

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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**NEW MEXICO
SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
CENTER**

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE STATE DIRECTOR

I'm pleased to provide you with the 2019 New Mexico Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC) Network's Annual Report. For the past 31 years, the NMSBDC Network has made a meaningful difference in the lives of New Mexicans by helping our clients start, grow, and sustain their businesses. This report provides an opportunity to share our clients' success stories from across the state. As well as reflect on our performance and the strategies we have implemented to help small businesses succeed and thereby create jobs and positively impact New Mexico's economy.

Please remember that these success stories are not just about up-and-coming small businesses, but also the incredible people behind those businesses. Just imagine, each of these small businesses started out as someone's dream or idea; followed by the hard work and dedication necessary for the owners and employees to make those dreams a reality. If each of these owners could speak to you in person, I'm sure they would tell you that the path is not always easy, but the journey is certainly worthwhile.

We have continued to enhance and expand our service offerings by focusing our efforts on continuous improvement. The NMSBDC Network currently has 18 Service Centers, 9 satellite offices, 6 Procurement Technical Assistance Centers and the International Business Accelerator, which team to provide valuable counseling and training statewide to our small businesses.

Numerous challenges are facing our small businesses in the state including long term sustainability, using the Internet successfully in offering products and services in a competitive global environment, access to capital and a variety of workforce needs. Additionally, issues such as Cybersecurity threats are no longer just a big business issue; small businesses are now facing the risk of losing valuable customer information, business records, and data.

I'm confident that the NMSBDC's Network of highly skilled business experts are posed to fully embrace the future challenge of advising our state's entrepreneurs on how to navigate these changes, and I'm grateful for the collaborative support of our US Small Business Administration partners like WESST, SCORE and VBOC

in accomplishing the task. Your state and federal tax dollars, along with our local higher education hosts, and other partners, make it possible for any New Mexico small business to work with our team from across the state.

I invite you to browse through our annual report, review the impressive statistics and read about a few of the small business owners that were selected to be our NMSBDC Star Businesses for this year.

Sincerely,

RUSSELL WYRICK

New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network
Executive State Director



NETWORK PROFILE

EXPERIENCE

The New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network (NMSBDC) was established in 1989 through a partnership with the US Small Business Administration, the State of New Mexico, the New Mexico Association of Community Colleges, and the New Mexico Association of Independent Community Colleges. The NMSDC Network State Office is located on the campus of the Santa Fe Community College in Santa Fe, NM. The program provides no cost business consulting and low cost business training to all New Mexico entrepreneurs. The 18 NMSBDC service centers and 9 satellite offices are strategically located throughout the state of New Mexico. The highly skilled NMSBDC staff is comprised of business professionals with small business management and ownership expertise. The pride and dedication of the consultants shines through the successes of the small businesses they help each year. The International Business Accelerator, located in Santa Teresa, NM is a one-stop shop of resources for New Mexican businesses and individuals wishing to introduce their product or service into the global market. The New Mexico Procurement Technical Assistance Center is the bridge between business and government. The program is designed to help NM businesses learn what they need to know about doing business with governmental entities, help NM businesses connect to government procurement decision makers, and assist businesses to ultimately win government contracts.

EDUCATION

The consultants of the NMSBDC have earned Bachelor's Degrees, Masters Degrees and Doctoral Degrees from colleges and universities all over the nation, from the University of New Mexico to the University of Notre Dame.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

As a statewide provider of entrepreneurial and business development services, the New Mexico SBDC Network plays a vital role in New Mexico economic development by assisting entrepreneurs at every stage of the business

life cycle. The NMSBDC has assisted thousands of emerging and growing businesses by providing the professional expertise, tools, and information necessary to make sound business decisions in a complex and ever-changing marketplace.

In addition to the NMSBDC's key service offerings of consulting provided at no-cost, training, and business research, the New Mexico SBDC Network also provides a comprehensive toolkit of specialized services for qualifying businesses looking to accelerate market growth, including: Growth Acceleration, International Trade, Government Contracting, and Business Continuation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The NMSBDC continues to be honored by the Association of Small Business Development Centers with full accreditation status. The ASBDC represents the collective interest of all members through a comprehensive Malcolm Baldrige based accreditation process. This process ensures the delivery of nationwide educational assistance to strengthen small business management, thereby contributing to the growth of local, state, and national economies.

