

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**BUILDING THE TEXAS ECONOMY
ONE BUSINESS AT A TIME**

Quality Stone Company
Owners Michael Doty and Todd Denton

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South-West Texas Border
**Small Business
Development Center Network**

The University of Texas at San Antonio

BUILDING THE TEXAS ECONOMY ONE BUSINESS AT A TIME

On behalf of the South-West Texas Border SBDC Network, it is my pleasure to present our 2019 Annual Report.

For over 30 years, the South-West Texas Border SBDC Network has served thousands of small businesses, creating a positive return on investment for the state of Texas “One Business at a Time.” Thanks to all of our stakeholders—our skilled and knowledgeable team of advising professionals, our advisory board members, and state legislators—we are able to ensure that the investment provided by our funding partners continues to generate strong economic impact to the state of Texas. These impressive results are depicted on the following page.

In 2019, because of SBDC services, our clients grew revenue three times faster and grew jobs nearly ten times faster than the average Texas small business. Our talented advisors and professional staff continue to enhance each small-business owner’s ability to meet the changing demands of Texas’ emerging markets. Additionally, our small business clients acquired \$180 million in new financing and generated \$45 million in new tax revenues to the economy.

I am proud to be a part of this great team, building the dreams and hopes of our clients while contributing to the economy of the great state of Texas.



Albert Salgado

Executive Director | South-West Texas Border SBDC Network

SBDC Client vs. Average Texas Business

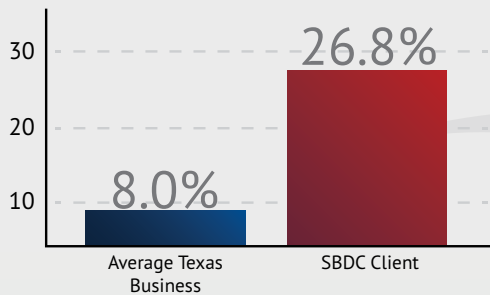
Return on Investment Equals Increased Jobs, Sales, Financing, and Tax Revenues



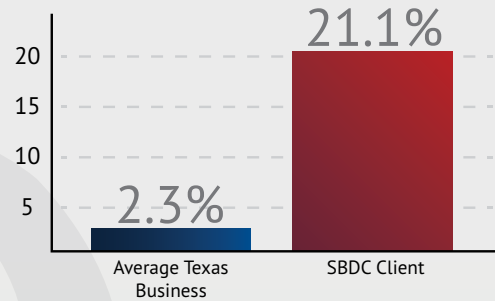
SBDC long-term advising assistance is highly valuable from a public policy perspective because it returns tax revenues to state and federal governments, as well as value and capital to its clients, that are greater than the direct cost of providing the service. For every \$1.00 invested in the South-West Texas Border SBDC, a return of \$7.80 is generated.

— 2019 FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL INDEPENDENT STUDY BY JAMES J. CHRISMAN, PH.D.

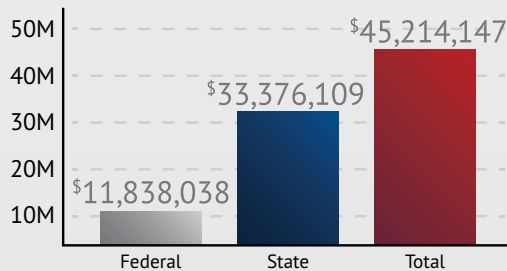
SALES GROWTH



EMPLOYMENT GROWTH



NEW TAXES GENERATED



COST PER JOB



\$1,282
TEXAS EMPLOYEE

SERVICE RESULTS

27,094 TOTAL BUSINESSES SERVED	20,937 TRAINING PARTICIPANTS	937 TRAININGS / SEMINARS & COURSES	6,157 CONSULTING CASES
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IMPACT RESULTS

4,517 JOBS CREATED	4,443 JOBS RETAINED	566 NEW BUSINESS STARTS
\$45,214,147 NEW TAX REVENUE GENERATED	\$179,803,649 NEW FINANCING / INVESTMENTS	\$747,057,189 NEW SALES / CONTRACTS & EXPORTS

A FLOW OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION



Gary Katz, founder of Katz Water Technologies, worked with the **UTSA SBDC Technology Commercialization Center (TCC)** to make significant strides through the commercialization pathway for their early concept innovation, X-VAP™. The X-VAP innovation will allow for the economical purification of produced water, a by-product of oil drilling, while utilizing harvested energy in the oil field. The technology provides a competitive advantage by allowing for the reduction in the transportation, storage, and water treatment expenses associated with current practices of utilizing brine disposal injection wells.

