

Small Businesses Can Obtain Assistance

CANTON - The Canton SBDC offers free one-on-one counseling services for small business owners in all phases of business, from start up to growth and expansion.

Assistance is offered in a variety of areas, including but not limited to: business plan development, financial planning, marketing research and development, and loan information.

The center also offers training programs and seminars on various topics to the small business community for a minimal fee.

With a staff of five, the Canton SBDC is well equipped to assist the small business community.

Staff members have a specific area of specialty and expertise in addition to a general business background enabling them to work with clients on all types of projects. The center's Director, Bert Corey, has a concentration in manufacturing and management; Administrative Assistant Linda LaParr offers experience in management and purchasing; Senior Business Advisor Dale Rice provides knowledge

of banking and finance; Certified Business Advisor Michelle Collins offers a concentration in Marketing/Advertising and women-owned business; and Business Advisor Grady Harrington has experience in marketing and management.

In addition to their collective knowledge and experience, the staff also has access to statewide and national networks of SBDC advisors. These networks provide each SBDC client access to the skills and experience of literally thousands of SBDC advisors from across the state and country.

In the past year the Canton SBDC has initiated several new efforts to provide the small business community better access to the center and its services.

The center now supports three satellite office locations at SUNY Canton's Education Center at St. Lawrence Centre Mall in Massena; at the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Building in Akwesasne; and at the SUNY Ranger School in Wanakena.

These satellite offices help the SBDC provide better access to underserved markets.

Strategic partnerships allow the SBDC to provide more effective services by working with organizations that share a common goal.

During the 2002-2003 fiscal year the SBDC is partnering with the Women's Business Center of New York State. Together the organizations provided a Business Start Up Workshop for women in September.

Following that event, the SBDC and NYWBC have offered a series of workshops designed specifically for women in business.

The series will conclude in April.

The SBDC's on-going efforts have resulted in significant impact on the north country's economy and the small business community since becoming a regional center in 1998. The center's expert advisors have worked directly with 1,604 businesses, helping them to invest \$13,812,646 in the area's economy and creating or saving 387 jobs.

For more information about the Canton SBDC's services, call the office at (315) 386-7312 or visit the website at <http://canton.nyss-bdc.org>.