The ASBDC recognized Briana Montano-Baca, Associate Director of the SBDC at Luna Community College at their National Convention in Long Beach, CA as the 2019 New Mexico State Star.

The SBDC at University of New Mexico Taos under the direction of Anwar Kaelin was recognized with the NMSBDC Center of the Year award for its exceptional processes and overall contribution the mission and vision of the NMSBDC Network.

With the support of the New Mexico Legislature, U.S. Small Business Administration, U.S. Department of Defense, our host institutions and all of our economic development partners, the NMSBDC has once again achieved all of the goals set out for this fiscal year.

TESTIMONIALS



“(Brian DuBoff) has been a godsend ever since. This has really resonated. He’s been a big help to find market research information, reports for us to use and to bolster the case for the size of the market and where we should put our resources.”

- Simon Woodruff, SciVista LLC, Santa Fe

“I kept saying, ‘Someday, someday I get my own restaurant.’ This restaurant is a dream come true. The kitchen is so big and roomy. JoAnn Garay (of Dona Ana Community College SBDC) did all the paperwork and made sure everything was perfect.”

- Gonzalo Chavez, Taqueria Chavez, Las Cruces



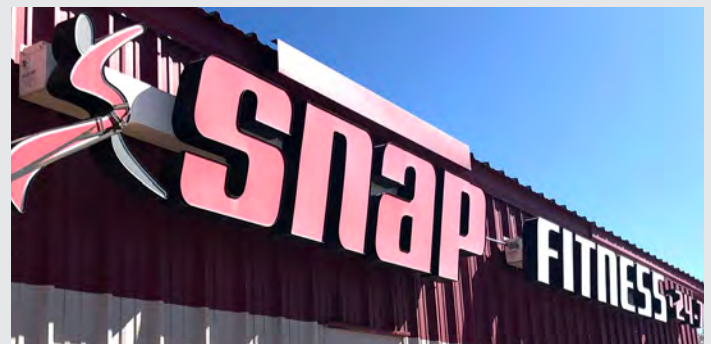
“We met (Cyndi Jarvison, director of the UNM Gallup center) when we first started. We had gone to get our business license and papers, and we went by to talk to her. We’ve had a long-term relationship since then. We’ve been doing a lot of classes with her and she’s become a big resource for us”

- Jacqueline Ahasteen, I Knead Sugar, Gallup



“Denise Chavez (of the NMSU Grants SBDC) is awesome. She helped me do the LLC, which was a nightmare, and she helped me with the EIN number.”

- Monique Santistevan, Snap Fitness 24-7, Grants



NMSBDC 2019 IMPACT

CLIENT ACTIVITY

3,638 Total Clients

2,845 SBDC | 733 PTAC | 60 IBA

SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

Program	Total FY 18/19	Attendees
SBDC	187	2,116
PTAC	93	702
IBA	15	15,636
		18,454

CLIENTS SERVED

Type	Total FY 18/19
Veterans	166
Hispanic	993
Caucasian	1,842
African American	123
Native American	207

CLIENT GENDER

Gender	Total FY 18/19	Percent
Male	725	25%
Female	742	26%
Male/Female	1,378	48%
Total	2,845	100%

AREA OF ASSISTANCE

Area of Counseling	Total FY 18-19
Business Accounting/Budget	196
Business Plan	703
Buy/Sell Business	138
Cash Flow Management	46
Customer Relations	50
eCommerce	10
Engineering R&D	8
Financing/Capital	395
Franchising	7
Government Contracting	59
Human Resources/Employee Mg't	90
International Trade	3
Legal Issues	201
Managing a Business	614
Marketing/Sales	577
Start-up Assistance	1,402
Tax Planning	195
Technology/Computers	93
Other	56
Total Counseling Sessions	4,843

**Our 2019 Results in the Region & Statewide. Brought to you by the
New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network**

INDUSTRIES SERVED

Type	Total FY 18/19	Clients Served
Retail	207	7%
Service	519	18%
Wholesale	17	1%
Manufacturing	138	5%
Construction	112	4%
Other	1,852	65%
Total	2,845	100%

JOBS CREATED & RETAINED

	Total Jobs	Created	Retained
SBDC	5,585	1,172	4,413
IBA	14	14	0
PTAP	0	0	0
Total	5,599		

*Includes SBDC, PTAP and IBA Performance

Time Period	Amount	Created	Retained
Total FY 18-19	5,599	1,186	4,413
July 1989-Sep 2019	35,424	29,344	6,080

