AMERICA'S SBDC®

ACCREDITED MEMBER

MONTANA

Montana Small Business Development Center Network

Guiding Montana Businesses to Success

2018 Annual Report

In 2018 the SBA ranked Montana number one in small business employment with 65.2% of Montanans employed by small businesses making the growth of small businesses a huge importance. Small businesses are a driving force to Montana's economy and they bring in a wealth of growth and innovation to our communities. By spreading good ideas and creating new jobs while also adapting quickly to changing economic climates, Montana small businesses are also building blocks for larger companies. The Montana SBDC was formed to guide Montana small businesses to success.

The Montana SBDC is a network of ten centers strategically placed throughout the state to ensure that all Montanans have access to free, confidential consulting and low-cost training. Our centers are evenly spread out between higher education and economic development centers creating a well-rounded network to help every business in all industries. Our Regional Directors and Business Advisors assist clients every day with business plan development, financial management, operations assistance, loan applications, marketing initiatives, and so much more.

Through the support of our host organizations, we can maintain the highest level of quality in the services we provide. Our collaborative efforts help aspiring and existing small businesses to succeed and create an enormous economic engine in our state.

We are proud to publish this summary of our productivity and economic impact for 2018.

Chad Moore
Montana SBDC State Director

2018 Economic Impact

58
New Businesses Successfully Launched

91
Training Seminars Hosted

1,055
Training Attendees

149
Client Loans Approved

494
Jobs Created and/or Retained

$24,340,309
Financing Obtained by Clients

Please Note: Our data source for all statistics comes from Neoserra Client Database.

Dena Johnson
MBA, SBDC Regional Director

Lorene Hintz
SBDC Business Advisor

BIG SKY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Billings Regional SBDC

The Sassy Biscuit Co.

"With the SBDC's enormous efforts I was able to obtain financing. Without their assistance The Sassy Biscuit Co. wouldn't be as successful as we are today."
Jilan Hall-Johnson

Driven and passionate, Jilan Hall-Johnson educated herself on every aspect of owning a small business when she moved to Billings with a dream of opening a restaurant. A culinary artist with a heart for serving others, she developed a solid plan and turned to the Billings SBDC to get assistance in opening her dream, The Sassy Biscuit Co.

Dena Johnson, Billings Regional Director, and the Billings SBDC team assisted Jilan with consulting, training and technical assistance to develop projections and fine tune her business plan. The assistance provided by the SBDC helped her become business-ready and enabled her to approach the bank with solid projections.

The Sassy Biscuit was able to successfully secure SBA financing for start-up costs as well as a grant from the Downtown Billings Alliance that helped with lease-hold improvements. In 2018, The Sassy Biscuit Co. opened their doors creating 10 jobs and an amazing place for the community to gather. The Sassy Biscuit Co. is already a growing hotspot as a unique business and Jilan has risen as a community leader and as an inspiration to other budding small business owners.

Tom Walker
MBA, SBDC Regional Director

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman Regional SBDC

Core Control, Inc.

"Tom and the SBDC offered specific, direct advice that helped identify and solve root cause problems most efficiently."
Eric Bueling, General Manager

In 2018, Core Control, Inc. found itself in a transition period due to a change in leadership. The shift proved to be challenging, and the overall operating performance along with declining profitability became concerns. The new leadership team turned to Tom Walker, Regional Director at the Bozeman SBDC, for assistance.

Tom helped the Core Control senior team realign management oversight to allow for streamlined decision-making. The SBDC also helped Core Control analyze and reduce its expenses by creating a new management system.

Under the senior team and direct leadership of new General Manger Eric Bueling, Core Control quickly and successfully managed to work through a difficult management transition and cash flow shortfall by reducing expenses and refocusing sales efforts to a more profitable market segment. The results have been a 10 percent reduction in expenses, improved operating performance and the retention of all current employees.

Julie Jaksha
SBDC Regional Director

Courtney Edwards
SBDC Business Advisor

headwaters
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

Butte Regional SBDC

Accu-Scribe, LLC

"In addition to the resources that the SBDC makes available to small businesses, the human component was the most valuable in the early development of Accu-Scribe."
Brian Gollehon, President

A mechanical engineering graduate from Montana Tech, Brian Gollehon had dreams of making a mark on the oil and gas industry with the creation of technological systems and processes that would enhance efficiencies, minimize risk and increase revenue. He turned to the SBDC for help.

