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STATE LEADERSHIP

The State Office of the Virginia Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Network is located at the Mason Enterprise Center at George Mason University in Fairfax Virginia, and it is responsible for the overall management oversight of the Network, including financial, administrative, and programmatic responsibilities. The State Office also evaluates programs, acts in a development manner to improve, grow, and support local centers, and helps to leverage resources, identify opportunities, address network issues, and to implement feasible and practical solutions.

Jody Keenan, State Director

Jody Keenan was named State Director of the Virginia SBDC Network in 2003. She began her SBDC career as a graduate student while earning her MBA. Later she joined George Mason University as Director of the Northern Virginia SBDC, overseeing four local offices. Previously she was the Deputy Director of Economic Development in Chester County, a suburb of Philadelphia.

Keenan has served the national SBDC network as Chair of the ASBDC Board of Directors and on the Operations and Accreditation Committees. She also serves on several statewide committees, including the Entrepreneur Board of Advisors for the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and the Small Business Committee for the Virginia Chamber of Commerce. Keenan earned her Masters of Business Administration degree from LaSalle University in Philadelphia and her BS from the College of William and Mary.

Holly Park, Associate State Director, Finance and Operations

Holly Park has over 17 years of experience in public higher education directly managing budget, finance, HR, and procurement using sponsored and non-sponsored funds. Before joining the Virginia SBDC, she was the Director of Fiscal Services at the School of Public Policy at George Mason University. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and an MBA from Old Dominion University.

Susan Lee-Merrow, Associate State Director, Programs

Susan Lee-Merrow develops programs for veterans who are small-business owners, for small businesses in Virginia who want to become exporters, and other special projects. Lee-Merrow began working with small businesses at the San Francisco SBDC as a business counselor and more recently at the Mason

SBDC in Fairfax, Virginia, as a certified business analyst. She continues to work with small-business clients as a volunteer counselor at Mason SBDC, after joining the Network in 2010.

Previously, Ms. Lee-Merrow was a marketing executive in the entertainment software industry. Her expertise in branding resulted in four of her products being named in the top ten brands of the decade in children's software. She served as President of the Game Developers Conference, and shepherded its sale to Miller Freeman (renamed CMP). She developed the Integrated Marketing Program at San Francisco State University, served as Program Advisor, and taught two classes. Ms. Lee-Merrow earned her BA in Behavioral Science from San Jose State University.

Tracy Nayar, Operations Manager

Tracy Nayar has been surrounded by small businesses all her life. She is the wife of a small-business owner, is the daughter of a small-business owner, and has been on the staff of small-businesses throughout her career. Ms. Nayar accepted the position of Operations Manager for the Virginia SBDC Network in September, 2009.

She has over 15 years of experience in IT solutions, as well as project and program management. Her previous managerial positions include Project Director, Program Manager, and Web Master. She holds a BA from Syracuse University with a major in International Relations.

SPECIALTY CONSULTANTS

Marc Willson, Retail and Restaurant Consultant

Marc Willson brings 35 years of experience to help retail, restaurant, and other tourist-related small businesses to refine and promote their concepts to the public. He is also adept at assisting all types of small businesses with their customer service plans.

In 1975, Mr. Willson started his retail career as co-owner of the largest distributor of Earth Shoes in the US. Since then, he has held executive positions with such retailers as Britches of Georgetown, Crown Books, Circuit City, The Bicycle Exchange, eCampus.com, and Storetrax. Most recently he opened the world's first energy-efficiency store for Current Energy, a Dallas company funded by Ross Perot, Jr. Since 2009, Mr. Willson has also developed its Small Town & Retail Merchant Program (STAMP) throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, while giving seminars to more than 1,000 attendees and counseling several hundred businesses.