CAPITAL FORMATION

Time Period	Total Jobs	Number of Businesses
Total FY 18-19	\$36,560,071	416
July 1992-September 2019	\$935,767,549	7,162

NEW BUSINESSES CREATED

Time Period	Number of Businesses
Total FY 18-19	261
July 1991-September 2019	9,943

IBA INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

2006 TO PRESENT		
Exports	Imports	Businesses Started
\$1,261,911,203	\$6,743,392	79
Jobs Created & Retained	Equity Investments	
1,040	\$207,841,164	

PTAC PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

2008 TO PRESENT	
# of Prime Contracts	Dollar Value of Prime Contract Awards
2995	\$438,284,330
# of Subcontracts	Dollar Value of Subcontract Awards
68	\$13,027,877

PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER - PTAC



Chris Weil (Owner of Weil Construction)

WEIL CONSTRUCTION

Chris Weil

Years in Business: 14

Type of Business: Construction

Number of Employees: 68

Community: New Mexico, Texas, and Utah

Procurement Technical Assistance Center



When Weil Construction was named National Prime Contractor of the Year in 2018, owner Chris Weil knew that he owed some of his success to the help he received from the New Mexico Procurement Technical Assistance Center.

“PTAC helped us with our business structure, and taught us how to get into the federal world. We work for several different federal clients and they were able to help and guide us.” - Chris Weil

PTAC is a unique partner organization of the New Mexico Small Business Development Centers that helps businesses navigate the complicated process to procurement opportunities with the municipal, state and federal government.

In Weil's case, the company sought out help when he needed to figure out various government websites. “The government sites can be very cumbersome,” Weil said. “They helped us resolve that. I also use them a lot as a sounding board to market to the government and they help us review materials and hold events that bring in government agencies so we can meet the decision makers and learn what kinds of work opportunities are coming up.”

Weil Construction, based in Albuquerque, has multiple offices in three states that all work with various government agencies. The problem was keeping up with opportunities in multiple states, and structuring a business that can serve local, state and federal contractors. The company has offices in New Mexico, Texas and Colorado, and has worked on schools, courthouses, and Sen. Mitt Romney's offices in Salt Lake City, Utah.

In 2018, the New Mexico Procurement Technical Assistance Center helped its 795 active clients bring in \$223.4 million in contract awards from federal agencies.

“Businesses that aren't taking advantage of the opportunities that the government is offering are missing out. In just the last three years we've helped New Mexico's businesses secure more

than \$425 million in contracts from local, state and federal sources,” said Therese Rivera, NMPTAC Statewide Program Manager. “PTAC consultants are here to help businesses find the resources they need to grow their businesses and serve their communities.”

And Weil says he'll continue working with PTAC to find more opportunities to continue to grow his business.



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ACCELERATOR - IBA

CORRUGATED SYNERGIES INTERNATIONAL

Guy DeYoung

Years in Business: 30



Type of Business: Corrugated Paper Sheets, and Specialty Corrugated Printing Solutions

Number of Employees: 50

Community: Santa Teresa

SBDC: International Business Accelerator



NMIBA

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ACCELERATOR
New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network



New Mexico is a land of possibilities for Corrugated Synergies International.

Corrugated Synergies International, which is based in Renton, Washington, opened its newest facility in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, in 2018 with the Governor and other dignitaries at the ribbon cutting. The project is a major economic development win, which will create new jobs and investment in southern New Mexico, as well as increasing the state's export base to Mexico.

CSI consists of two companies in one facility: Universal Sheets makes corrugated paper sheets, and Visual Impact Preprint (VIP) prints on those sheets. The company's paper is used for displays, boxes, and by customers who need a unique, high-quality, printed, corrugated sheet. CSI purchased a state-of-the-art, single-pass digital press to print on the sheets and is a pioneer in its industry. "Universal sells to converters, what we refer to as sheet plants, on the other side of the border. We ship VIP products as far away as Atlanta, Seattle, California, and ultimately into Mexico," said Guy DeYoung, Universal Sheets' General Manager.