Julie Jaksha, Regional Director for the Butte SBDC, aided with financial projections and the initial plans to launch his business. Brian and Julie spent hours on his marketing plan as well as refining his pitch presentation to potential clients. The SBDC arranged for Brian to practice his pitch to a few statewide investors who were well versed in the oil industry. Through insight brought forth by the investors, Brian was able to focus his vision and began targeting high-impact clients, which resulted in test-site opportunities throughout the Bakken that propelled his business to the next level.

Accu-Scribe currently has operations in North Dakota, Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, California, Canada and eastern Europe and is in negotiations to deploy its technology across the world. Accu-Scribe has paved the way for the rig of the future that brings cutting-edge technology to an industry eager for ways to decrease costs of operations.

Jason Nitschke
SBDC Regional Director

Tyler Menzel
SBDC Business Advisor

Great Falls Regional SBDC

Pardue Grain, Inc.

"The assistance we received from Jason Nitschke has yielded phenomenal results in helping our vision become a reality."
Roger Sammons, President

After operating as a storage facility for six decades, Pardue Grain owners Lisa and Roger Sammons discovered an opportunity presented in business cases published by the SBDC host, the Great Falls Development Authority, that highlighted opportunities for pulse crop expansion within the Golden Triangle. The discovery inspired the Sammons to expand their business to include a pulse processing facility.

Jason Nitschke, Great Falls SBDC Regional Director, began work on the project in June 2017 to assist the Sammons with the financial feasibility, strategic planning, loan packaging, grant writing and team-building with additional resource partners. He referred the Sammons to the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center for assistance in designing the new facility and sourcing the equipment needed for the processing line. Jason continued to provide guidance for three loan applications, a USDA guarantee, three grant applications, marketing assistance, and ongoing project and business management support.

In the winter of 2018, Pardue Grain opened its state-of-the-art, 32,000-square-foot pulse processing facility after attracting more than $7 million in investment from eight sources of funds. The expansion will significantly reduce transportation costs for Montana growers within the Golden Triangle and create an additional 20 high-wage jobs on the Blackfeet Reservation in Glacier County.

Joe LaPlante
SBDC Regional Director

Bear Paw Development Corporation
of Northern Montana

Havre Regional SBDC

Boxcars Restaurant and Lounge

"Joe was great to work with. He made sure all of our paperwork was correct and we had accurate financials."
Ashley Weinheimer and Anthony Windy Boy, Owners

Ashley Weinheimer and Anthony Windy Boy dreamt of owning their own business and in 2018 that dream became a reality. When the owner of Boxcars, a local bar, decided to sell, Ashley and Anthony jumped at the chance. Having never owned their own business they turned to the Havre SBDC for assistance in completing the process of becoming business owners.

Joe LaPlante, Havre Regional Director, worked with Ashley and Anthony in developing a business plan backed by solid financial projections to assist with the lending process. He worked with them to identify funding solutions that best fit their needs and provided guidance on financial documents required by their lender.

With the support from the Havre SBDC Ashley and Anthony were able to secure financing to purchase the existing business, retaining two jobs and creating an additional four. They also repaired the iconic toy train that runs around the top of the restaurant. Boxcars is once again a reliable source of amazing food and quality customer service in downtown Havre.

Ryan Loomis
SBDC Regional Director

HELENA COLLEGE
University of Montana

Helena Regional SBDC

Ristorante Bella Roma

"The Helena SBDC was extremely helpful and knowledgeable with writing and improving my business plan. They gave me the confidence and the peace of mind I needed to start a business."
Davide Giuliani, Owner

Davide Giuliani was born and raised in Rome, Italy, and brought his formal training and his grandmother's recipes to Montana in 2016. Starting with reservation-only pop-up restaurants in East Helena, David eventually opened Bella Roma, a traditional Italian restaurant, in leased space. After a year of operating four days a week in a space that provided seating for 30 customers, Davide turned to the Helena SBDC for assistance in finding a new location.

