



## SPD Gazette

Week of March 16, 2009 / Issue 57

### NYS SBDC's Short Term Priorities

Between March 3 and March 6, a team led by the State Director composed of center directors and senior staff visited every member of the NYS Congressional Delegation in their Capitol Hill offices. The message to the delegation was that the NYS SBDC has a plan to help small businesses in New York stabilize, survive and perhaps even thrive during the economic downturn. The following paragraphs outline the program's legislative strategy and short term priorities.

#### Legislative Agenda for 2009

The SBDC legislative strategy is divided into two categories: the first is immediate actions in response to the recession and fiscal crisis; the second is medium-term actions targeted at the needs of small business as the recovery develops. The medium term priorities are outlined in the next issue of the *Gazette*. The SBDC has approved a focused approach to the SBDC strengths of rapid deployment and immediate impact upon the small business community, while being responsive to the state priorities.

The crisis facing the State and small business is judged to be the greatest challenge of the past half century requiring the rapid deployment of needed services to the small business sector to assist New York's engine of economic and job growth. By expanding the SBDC service network capacity, essential information, analysis and business decision-making tools will be more readily available to the small business sector to improve survivability, efficiency and growth.

#### Short Term Priorities

The SBDC program, in response to the State priorities to stimulate the economy and ease the financial crisis, is proposing to allocate 75-80% of all incremental funding support to the urgent needs of the small business sector. The recent financial crisis combined with the economic recession and stimulus package(s) have necessarily caused the program to adjust priorities in meeting the needs of the small business sector. Three (3) areas of priority have been identified as immediate and needed actions for information, business advisement and training to respond to the current challenges confronting the domestic small business economy.

- **Capital Access:** Access to capital is regularly one of the most dynamic and challenging aspects of growing or establishing a successful small business. In normal times, capital markets can be confusing and discouraging. The capital environment has been dramatically exaggerated by the current fiscal crisis, resulting in small business owners and entrepreneurs having little or no access to options, often accepting the publically held belief that capital is not available. State priority would be placed upon informational seminars, working with potential

borrowers to improve financial presentations and facilitating non-traditional as well as historical lending sources.

- **Procurement Assistance:** The Stimulus Package(s) are designed to boost spending, often through public works, shovel-ready projects in the nation. Government contracting-procurements have a rapid and extensive impact upon the economy designed to be a quick stimulus. In order to maximize small business involvement with the package, the SBDC proposes to prioritize assistance by preparing small businesses to be project ready as subcontractors and smaller prime contractors through training and business advisement, especially in the construction trades
- **Under-served/Minority Small Businesses:** The recent expansion of entrepreneurship within the under-served community creates a significant number of comparatively newer businesses within the minority community (African American, Hispanic, Women, etc.). Analysis indicates that these businesses may be at greater risk in the downturn, so the SBDC program intends to target outreach and information to the under-served community. These efforts will be designed to improve the survivability and continued growth of these firms. Many of these business owners have not experienced an economic contraction and seek business assistance in analyzing the impact of the contraction on their businesses and plans. In order for these firms to survive and help lead the recovery, SBDCs would prioritize increase public awareness of the challenges as well as the opportunities that exist within the economy. This priority also includes displaced workers such as the financial services employees in NYC.

The next issue of the *Gazette* will discuss the medium term priorities.

## From e-newsletters...

**SSTI Weekly Digest** (A Publication of the State Science and Technology Institute)  
Vol. 14, Issue 2 – March 5, 2009

### **Entrepreneurial Efforts Underway to Boost Economy**

As companies across the nation continue to announce massive layoffs during the economic recession, states, localities and private foundations are encouraging entrepreneurial training and providing support services to help create new jobs and assist struggling businesses.

- **New York City**

New York City, which has suffered major job losses throughout the financial sector, was the first to sign on to Kauffman's FastTrac program. The city's [Department of Small Business Services](#) will offer a six-session classroom-based course to help entrepreneurs determine the viability of their business concepts and develop startup strategies. An eight-week classroom training session will teach existing businesses how to review and reshape their business models in order to meet the current economic challenges. Mayor Michael Bloomberg made the announcement last month in tandem with several other initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and grow the city's venture capital sector, including low-cost incubators for startup companies, creating an angel seed fund, and establishing a central information clearinghouse and support network for entrepreneurs.

## Federal Agencies Set Up Recovery Websites

As instructed by the White House Office of Management and Budget on Feb. 17, at least 25 of the federal agencies that received funding through the Recovery Act have created recovery webpages to allow easier access for potential grantees to the funding opportunities available through the act. In addition, OMB believes the sites will help keep the distribution process as transparent and trackable as possible. OMB also is maintaining a master recovery site, <http://www.recovery.gov/> to monitor overall progress of the stimulus bill.