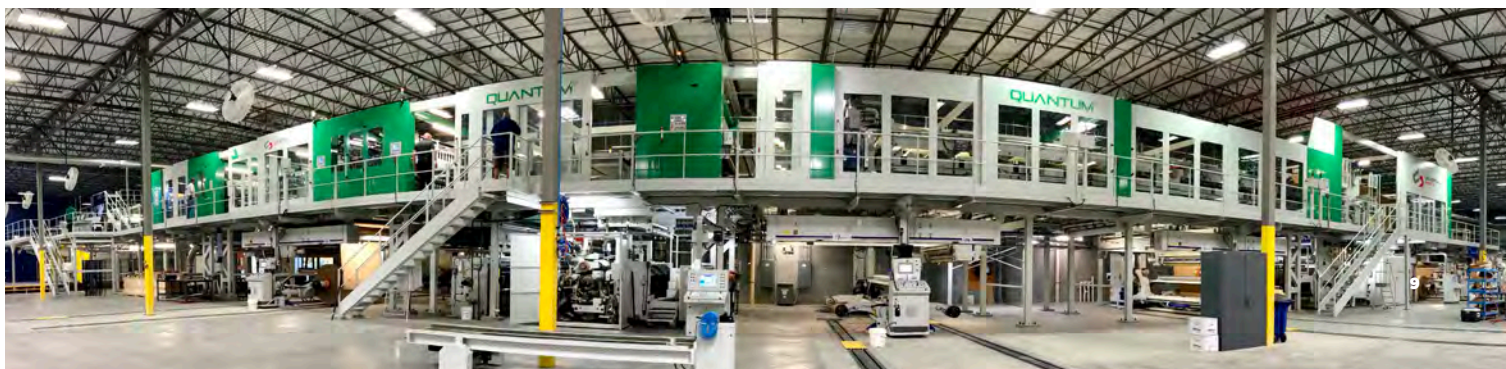
And business is good. The company currently has 50 employees working two shifts on the Universal Sheets' side of the business, and plans to add 25 more employees as it moves to a third shift. VIP is already on three shifts with 43 employees.

According to DeYoung, the company wouldn't have gotten its footing in New Mexico without help from the International Business Accelerator. "They really helped us. We had the connections in Mexico in terms of sales. The big things they

helped us with were the state and local contracts, our supply chain, and getting set up," DeYoung said.

The company took advantage of several state economic development incentives, but those weren't the only reasons for moving to New Mexico. For DeYoung, opening a new manufacturing plant in southern New Mexico was almost like coming home.

"I grew up in El Paso, which is close to Santa Teresa, went to high school there, and it was always a goal to come back. My wife is from Chihuahua, so it's nice to be close to family. I'd worked here before at what was then Vista Corrugated, and when we decided to locate the project here, it was a natural thing." - Guy DeYoung





Deanna Montoya (Owner of Enchanted Smiles, LLC)

ENCHANTED SMILES, LLC

Deanna Montoya

Years in Business: 6

Type of Business: General Dentistry Practice

Number of Employees: 5

Community: Belen

SBDC: University of New Mexico, Valencia



New Mexico is one of just a few states that allows a dental hygienist to own and operate a dental practice. For Deanna Montoya, that meant she was able to buy the practice she's worked at for decades from the dentist that was retiring and keep her job as a hygienist, hire a new dentist, and maintain the successful Enchanted Smiles, LLC dental practice in Rio Communities, which is south of Belen.

"In New Mexico, we are able to practice on our own and that's great. We can have dentists on staff." - Deanna Montoya

But she didn't want to just keep the practice going, she wanted it to keep growing. Montoya began working with SBDC counselor Chris Garcia from the UNM Valencia campus to craft a plan that will help her grow, market, retain employees, expand services and eventually sell the practice.

"He helped me with employee retention, marketing and my website, as well as Facebook," Montoya said. "He actually sat down with my front office people and they re-did my website together."

Learning how to market the practice, she said, has been a major factor in the growth of Enchanted Smiles.

Garcia also helped Montoya plan ahead.

"He helped me with my equipment, too; Do I buy it and pay it off right away, or do I get loans? He helped me figure out how to get my business sellable, and checked how my LLCs were set up," Montoya said.

Though she spends Mondays and Wednesdays on office work, she got into the business to help patients' smiles. She still sees patients Tuesdays and Thursdays and helps the dentist, Dr. Robert Grodner.

Now, she said, she wants to expand the practice to include more services, such as orthopedic dentistry, which would help correct peoples' bites through braces and other orthodontist procedures.

"Now, most people have to go all the way to Albuquerque for braces. I'd like to offer that in Belen," Montoya said.