The Helena SBDC worked with Davide to measure the feasibility of moving to a new location by developing projections and revising his business plan. In addition, the Helena SBDC assisted Davide in finding a new location that would be suitable for his upscale restaurant.

With help from the Helena SBDC, Davide was successful in negotiating with the owner of the Doubletree by Hilton to renovate and lease the space that had been vacated by another restaurant. Bella Roma secured a bank loan of $25,000 to assist in the renovations. The new location allows customers to have an outdoor dining experience while increasing indoor seating accommodations from 30 customers to 70. Bella Roma is now open seven days a week, has created seven new jobs and has increased overall sales.

Dan Gorton
SBDC Regional Director

Flathead Valley Community College

Kalispell Regional SBDC

Montana Hoof Care

"Dan Gorton's advice and expertise was extremely valuable in writing my business plan to obtain the loan for building our arena."
Marion Eash, Owner

Marion Eash and his wife Sara started Montana Hoof Care in 2008 after moving to Fortine, Montana. Marion has been a farrier for 17 years and works beside his brother and the occasional part-time help. Marion and Sara needed an indoor space to add business lines complementary to the farrier business, especially in the winter months, and they turned to the Kalispell SBDC for assistance.

Dan Gorton, Kalispell Regional SBDC Director, did a commercial loan/financial analysis on Marion's business to determine if building an indoor space was a viable option for him to pursue. Dan also did a break-even analysis and projected revenue from some alternative uses for the building to show the lenders that the multi-use facility would create other lines of business to allow for Montana Hoof Care's growth.

Marion was able to obtain bank financing in the amount of $250,000 with an additional owner investment of $40,000. The addition of a 100' x 200' indoor arena will add one part-time employee upon completion. The construction of the indoor riding arena will allow Montana Hoof Care to offer boarding, horse clinics and related events in addition to being able to work inside during the winter months.

Tracy Baker
SBDC Regional Director

Miles City Regional SBDC

Driven Repair, LLC

"With the SBDC's help I was able to purchase the land and property that I was leasing and grow my business!"
Gregg Clark, Owner

Gregg Clark, owner of driven repair had been operating his diesel truck repair business from a leased facility since early 2016. In late 2017 he was approached with the opportunity to buy the building and property located outside of Miles City.

Gregg turned to the Miles City SBDC for assistance. The SBDC provided guidance on the business planning process, market research, financial projections, and loan packaging. With the assistance of the Miles City SBDC, the loan process was successfully accelerated allowing Driven Repair to receive the requested funding.

In 2018, Gregg was able to take advantage of the opportunity and finalize the purchase. The financing also allowed Gregg to fix drainage issues on the property and make general repairs to the building. Gregg has added a full-time mechanic that is well versed in both truck and agriculture equipment maintenance and repair. The improvement to the property along with the additional technician allows Driven Repair to meet the demand for diesel truck repair services in Miles City and the surrounding area.

Jennifer Stephens
MBA, SBDC Regional Director

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Missoula Regional SBDC

Spartans Vehicle Repair & Tuning

"Jennifer put together recommendations and meetings with individuals that were willing to help and get everything rolling. I am very impressed by her knowledge and ability to guide an individual to success."
Milt and Jennifer Itskos, Owners

Milt and Jennifer Itskos have a successful vehicle repair business in Missoula with an impeccable reputation. Spartans has such a good reputation that clients are often willing to wait for service rather than work with another vehicle repair business. The high demand was exceeding the human resources and physical capacity of the existing repair facility. Milt and Jennifer contacted the Missoula SBDC for assistance in scaling their business.

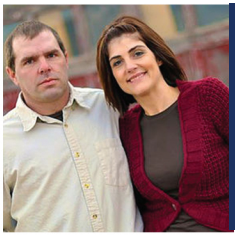
Jenn Stephens, Missoula Regional Director, assisted Milt and Jennifer with financial projections and business planning guidance for their initial plan to build a new vehicle repair shop. When Milt and Jennifer found an existing vehicle repair center that was for sale, Jenn helped identify SBA loans that they qualified for and assisted them through the lending process.

With the help from their local SBDC, Milt and Jennifer were successful in securing $1,209,000 in total financing for the purchase of the existing facility. The new, larger location has allowed Spartans to retain four jobs and create an additional two. As of January 2019, revenues for Spartans are exceeding projections by 35% to 40%. Milt and Jennifer continue to grow their business by providing superior customer care and consistent vehicle repair services to their clients.

