sasbdc.org)

### Victoria

University of Houston-Victoria SBDC  
361.485.4485 | [uhv.edu/small-business](http://uhv.edu/small-business)

## SPECIALTY RESOURCES

Located in San Antonio but serving the entire 79 county service area

### International Trade

UTSA SBDC International Trade Center  
210.458.2470 | [texastrade.org](http://texastrade.org)

### Government Contracting

UTSA SBDC Center for Government Contracting  
210.458.2458 | [cgc.txsbdc.org](http://cgc.txsbdc.org)

### Technology Commercialization

UTSA SBDC Technology Commercialization Center  
210.458.2731 | [tcc.txsbdc.org](http://tcc.txsbdc.org)

### Market Research

SBDC National Information Clearinghouse (SBDCNet)  
1.800.689.1912 | [sbdcnet.org](http://sbdcnet.org)



Proud members of the Texas South-West SBDC Network



501 W. César E. Chávez Blvd., DB 4.370  
San Antonio, TX 78207  
Phone: 210.458.2450

Learn More About SBDC at  
[www.txsbdc.org](http://www.txsbdc.org)