Working with Bijo Mathew, Director of TCC, Katz was encouraged to apply for the National Science Foundation (NSF) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program, a highly competitive United States Government funding source, for supporting the commercialization of innovations. Mathew worked with Katz to develop his team, address technical knowledge gaps, and formulate his technical and commercial proposal strategy. As a result, KWT received its first NSF Phase I SBIR award for \$224,994. The provided seed funds are non-dilutive and are not loans that need to be repaid.

Katz continues to work with the TCC to support on-going commercialization activities and develop strategies for other related funding opportunities with federal agencies and commercial partners. By working closely with TCC, the company has received several other regional awards and has been an invitee to several technical conferences, positioning the business well for future awards and commercialization opportunities. ■



A CYBER RESILIENT TEXAS

For the past five years, the **UTSA Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Center for Government Contracting (CGC)** team has been providing training and advising on cybersecurity awareness for small business.

Starting in 2017, the Center has specifically focused on addressing the federal requirement for contract compliance outlined by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS)—federal requirements that contractors doing business with the Department of Defense (DoD) must follow in the procurement process for goods and services. The Center is also providing training which adheres to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) cybersecurity framework through its Small Business Cybersecurity Training Academy. This training is conducted in partnership with the UTSA Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security (CIAS) and has proven to be of tremendous value to the small business federal contractors in central Texas.

In 2019, the DoD Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) awarded funding to the CGC for a new Texas Cybersecurity Compliance Program (TCCP) to solidify the cybersecurity

PROGRAM FOCUS

- Strategic Alignment
- Small Business Cybersecurity Training Academy
- Cyber Physical Security Awareness Workshops
- Cyber Physical Security Assessments

resilience of Texas's defense supply chain while decreasing its vulnerability. The project will also increase the capacity for government contractors and manufacturing businesses to be more competitive and compliant in their federally-focused business activities. And finally, the funding will allow the successful Cybersecurity Training Academy to be rolled out across the entire state of Texas.

The TCCP will partner with a coalition of state agencies, community organizations, industry partners, and educational institutions. ■



A HOME RUN FOR LERMA

“Understanding the loan process was overwhelming. My SBDC business advisor was, and continues to be, readily available to answer all of my questions.”

– Mario Lerma, Owner

In high school, Mario Lerma was a standout baseball player, threw a 96-mph pitch and was being scouted by many universities. In between practices and games, he found time to work at Eastside Choice Meats, where he quickly became a standout employee. From carrying out groceries to mopping floors to becoming a skillfully crafted butcher, he learned all aspects of the business including the company’s recipes, how to determine and set pricing, and how to repair the equipment. Although Mario’s promising baseball career ended when he suffered a back injury, his dedication to Eastside Choice Meats never wavered. After 40 years, company owner Hector White decided it was time to sell the business. He wanted to sell it to Mario, knowing he would continue to offer the same quality customer service upon which the company was built.



SBDC SUPPORT

Mr. White and Mario contacted the **El Paso Community College Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) and met with Business Advisor Hector Espino. Together, they worked on a business plan and financial projections for an SBA 7(a) guaranteed loan. The loan was approved, and after 32 years of dedicated service to the company, Mario purchased the business and became the new owner of Eastside Choice Meats.

Mario continues to grow and advance the business, expanding the company’s selection of choice meats and specialty foods, including homemade *chorizo* and fajitas. He works closely with the SBDC on new marketing ideas and is currently exploring mobile app delivery services. ■

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Acquisition
- SBA Guaranteed Loan
- Jobs Retained - 16



OASIS A SUCCESS IN ALPINE

“My SBDC business advisor was helpful and prompt with advice and paperwork. Our loan was approved in an astonishingly short time frame.”

