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## BACKGROUND

The Virginia Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Network is a partnership between the US Small Business Administration (SBA), George Mason University, and a variety of local organizations, including universities, chambers of commerce, and economic development groups.

### Programs

For established firms, emerging companies or aspiring entrepreneurs, the Virginia SBDC is the place where businesses go to talk business. Counseling, training and information resources are the hallmarks of the SBDC program. Business owners and managers can count on professional guidance, experienced insight, practical solutions and respect for confidentiality when they work with a Virginia SBDC.

These services are periodically assessed to keep pace with changing small business needs. SBDCs work with other federal, state, and local government programs that assist small businesses.

In 2010, clients reported significant economic impacts as a result of working with their local SBDC:

Clients served: 14,000  
Jobs created or retained: 5,827  
New business starts: 307  
Capital formation: \$ 66.8 million  
Sales increase: \$101.0 million

**One-on-one Confidential Counseling:** Business management counseling is the premier offering of the Virginia SBDC Network. The depth and breadth of the Network ensures that businesses across Virginia can tap into a variety of expertise including strategic and business planning, marketing, operations, accounting and recordkeeping, financial analysis, international trade, manufacturing, government procurement, and access to capital. All Virginia SBDC professional counselors have extensive business experience, and many have personal business ownership in their backgrounds. In addition, private sector professionals are available to meet and advise business owners. Confidentiality and privacy are ensured.

**Training:** Many business topics are best addressed in small group settings with time and attention focused on the details of the topic. The SBDCs offer two-to-four-hour training programs and seminars

on a variety of topics including business planning, marketing, management, legal considerations, accounting and bookkeeping, financial analysis, technology, access to capital, and business basics. Subject area experts deliver training programs for the Virginia SBDCs.

Information Resources: Virginia SBDCs are tapped into the business community. They know local businesses, banks and funding sources, service providers, state and federal programs and other resources available to help businesses grow. The Virginia SBDC is where businesses go to talk business.

Small Town and Merchant Program (STAMP): Independent retailers and restaurants are the heart and soul of small towns and main streets across Virginia. Successful retailers build vibrant downtown destinations, but they face unique challenges ranging from inventory control, advertising, merchandising and staffing, to big box competition. STAMP is a comprehensive collection of workshops, hands-on initiatives, and resources designed to address the specific needs of main street retail and restaurant businesses. Local organizations such as Main Street programs, chambers of commerce, retail and restaurant associations and others can work with the Virginia SBDC Small Town & Merchant Program to deliver targeted, relevant guidance that business owners and managers can put to use immediately.

International Trade Initiative: Virginia SBDC Network is developing an International Trade Initiative, which will be available in Q2 of 2011. It will help businesses who are interested in international trade become “export ready.” Once this initial preparation work is done, the Virginia SBDC International Trade Initiative counselors will then introduce the businesses to the appropriate export program and continue helping and supporting them as they expand into these new markets.

## **SBDC Local Offices**

There are 29 local SBDC offices, enabling an SBDC to be located within a one-hour drive from anywhere in the Commonwealth. Each center receives funding from the SBA through the State Office, along with matching funds from their local hosts and sponsors.

### **Potomac Region**

- SBDC at the Community Business Partnership (Springfield)
- Mason SBDC -- Fairfax, Arlington, Prince William
- Loudoun SBDC
- Alexandria SBDC
- University of Mary Washington SBDC (Fredericksburg)
- University of Mary Washington SBDC – Warsaw

### **Central Region**

- Shenandoah Valley SBDC (Harrisonburg)
- Central Virginia SBDC (Charlottesville)
- Greater Richmond SBDC

Lord Fairfax SBDC (Middletown)  
Lord Fairfax SBDC at Fauquier  
Lord Fairfax SBDC at Culpepper  
Lord Fairfax SBDC at Bright Center

### **Hampton Roads Region**

Hampton Roads SBDC (Norfolk)  
Hampton Roads SBDC – Eastern Shore  
Hampton Roads SBDC – Franklin  
Hampton Roads SBDC -- Hampton  
Hampton Roads SBDC -- Smithfield  
Hampton Roads SBDC -- Suffolk  
Hampton Roads SBDC -- Williamsburg

### **Southern Region**

Longwood SBDC (Farmville)  
Longwood SBDC -- Danville  
Longwood SBDC – Martinsville  
Longwood SBDC -- Petersburg  
Longwood SBDC -- South Boston  
Region 2000 SBDC (Lynchburg)

### **Southwest Region**

Blue Ridge Crossroads SBDC (Galax)  
Radford University SBDC  
Roanoke Regional SBDC  
Southwest Virginia Community College SBDC  
Virginia Highlands Community College SBDC  
Mountain Empire Community College SBDC

## **Objectives**

Virginia SBDC Network’s mission, vision, and values are as follows:

**Mission:** To foster small business success and grow Virginia’s economy

**Vision:** To be recognized as the leading provider of consulting and education for small business in Virginia

**Values:** Integrity: Demonstrate honesty, confidentiality and conduct above reproach  
Professionalism: Provide quality service, practical advice and objective guidance  
Respect: Recognize the views and opinions of clients, stakeholders, and colleagues and be responsive to their needs