Shandy Hanks
SBDC Regional Director

Wolf Point Regional SBDC

Wheatland Lodge



"I am amazed with the services and continued education provided by the SBDC even after the loan process was complete."
Twyla Holum, Co-Owner

For 65 years, the Juel Motel located in Scobey, Montana, has offered accommodations to bird hunters, tourists and business travelers alike. The Juel family developed a tradition of success, and when it came time to sell, they sought new owners who could continue that tradition. In 2018, the Juel family approached Kent and Twyla Holum with the opportunity.

Kent, an experienced auto body technician, and Twyla, a part-time bookkeeper at an agricultural company, always had an interest in becoming business owners. When the opportunity arose, they turned to Shandy Hanks, SBDC Regional Director at the Wolf Point SBDC for assistance. Shandy provided guidance on the loan packaging process for gap financing at Great Northern Development Corporation.

With the help from Shandy, Kent and Twyla were successful in receiving $25,000 in gap funding to leverage over $200,000 in total financing for the purchase. The Holums were able to create one additional job while retaining the existing staff. The motel was renamed "The Wheatland Lodge" and continues to provide comfortable accommodations and the great service it has become known for.

Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation

April 15-17, 2018
Big Sky, MT

The Montana SBDC Network teamed up with the Office of Tourism and Business Development to provide business training presentations at this annual conference. The SBDC offered small business owners the opportunity to enhance financial, managerial and technical skills.

2018 U.S. Small Business Administration Awards

May 3rd, 2018

Jason Nitschke, Great Falls Regional Director, was named the 2018 Montana "State Star," a national award recognizing outstanding performers from America's Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC).

Since joining the SBDC in 2014, Nitschke has consulted 366 clients, assisted with starting 45 businesses and secured $42 million in financing. His impact is felt among his peers, as they often turn to him when they need help refining processes, strategizing and mentoring new advisors. Jason continually exceeds all program goals and hosts Boots to Business classes at Malmstrom Airforce Base.

Nitschke's office at host organization Great Falls Development Authority provides customized one-on-one consulting and training to startup and existing businesses in a nine-county region including Cascade, Fergus, Glacier, Judith Basin, Pondera, Teton and Toole counties.

Governor Bullock Celebrates the 2nd Annual SBDC Day with Small Businesses Owners

March 21, 2018

Governor Steve Bullock joined four Montana small businesses to celebrate their successes with the help of the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) at the second annual SBDC Day event at Anchor Fitness in Great Falls.

“Montana is built on the innovative ideas of our small business owners, and it’s an honor to celebrate them,” said Governor Bullock. “These businesses, with support of the Small Business Development Centers, strive to make their communities and Montana a great example for future entrepreneurs.”

Anchor Fitness and 2J’s Fresh Market are two SBDC success story businesses that promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging people stay active and sustain healthy eating habits. Both have successful businesses thanks to the support and expertise of their local SBDC business advisor.

Governor Bullock recognized March 21, 2018 as SBDC Day in Montana. The event unites 10 regional centers in Montana and nearly 1,000 SBDC centers across the country and the hundreds of thousands of clients they’ve served in their near 40-year history. The Montana SBDC network has assisted more than 29,000 Montana entrepreneurs and nearly 6,500 businesses since it began in 1989. In just the last year, Montana SBDC’s have helped launched 78 new businesses and created or retained 841 jobs.

“The SBDC has been invaluable to us, and the fact that it is offered at no cost to the business is truly remarkable,” said Anchor Fitness owner Tamara Podry.

"This day is important to tell the stories of successful businesses and the support that the Montana SBDC network strives to provide in building a thriving economy in Montana," said SBDC State Director Chad Moore.

Contact Us:

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Helena College
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Miles Community College
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Flathead Valley Community College
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Missoula Regional Center
University of Montana
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Wolf Point Regional Center
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406.653.2590

Visit **sbdc.mt.gov/About/Locations** to learn more and make an appointment with an advisor in your area.

Check out **sbdc.mt.gov** for more information on our programs, trainings, events and success stories.

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MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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