– Greg & Mary Unruh, Owner

The Unruh family has a long history of bringing water to where people need it most. Greg Unruh learned about agricultural and sprinkler installation and repair while working for his father for 13 years. Years later, he and his wife Mary spent six years doing humanitarian work in Africa, enhancing their skills and knowledge by digging wells and performing pump installs and repairs. Their efforts brought clean drinking water to areas where people previously had none.

In May 2013, they opened Oasis Excavating, LLC, an agriculture pipeline and sprinkler installation and repair business, servicing the farming community, residential, and municipal projects in west Texas.

SBDC SUPPORT

The Unruh’s first contacted the **Sul Ross State University Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) in 2014 to obtain assistance on a business plan for their new company. Based on this positive experience, they contacted the SBDC again in 2018, when they needed assistance with seeking capital. Business Advisor Loretta Garcia assisted the pair with completing an SBA Express Loan application. They were approved for the loan, allowing the owners to expand their irrigation inventory, refinance their existing debt, and establish a line of credit to promote continued business and cash flow growth. As a result, Oasis Excavating, LLC was able to create one job and retain six employees.

Several months later, the owners were presented with an opportunity to diversify their product line by purchasing 17 acres and installing a water well to foster an upcoming agri-business. Once again, they reached out to their trusted advisor at the SBDC, who assisted them with updating their business plan and completing the appropriate forms to secure an SBA 7(a) Guaranteed Loan. Securing the loan allowed them to facilitate this new project’s funding, which is expected to result in additional full time jobs and produce another revenue stream for the company. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Expansion
- SBA Guaranteed Loan - 2
- Jobs Created - 1
- Jobs Retained - 6

A LIFT TICKET TO RURAL HEALTH

“Our SBDC business advisor went above and beyond what we could have asked for or expected! He is top notch and his work was so beneficial to our project and what we hope to accomplish.”

– Clint Reichenau, Owner

Clint Reichenau was nine years old when he fell in love with skiing. Years later, while enjoying a day out on the slopes, he suffered a knee injury, sidelining him for months. Clint’s doctor eventually recommended an MRI; however, his options were limited locally. He could wait over two weeks for an appointment or travel 90 minutes to the closest city, Abilene, Texas. Frustrated by his pain and his limited options, Clint landed upon an idea for a new business venture—Angelo MRI—bringing quality medical care and service to the rural San Angelo community for a fraction of the cost.

SBDC SUPPORT

In 2017, Clint and co-owners Brett Schniers and Charlie Reichenau were referred by their lender to **Angelo State University Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) for assistance with the company’s business plan. Business Advisor James Leavelle assisted Angelo MRI with writing their business plan, formulating their financial projections, and assisting with the various forms required to secure a loan. James also helped them to identify and ensure the collection of the required documentation to support their loan request.

The loan was approved, and the co-owners opened Angelo MRI, which offers prompt, high-quality magnetic resonance imaging at an affordable price. Included in their price is an interpretation of the scan by a board-certified radiologist, which is provided to the patient’s doctor within 24-48 hours. Angelo MRI’s owners are proud to be able to meet a critical healthcare need, leading their rural community one step closer to self-sufficiency. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Start
- Jobs Created - 6



MORE THAN A CELEBRATION

“I am extremely thankful for all the help I received from the SBDC and am beyond happy for being able to finally own my own party venue.”

– Olga Guajardo, Owner

Olga Guajardo loved to plan and manage small events for her large, extended family gatherings. Everyone always loved her food and complemented her on her festive and beautiful decor. After years of joyfully making people’s dream events possible, she recognized the business potential and decided to open her own business, Guajardo’s Banquets, LLC.

SBDC SUPPORT

Mrs. Guajardo first connected with the **Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** in Eagle Pass in 2008 and received assistance with obtaining her licenses and permits. As the business grew, Mrs. Guajardo started to hire family members to help manage the flourishing business. Her dreams continued to blossom when she had the opportunity to purchase an event hall, which would allow her to provide exclusive catering services to her clients. She again approached the SBDC for assistance.

