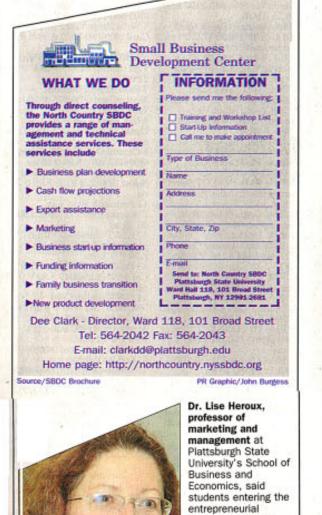
Sunday, April 4, 2004 D1



program have the flexibility to take courses matching

their plans after

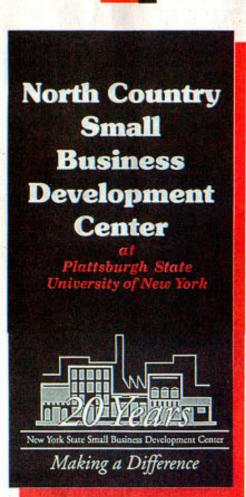
graduation, with

options targeting

advertising, public

relations or even starting a franchise

marketing,



Dr. James Csipak, associate professor of marketing and management at Plattsburgh State University's School of Business and Economics, said many see entrepreneurs as risk-takers, when actually they "plan and calculate, then invest their time and energy. Rick Latour, owner of Giolosa's Liquor, told students interested in the entrepreneurial program that starting a business requires hard work. persistence and patience, but is very rewarding. In addition to a full-time job as plant manager at Johns-Manville, he spends four nights a week making sure the liquor store is running Example of a certificate earned for attending a workshop through the

Serving the counties of Clinton,

Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Warren and Washington

Helping People Achieve

**Business Success!** 

## SBDC offers classes in entrepreneurialships

"If you have the drive

and determination,

owning your own

business is the most

rewarding experience

you can have."

By DAN HEATH

lackers need not apply. Plattsburgh State's School of Business and Economics is offering students the chance to major in entrepreneurial studies, tailoring aspects of their curriculum to their own interests.

The program uses much of the standard business-school curriculum. Dr. Lise Heroux, a professor of marketing and management. said five aspects distinguish the entrepreneurial program, including three foundation

▶ Dr. James Csipak, associate professor of marketing and management, teaches an introductory course in entrepreneurship starting your own business — and intrapre-

neurship — instilling entrepreneurship into an already existing company. choose courses based on their own particular interests," Heroux said.

➤ Plattsburgh State Small Business Development Center Director Dee Clark teaches small-business management, the day-to-day operations of a company. Clark serves a dual role as director of the

center and example to busi-

ness owners "The SBDC is a wonderful resource to have," Csipak said. "Dee and her husband own the Plattsburgh Flower Market. They have 25 years as entrepreneurs.

► The third foundation class is personal finance planning, teaching students finances so they will be ready to start their

own business. Students can choose their own path in other upper-level classes, such as advertising,

sales-force management, retail-store management or even e-commerce This provides the flexibility. Students can

They also have the choice of a managen-

ment internship or independent study.
"While it is flexible, we are in favor of an

internship," Heroux said.

Two local entrepreneurs recently shared

their experiences running their own businesses.

Rick Latour is the owner of Gioiosa's Liquor Store in Skyway Plaza. He is also the interim plant manager at Johns Manville Roofing Manufacturing

Plattsburgh. Latour started on the floor

Rick Latour at Imperial Wallcovering, way steadily upward until the company closed in 1998. He then went back to school and began working at Gioiosa's, studying while at

> In 2001, Gioiosa's owner Barney Walpole decided it was time to retire and asked Latour if he wanted to buy the business.

Latour jumped at the chance,

"I was handling the business while he was in Florida already," Latour said, "I had a lot of ideas of how to improve the business. He didn't really want to change."

Examples of the effort needed to run a

Examples of the effort needed to run a business soon became all too apparent.

"It was a nightmare to get a liquor license," he said, displaying a thick form he had to submit. "I started the process in 2001. I was able to buy it in 2002."

Since then, the business has steadily increased. His ideas included targeting an audience, with recoverious to work head.

audience, with renovations to match; and implementing a new ordering system, buy-ing in larger quantities to reduce costs.

Gross sales that first year totaled \$364,000. Last year, Latour had increased sales to \$446,000 and was on pace for \$508,000 for this year.

"If you have the drive and determination owning your own business is the most rewarding experience you can have," he said. "It's a very powerful feeling to have your

Please see SBDC Page A6 ▶

## SBDC: Introduction to Public Speaking to internships

From Page A1

own business."

Csipak, said he found it interesting that Latour worked at the business before

buying.
"It's a good idea for any job to try it out before you jump in," he said. "The more you know about a business, the better you can judge your chance of success."

neurial success. He is the co-

and Adirondack Customer

Care in Ausable Forks. The Mountain Valley side of the business takes calls for direct-response marketing clients, those who advertise products through infomercials, television, radio and print advertisements.

Adirondack takes care of post-order customer service.

Hance started in human services, then moved into the call-Harold Hance provided center business. He had suc-another example of entreprecess within the company but cess within the company but started searching for more staowner, CEO and president of bility when the company went Mountain Valley Teleservices through a series of buyouts.

He initially contacted State Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, then the town supervisor in Willsboro. She directed him to the Essex County IDA, which sent him

to Clark. Clark was able to help Hance whittle his 100-page business plan to a tightly

focused 32 pages. That helped him start from the ground up, with three clients and 40 employees tak-

ing about 40 calls per day.

He and co-owner Kurt Ellis
now have 77 employees. They take 3,500 calls a day for nine

clients, averaging \$250,000 to \$300,000 in sales per week.

Another 18 employees are due to start work Tuesday, and Hance expects to have more than 100 by the end of April. He originally owned more than 60 percent of the company but relinquished about 30 percent in his efforts

to attract investors.

"I had to make that sacrifice," he said. "I could because I trust my partners."
He gave the students inter-

ested in the Plattsburgh State program some advice.

"My philosophy is to manage by solution, not excuses. You definitely will make some mistakes. Minimize them." He advised budding entrepreneurs to take care of

things today, not tomorrow.
"Also, don't burn your bridges. It's funny how the world goes around

E-mail Dan Heath at:

dheath@pressrepublican.com