NM SOLAR GROUP

ALBUQUERQUE

NM SOLAR GROUP

Ryan Wallace

Years in Business: 4

Type of Business: Solar Panel Installation

Number of Employees: 65

Community: New Mexico statewide service

SBDC: Central New Mexico Community College



When a customer calls NM Solar Group for any reason, they will always get to talk to an owner of the company, and an owner will always conduct the work.

That's because as of about a year ago, NM Solar Group founder Ryan Wallace sold his then 3-year-old business to his employees. The company, which offers residential and commercial customers a complete range of solar panel services - from consultation, design, financing, installation and system maintenance - is now organized under an Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP). Employees are automatically vested in a retirement plan at no cost to them; the company contributes stock based upon growth and provides health benefits.

"It means that every screw on every system will be fastened by an owner of the company. Every service call placed to an NM Solar Group employee will be placed to an owner of the company. The person sweeping the floor in the warehouse? You guessed it... An owner." - Ryan Wallace

"The successes and challenges of the business will be shared by every employee at NM Solar Group which means our team really, truly cares," Wallace says on the company website.



The son of entrepreneurial parents, Wallace had always dreamed of building his own company. He started NM Solar in his sister's garage on Albuquerque's West Side in 2014, walking the neighborhood and knocking on doors to make sales. He sold about 90 percent of systems himself in the first year, said CEO Nicholas Kadlec, who began helping Wallace with sales in his second year.

"Ryan had worked for another solar company and saw an opportunity to do solar in a better way as a local company, Kadlec said. The Small Business Development Center in Central New Mexico Community College's Eagle Rock location was instrumental in NM Solar's success from the beginning, Kadlec said.

Exceptional customer service has proved its mainstay: "I think we get about a quarter to a third of our business referrals from happy customers," Kadlec said. "Being local and doing everything in house vs. subcontracting has allowed us to control every part of the process."

The numbers show the strategy is working. The startup grew by 500% in Year Two alone. Kadlec projects revenues of about \$15 million this year, up from \$8.9 million in 2018. NM Solar Group employs about 65, divided between Albuquerque, Alamogordo and Anthony, NM. Six to eight more employees will likely be hired in the next year as the company seeks to take statewide a roofing division that was added in Albuquerque in November.





Matt Willett and Jim Maynard (Co-owners of Cloudcroft Brewing Co.)

CLOUDCROFT BREWING CO.

Matt Willett and Jim Maynard

Years in Business: 1.5

Type of Business: Brewery and Restaurant

Number of Employees: 30

Community: Cloudcroft

SBDC: New Mexico State University Alamogordo



For a town of 698 people, Cloudcroft is a happening place. It's got a pizza parlor that serves wood-fired pizza cooked in an Italian brick oven. There's a brewery that crafts its own beer using a seven-barrel system on premises. The village even has live music every weekend and some weekdays. And anyone so glutinous as to want to have their pizza with a beer and be entertained all at once is in luck, because everything is under one roof at Cloudcroft Brewing Company.

Cloudcroft has no other pizza place and no other brewery. So, the business, which opened on the town's main street in the summer of 2018, has no competition. As a result, the venue, which has an open back patio for live acts as well as children's game areas, has taken off quickly.

"It's definitely become a local gathering spot. This town really needed something for locals, for tourists, for outdoor people to gather after their day of activities." - Matt Willett

"It's definitely become a local gathering spot. This town really needed something for locals, for tourists, for outdoor people to gather after their day of activities. It's a great place for families to hang out," says co-owner Matt Willett, who also owns High Altitude, an outdoors store down the street from the brewery.

Before the brewery came about, one of Willett's employees at High Altitude would throw parties in an old U.S. Forest Service fire station that Willett's future partner Jim Maynard owned, posting a BYOB sign and charging a minimal entry fee. It was at one of those events that they began tossing around the idea of opening a legitimate business to accommodate the gatherings and make them more attractive to more people. "Both of us are businessmen

in the village, and we have a passion for live music and the betterment of our town, so we thought this is a perfect opportunity to create a business that provided the community something it was lacking."

About five years later, they began working with Trish Livingston, director at the Alamogordo Small Business Development Center at New Mexico State University, to formulate a business plan. The assistance proved instrumental when Willett and his partners Jim Maynard and Cody Castello approached First National Bank for a business loan to renovate the old wildland fire engine bays into the present-day brewery.