For the next three years, Senior Business Advisor Cynthia Gomez helped the Guajardo’s get their finances in order through a series of advising sessions to make their financial proposal more viable for a commercial bank loan. By 2019, the Guajardo’s had three complete and up-to-date financial documents for the business. Cynthia then assisted the owners with the preparation of their loan proposal to Uvalde State Bank, which funded the loan. Over the next few months, Cynthia assisted the owners with completing loan applications, financial statements, appraisals, and insurance requirements to meet all of the lender’s requirements. In May 2019, the Guajardo’s closed on the loan and are ecstatic to now have a party venue space to call their own. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Start & Expansion
- Owner Investment \$152K+
- Commercial Loan \$320K+
- Jobs Created - 2
- Jobs Retained - 4



EXCAVATING A MARKET FOR DUST

“Our experience with the SBDC has developed into a professional relationship that offers a broad footprint of contacts and expertise.”

– Todd M. Denton, Managing Partner

Immediately after graduating from college, Michael Doty and Todd Denton purchased Quality Stone Company, a rock quarry business located outside of Florence, Texas. As young entrepreneurs, the co-owners were also interested in figuring out how they could minimize the negative impacts of their industry on the environment. They had an innovative idea to repurpose rock dust, a waste product generated by quarries. Not only would the solution minimize the negative impacts on the environment, but it would also provide a revenue source from what would otherwise be a waste product.

SBDC SUPPORT

Michael and Todd were referred to the **Texas State University (TSU) Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** to assist in researching the cost and feasibility of re-purposing the rock waste. Business Advisor Bill Thompson introduced them to Dr. Gary Beall of the Materials Science, Engineering and Commercialization (MSE)C program at Texas State University. Dr. Beall’s team confirmed that their rock dust is 100% calcium and has a commercialized market value. One of the many commercial uses for the calcium is as a bonding element in the manufacturing of steel and other manufacturing processes. Currently, the team is working to discover if the company’s calcium carbonate rock dust can be used in Feldspar, which is a bonding agent in the manufacturing of brick.

Bill also introduced the owners to Dr. Dennis Smart, professor of the MBA program at TSU. Dr. Smart’s graduate students assisted the owners with estimating the value of their calcium dust and the cost of the machinery and equipment required to execute on this strategy. This research is assisting the company as they continue to explore this promising revenue stream. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Expansion
- \$80K Owner Investment
- Jobs Created - 9
- Jobs Retained - 23



EXPERIENCED DUO INNOVATE INDUSTRY

“2A Energy Services would not have been as successful without help from the SBDC. Our business advisor provided us with referral contacts and a top notch business plan.”

– L J Letourneau, Owner

Frank McKay, a UTSA alumnus and U.S. Army veteran, and L J Letourneau have spent the majority of their careers working for an oil services company that did inspection and testing for high-pressure fracking wells. In 2018, they decided the time was right to fulfill their shared dream of owning their own business. With 20 years of combined experience in the oil industry—and a new, innovative technology to share with customers—the pair launched their own company, 2A Energy Services, LLC.

The company provides services and products to the well stimulation and completion processes in the Eagle Ford Shale. Their products and services primarily focus on pressure containment, well control, and fluid transfer equipment. 2A Energy Services’ customers include companies who specialize in hydraulic fracturing, cement pumping, coil tubing, well drill out, well flow back, and well testing. They also have been carrying iron supplies, and well and gauge parts, in order to provide real time repairs in the area.

2A Energy Services also helped to design and build a radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology app with a prominent technology company. This innovative technology allows their customers to obtain inspection data and asset management in real time right from their phone, saving them down-time, money, and ensuring accurate field data.

SBDC SUPPORT

Frank and L J approached **The University of Texas at San Antonio Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) and worked with Senior Business Advisor Lisha Garcia. She helped with the initial launch of their company by reviewing and refining their business plan and assisting them with developing financial projections.

As the company grew, they needed to hire additional workers and were also seeking to move from their start up location in L J’s garage to permanent office space. Lisha worked with the owners to revise their business plan and prepare them to meet with high profile lenders, investors and CEOs, in order to help them reach their new company goals. The pair has now hired workers and has permanent office and shop space in Pleasanton, Texas. The move also allowed them to increase their capacity to store more equipment, hire additional employees, and fulfill their number one goal of providing health insurance for their employees. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Start & Expansion
- Secured Lines of Credit
- Jobs Created - 5
- Jobs Retained - 8
- Increased Revenues



SETTING THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS

“Anytime I have an issue I contact my SBDC business advisor. I don’t know where I would be without all of his support.”