Links to 25 agency recovery websites are available at: <http://www.recovery.gov/?q=content/agencies>.

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At 179 years old, Yuengling remains the country's oldest beer maker.

Dick Yuengling, the fifth-generation CEO, says the family kept the business afloat by diversifying into dairy farming, Broadway shows, and dance halls during the Great Depression instead of shutting down or selling out. – “Learning from the Great Depression”, [BusinessWeek.com](http://www.businessweek.com)

## WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

Each of the focus areas listed in this section contain descriptions of activities relating to SBDC's key objectives and are the basis of the metrics by which our Strategic Plan implementation is measured and assessed.

### MARKETING & ADVOCACY

In January, Niagara Director SBDC Richard Gorko was the guest on a local cable television program, “Target Success”. He spoke about the myriad of services the SBDC provides and the current economic climate.

On November 14th, Pace SBDC Director Ira Davidson was quoted in Westchester Journal News/ lohud.com article entitled “Viability of small business hangs on Obama's plans.” This website focuses on news in the Lower Hudson area.

In the February/March 2009 issue of Business Week SMALLBIZ, Pace SBDC Director Ira Davidson had a letter to the editor published about an article entitled “Retooling the SBA: Small Business Speaks.”

In November, North Country SBDC Director Rick Leibowitz conducted a radio interview with Hall Communications to be broadcast on a series of their radio stations called “North Country Hour.” The Director discussed the services provided at the SBDC and spent some time explaining the business planning process.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & STAFF RETENTION

In February, Niagara SBDC business advisor Pauline Soeffing attended the 2009 Farmer – Chef, business to business conference and workshops, which was held by the Field and Fork Network. The Network is active in the eight counties of Western New York, and its mission is to bring food producers (*farmers & artisans*) and food buyers (*chefs, retailers, processors, distributors, and institutional purchasers*) together and create a practical economic engine for local, sustainable agriculture. This is the first of Ms. Soeffing's professional development activities in the realm of Agriculture and Agri-Tourism. She intends to pursue her advanced business advisor certification in this area of interest.

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: PRODUCTS & SERVICES

In December, North Country SBDC Director Rick Leibowitz met with Mike Conway from AEDC and Nick Curtis from Comlinks in Saranac Lake. Mr. Conway facilitated the meeting and discussed plans for all three organizations to cooperate a little bit better in the future. Since all organizations receive some SBA funding and have a bit of an overlap in service areas, he suggested that we better communicate in regards to program development and provide more

cooperation in delivering services.

In March, the Niagara Community College SBDC is presenting its "Winter Tune-Ups", series of four workshops: Financing Sources and Business Plan Development, Developing a Marketing Plan, Business Organizational forms, and Recordkeeping for Small Businesses.

In December, North Country SBDC Director Rick Leibowitz met with Mike Conway at AEDC, Jim McKenna from the Lake Placid Visitor's Bureau and Jamie Rogers, Mayor of the Village of Lake Placid to discuss how AEDC and SBDC could expand their services in Lake Placid. Mayor Rogers suggested that the SBDC and AEDC provide a training seminar series to the Lake Placid Business Association. Director Leibowitz proposed some topics, which Mayor Rogers and Mr. McKenna felt would provide value to the business owners in Lake Placid.

## SPONSORS, HOST INSTITUTIONS, PARTNERS & ALLIANCES

In November, Pace SBDC Director Ira Davidson was a panelist at the New York City Bar Association's 5th Annual Law Practice Management Symposium. The topic discussed by the panel was "Business Plans for Lawyers."

In December, North Country SBDC Director Rick Leibowitz participated in the Strictly Business Forum sponsored by the Northeast Group. At the event, business leaders from the North Country discussed the state of the economy and identified the economic outlook for business in the North Country.

## TECHNOLOGY

The Professional Development Committee is developing a weekly webinar series to facilitate intra-SBDC communication about successful service delivery methods and techniques. The webinars also will be used to implement a quick training response as needed during rapidly evolving situations such as the economic downturn. The PDC has planned topics for the first four sessions, and is seeking ideas from advisors to continue the series. The webinars will use VoIP technology so SBDC staff will be able to participate in online meeting space via computer from their office. Headsets will be provided to each staff member.

## ABOUT THE GAZETTE

The SPD Gazette is a brief newsletter distributed via email and posted on the Internal Web Site. It will feature a column to be titled, What's New This Week, in which the network will share best practices in strategic objectives. A series of articles in the Gazette will explain the program's statewide approach to strategic objectives in six key areas:

- Marketing
- Professional Development and Certification
- Program Development: Products and Services
- Special Projects
- Strategic Partners and Alliances
- Technology, Information and Communication

### Previous SPD Gazette Issues:

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