- David Ramos, Owner

In 2007, David Ramos decided to leave his job of 15 years and start his own business, A Plus Party and Events, which specializes in equipment rentals for weddings, special events, and parties. The company provides a wide array of rental products including tents, staging and flooring, linens, furniture, and A/V equipment. They also rent carnival-like games and inflatables of various sizes from bounce houses to waterslides. The owner differentiates his business in many ways including only renting out equipment that is fully insured and inspected, to ensure his customers’ safety and satisfaction. The company also often gives back to the community through civic engagement activities, such as the entire family volunteering their services at their local church festival (see photo below). A Plus Party and Events provides rental services to Victoria and 46 surrounding towns and cities, including service to Corpus Christi and South Texas.



SBDC SUPPORT

David Ramos came to the **University of Houston-Victoria Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** to learn how to better manage his business’ operations and finances. Business Advisor Mark Martinez assisted him with learning to read and understand financial statements and showed him how to properly set up and maintain QuickBooks. He also assisted David with human resources issues, including the development of an employee handbook. Mark worked closely with David on developing his leadership and communication skills, which has helped him build a strong team and ensure top notch customer service to his clients. A Plus Party and Events has seen significant growth over the years; and with the advice and assistance of the SBDC, David is now expanding his business into a new building. Once completed, David will be able to add new jobs and continue to grow his vision for the business into reality. ■

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Expansion
- Owner Investment
- Jobs Created - 3
- Jobs Retained - 7
- Significantly Increased Sales



CONSTRUCTING A STRONG FUTURE

“The SBDC has been vital to our success for our nine years of business. Thank you to the SBDC team for their continuing support and dedication.”

- Max Salinas, Owner

Brothers Max and Manuel Salinas immigrated to the United States in 1977. The pair went on to work for several Corpus Christi area civil construction contractors for more than 35 years, gaining extensive experience in underground utility construction. In 2010, the brothers opened their own full-service general contracting company, MAX Underground Construction, LLC in Corpus Christi, Texas, specializing in concrete and underground utility and drainage projects. Their strong work ethic helped them to develop a loyal client base, acquire sufficient equipment, hire personnel, and build a strong financial statement.

SBDC SUPPORT

In 2011, the Salinas brothers contacted the **Del Mar College Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**. Business Advisor Celia Garza assisted the owners with creating a business plan, which included a 3-year financial projection plan to budget the company's expenses, in order to purchase their first piece of heavy equipment. Garza also connected the pair with resource partners and assisted them with obtaining proper certifications to make the business more marketable to government contract opportunities. This support and direction was instrumental in helping the business reach its full potential including obtaining SBA certifications and winning bidding opportunities.

Today, Max Salinas is proud to be a U.S. Citizen, MAX Underground Construction, LLC has completed numerous TxDot and city government projects throughout Texas, and the company has acquired a line of credit of \$550,000 for working capital. The business has outgrown its office and yard space, so they purchased approximately 0.65 acres to meet the needs of the expanding company. They have started construction on their own 2,800 sq. ft. office building and an expanded yard space to store 14 pieces of heavy equipment machines worth over \$1M. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Start & Expansion
- \$550K Line of Credit
- Jobs Created - 64
- Jobs Retained - 6
- Increased Sales - \$6.9M+



BUSINESS BUZZING FOR OUTER RIM

“Our SBDC has helped us tremendously. We want to grow our business, and I know they will help get us there.”

- Cecilia Cisneros & Christopher Segovia, Owners

Concerned about declining bee populations, this mother and son team from Laredo, Texas, were determined to be part of the solution. In 2017, co-owners Cecilia Cisneros and her 18-year old son Christopher Segovia purchased their first bee hive and opened Texas Outer Rim Apiaries, LLC (Outer Rim) in rural South Texas. Outer Rim provides humane live bee extraction services and produces natural, locally-sourced honey and beeswax products. Outer Rim also educates youth and the general public about the negative environmental and social impacts of a declining bee population. The company is an integral part of the community and is in discussions with Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) to provide bee extraction services, assist the TAMIU's Community Garden to start an apiary, and serve as speakers at the University's Earth Day celebration.



SBDC SUPPORT

Outer Rim contacted the **Texas A&M International University Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) when they were struggling with how to meet the growing demands on their business. Business Advisor Norma Rodriguez introduced the owners to various funding options and sources to grow their business. Norma also assisted them with their marketing needs, including logo development, updating product packaging, and strategizing product positioning.

Norma then assisted the owners with preparing for the 2019 Texas Strong SBDC Fast-Pitch competition for small business funding. Outer Rim won second place and was awarded \$4,000, which they used to purchase 15 new bee hives that can produce up to 80 pounds of honey per hive, per season. The owners now have their sights set on owning their own ranch and eventually selling their products to the many large retailers in the area. ■

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Expansion
- \$4K Capital Injection
- Texas Strong Fast-Pitch Winner



SWEET SUCCESS FOR CAPPADONA

“Our SBDC has helped every step of the way! We have a close working relationship with our advisors. We are forever grateful for their patience and the education and guidance they have provided.”

- Victoria B. Cappadona, Owner

In the summer of 2012, Texas was experiencing an extreme drought. Victoria Barrera Cappadona noticed that despite the conditions, the mesquite trees throughout their ranch continued to thrive with plentiful mesquite bean pods hanging from the trees. Chewing on one of the pods brought back childhood memories of visiting the ranch with her father, who first introduced her to their sweet flavor. While talking to her father-in-law, he recounted how he used to receive mesquite bean jelly every Christmas from a dear friend. With a sense of adventure and desire to try something new, Victoria, her husband Justin, and their three sons started to gather mesquite beans and experiment with different recipes. Through trial-and-error, she finally landed on the perfect mesquite bean jelly recipe. She started to sell the jelly in small batches; however, requests soon grew to the point where she knew it was time to think bigger.

SBDC SUPPORT

Victoria contacted **The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** to discuss options for growing her business. Her SBDC advisors helped her to apply and prepare for various grant contests. Victoria was delighted to receive all three grants: the McAllen Chamber Innovation Grant, Hidalgo County's STED grant, and the USDA Value-Added Producer Grant. Cappadona Ranch also won the Texas Strong competition in 2018 and used the funds toward the purchase of new machinery and equipment.

Through the years, the SBDC assisted Cappadona Ranch with business planning, calculating financial projections, and assessing their capital needs. As the business grew, Cappadona Ranch started to buy beans from local farmers to utilize local, natural resources and to support the local economy. The company has expanded its product line to include mesquite bean coffee, flour, and tea. It has also launched a website, started to manufacture products from a commercial kitchen, and is proud to have sold products throughout every state in the United States. Two years after the company's inception, Victoria hired Jaelyn Cappadona Jackson, who has supported her since the business launched and, with the ongoing support of the SBDC, continues to help the business grow. ■



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Business Expansion
- \$52K+ Competition Awards
- Jobs Created - 4
- Jobs Retained - 4



ADVANCING A GLOBAL ECONOMY

The Small Business Network of the Americas (SBNA) was launched during the 2012 Summit of the Americas with the goal of strengthening the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) sector and to encourage greater trade throughout the Americas.

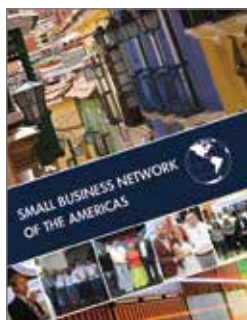
The U.S. Department of State, along with Foreign Affairs Ministries of participating countries and their Ministries of Economy, has led an extensive policy and promotion dialogue to achieve 23 Western Hemisphere nations' commitments to becoming part of the SBNA.

Since 2003, the **UTSA SBDC International Trade Center** (ITC) has guided and assisted every SBDC network operating outside the U.S. and has been the primary technical assistance provider for the SBNA. Over 253 SBDCs have been launched throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to date. In 2018, a total of 361,999 entrepreneurs were served and the amount of domestic resources committed to implementation in their own SBNA networks was an estimated \$66.2M—a strong tribute to the efficacy of the SBDC model, its adaptability, and stakeholder support.

These results clearly illustrate ITC's strong leadership on this initiative and its firm and growing presence abroad. ■

The SBNA drives sustainable and inclusive economic development in the Americas.

For more information visit:
bit.ly/SBNA_2018



SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK OF THE AMERICAS 2019 RESULTS & IMPACT

▶ SERVICE RESULTS

60,767 TOTAL NUMBER OF ADVISING CLIENTS	301,232 TOTAL NO. OF TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
361,999 TOTAL ENTREPRENEURS SERVED	991,294 TOTAL ADVISING HOURS

▶ ECONOMIC IMPACT

10,495 NEW BUSINESS STARTS	30,361 NEW JOBS CREATED
133,303 JOBS RETAINED	1,250 BUSINESS FORMALIZATIONS
\$69.6 Million NEW FINANCING	\$193.3 Million INCREASED SALES
\$66.2 Million PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES FUNDING COMMITMENT	

▶ NETWORK OVERVIEW

23 TOTAL NO. OF COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN SBNA	253 TOTAL SBDCs OPERATING
1,490 TOTAL SBDC PROFESSIONALS	7,310 TOTAL MSME STAKEHOLDERS TRAINED

2019 RESULTS | LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN | ALL AMOUNTS ARE LISTED IN U.S. DOLLARS

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, FACULTY EXCHANGES



The **UTSA SBDC International Trade Center (ITC)** led the creation of the Small Business Network of the Americas (SBNA) and has transferred the successful UTSA SBDC model to 23 countries throughout the Americas. Most international SBDCs are hosted at universities. The goal of the UTSA Global Bridge Program is to leverage the SBNA in an effort to develop international relationships between UTSA and top-tier universities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean promoting:

- International service learning internship exchanges
- Faculty and staff research exchanges and collaborations
- International student offerings at UTSA

In 2019, and as part of the UTSA Global Bridge Program, the Institute for Economic Development hosted 10 students from the *Universidad de Chile*, which operates five SBDCs. As part of the program, the Chilean students worked for three months within the UTSA SBDC program by participating in client advising and developing new programs. This international exchange provided the students with the real-world experience of working in the U.S. on high-impact projects. ■

Texas business recognized for global contribution

In 2019, Irving, Texas-based Bespoke Group, LLC won the prestigious President's "E" Award for Excellence in Exports for an unprecedented second time in four years. This award is the highest recognition a U.S. company can receive for making a significant contribution to the expansion of U.S. exports. Bespoke Group is a leading exporter of high-quality pulses, a member of the legume family, including peas, lentils, and chickpeas. Since its inception in 2004, the company has grown to provide pulses to customers in more than 35 countries worldwide. Bespoke Group has built its successful business by focusing on consistency and reliability, contracting with and providing seed to farmers to assure a quality supply, partnering with major brands in Europe, and introducing branded pulse products to major retail chains in Asia.

SBDC SUPPORT

Bespoke Group began working with the UTSA SBDC International Trade Center (ITC) in 2009 when the company entered ITC's export training program, which offered training and advising assistance to small food exporters. The ITC team also provided export-related technical training to Bespoke Group and has since continued to supply on-going international market research and advising to the company. Additional assistance to the company has included providing trade data, country pulse studies and regulatory analysis, as well as identifying trends, opportunities, and potential buyers. ■



A FRESH TAKE ON MARKET RESEARCH

For over 20 years, the **SBDC National Information Clearinghouse** (SBDCNet) has been providing customized, in-depth market research and business development resources to approximately 1,000 America’s Small Business Development Center (ASBDC) Network members and their small business clients.

SBDCNet continually strives to develop new solutions to the changing information needs of millions of small businesses. In 2019, the Center launched its newly redesigned and revamped public website—sbdnet.org. The site provides direct access to a vast array of small business information and resources for SBDC advisors and the small business community, including small business snapshot reports, help topics, and daily entrepreneur news.

In addition to the tens of thousands of projects for small businesses completed to date, the Center also provides professional development to SBDCs, offers research services to economic development partners, and collaborates with UTSA to support the local community.

SBDCNet, hosted at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), also provides meaningful experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. As interns, UTSA students research real-world business challenges and provide business intelligence and development resources for clients in response to requests from SBDC advisors. These experiences hone students’ research and business skills, supplement their UTSA studies, and make them increasingly more marketable to employers upon graduation. In 2019, the Center also hosted three student interns from Chile as part of a cross-cultural exchange between UTSA and the *Universidad de Chile*, providing a unique learning experience for both the international students and the SBDCNet staff. ■

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 20 Years of Service
- Support 62 SBDC Networks Nationally
- 95,000+ Research Projects
- Nearly 1,000 ASBDC Members



GOMEZ DOUBLES DOWN ON AWARD

Congratulations to Sr. Business Advisor Cynthia Yadira Gomez from the Sul Ross State University-Rio Grande College SBDC who received the SBDC State Star Award for the second year in a row. America's Small Business Development Center Network recognizes 'Stars' who significantly contribute to their SBDC network.

Cynthia has worked for the SBDC for 14 years. She has extensive experience in finance, management, marketing, and more. She obtained a BBA in Finance and an MBA in International Business from Texas A&M International University. She has also taught undergraduate business classes at SRSU-RGC and serves as a mentor to her teammates.

2019 ADVISING HIGHLIGHTS

- 1,418 Advising hours
- 201 Jobs Created/Retained
- 58 Business Starts/Expansions



COLLABORATING FOR RURAL TEXAS

Celebrating its 10th year, the Texas Rural Challenge conference brought key economic development partners together to support a collaborative agreement between the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and Texas United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA) to support businesses and agricultural economies in rural Texas. The collaborators committed to increasing access to capital through enhanced collaboration and coordination in areas of mutual interest. Other agencies including the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC) were also present to express their ongoing support to rural Texas.

During the 2-day conference, participants had ample opportunities to learn and network with other rural leaders on topics from rural innovation to sustainable growth to infrastructure challenges. The SBDC Texas Strong Fast-Pitch Competition featured three of the top SBDC clients from across Texas. Mike Rogers, founder of Texas Hog Blocker, walked away with the \$5,000 first-prize award. ■

For information visit:
www.texasruralchallenge.org

SBDC-AFFILIATED FIELD SERVICE CENTERS

El Paso Community College SBDC
915.831.7743 | elpasosbdc.net

Sul Ross State University SBDC
432.837.8694 | sbdc.sulross.edu/alpine

Angelo State University SBDC
325.942.2098 | sbdc.angelo.edu

SRSU - Rio Grande College SBDC
830.758.5022 | sbdc.sulross.edu/rgc

Texas State University SBDC
512.420.9379 | sbdc.mccoy.txstate.edu

University of Houston-Victoria SBDC
361.485.4485 | uhv.edu/small-business

The University of Texas at San Antonio SBDC
210.458.2460 | sabsdc.org

Del Mar College SBDC
361.698.1021 | delmar.edu/sbdc

Texas A&M International University SBDC
956.326.2827 | sbdc.tamui.edu

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley SBDC
956.665.7535 | utrgv.edu/sbdc





South-West Texas Border
**Small Business
 Development Center Network**
 The University of Texas at San Antonio

www.txsbdc.org

The South-West Texas Border SBDC Network stretches for 79 counties across south, central, west and Gulf Coast Texas. This vast and diverse territory encompasses 108,000 square miles including our state’s capital.

To meet the challenge of providing services to aspiring and experienced entrepreneurs, we operate 13 professionally staffed SBDC centers. Each center matches clients and expertise, ultimately helping to create jobs and grow the economy. The SBDC is funded in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), The University of Texas at San Antonio, as well as colleges and universities throughout our territory. Our confidential business advising services are offered at no cost to SBDC clients.

The 27,094 advising and training clients served in 2019 represent over 18 percent of the 148,784 employer businesses in the service area. Our SBDC clients continue to outperform the average Texas business in sales and employment. Those clients, who represent our long-term impact, also generated more than \$33M in state tax revenues for Texas.

Proud members of the South-West Texas Border SBDC Network



Institute for **Economic** Development
 The University of Texas at San Antonio

SOUTH-WEST TEXAS BORDER SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK
 501 W. CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ BLVD. | SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78207 | 210.458.2450