"It was that building block that opened the door for a lot of other things," he said of the SBDC's help.

The brewery has also boosted the local economy - creating 25 to 30 jobs - and the place stays so busy that the oven often can't keep up with demand, Willett said. With an eye toward expansion, he says he and his partners have already purchased the lot next door to add much-needed kitchen space. They also intend to add some new appetizers to the menu, he said.

"It's definitely a destination place," Willett said. Even the architecture, the interior finishing and woodwork we've done is a draw."





CLOVIS SAFETY LANE

William Vanous

Years in Business: 75

Type of Business: Auto Shop

Number of Employees: 4

Community: Clovis

SBDC: Clovis Community College



William Vanous (Owner of Clovis Safety Lane)

Every small town has businesses where its people, generation after generation, just tend to end up - the corner barbershop, the local deli, maybe even a gas station that some folks recall used to sell individually wrapped pieces of bubblegum for a penny and had stools inside that encouraged lingering. Clovis Safety Lane, a brakes and suspension specialist in business since 1946, is one of those places for Clovis, NM.

"Sons and fathers and grandfathers and probably great-grandfathers have traded here their whole lives," said William Vanous, a Safety Lane employee for 35 years and its owner since May 2017. "They just continue to come here because we do good honest work."

"Our clients are like family. I see a lot of them and know a lot of them on a first-name basis." - William Vanous



"There's nothing unique about us. We just have great customer service."

Vanous bought the company at the suggestion of the previous owner, who was the last in the business' family line. It was no lifelong dream of his to run the place, though he had done so on occasion when asked. "If I didn't purchase it, we'd all be unemployed," he said. "Ah, I don't know if that's true or not. But he'd been pestering me to pull the trigger for a while and eventually, sure enough I did."

Before taking over, Vanous received help from the Small Business Development Center at Clovis Community College. He said SBDC assistant director Dominique Chairez helped tremendously with paperwork and "explaining a lot of the business stuff to me." The assistance enabled Vanous to secure a \$380,000 7(a) loan through Western Bank.

"It's been great ever since. My second mortgage is paid back and I'm working on my SBA loan right now, and I've got it almost to half. I can't stand to owe people money," he said.

Vanous says the business never missed a beat during the transition. He and his three employees take about a dozen or more customers daily, with occasional walk-ins when they can squeeze them. As owner, Vanous continues to do all of the alignment work himself, but he says he also answers the phone and takes care of various paperwork he didn't before, including writing the daily invoices. "It's all done the old-fashioned way," he said. "I type it all in on a manual typewriter. A lot of people don't even know what that is anymore. I call it my wireless keyboard."

In addition to the shop, which takes up two buildings in the middle of a block about five blocks from the center of town, Vanous owns and rents out the two buildings on either side of him. So, there's no immediate room for expansion. He says he'd have no plans for growth anyway. "This (new ownership) just happened. My hairs have turned gray in the last 2 ½ years."



BLACK MESA WINERY

Lynda and Jerry Burd

Years in Business: 20

Type of Business: Winery

Number of Employees: 10

Community: Española

SBDC: Northern New Mexico College



Lynda and Jerry Burd took a circuitous path to New Mexico and entrepreneurship.

From Colorado to Arizona to Oregon and finally to New Mexico – and six careers later – the Burd’s were looking for “the thing” that they wanted to do. Finally, after falling for wine and winemaking, they found Black Mesa Winery for sale. Twenty years on, they’re growing the business and still love winemaking.

“We were living in Oregon, and that’s where we learned to make wine. Linda said ‘Let’s go to New Mexico and do it,’ and I said, ‘There aren’t any wineries in New Mexico.’” Jerry said.

But, he quickly learned how wrong he was.

“Then we found out they’ve been making wine in New Mexico for 400 years. Then we found this place for sale,” Jerry said.

While Jerry makes the wine, Lynda focuses on marketing, creating unique labels that pop, and more.

“I didn’t think I ever dreamed we’d be in it for 20 years. We’ve really expanded since we bought it. It’s something we never dreamed it could be. It’s gone beyond my expectations in what it can be.” - Lynda Burd

The Burds have made it a point to use as many of the state’s resources as they can, from getting certified as a woman-owned company, to using SCORE executives to help determine the right production levels and to develop a business plan with the SBDC at the Northern New Mexico Community College in Espanola.

The SBDC is helping the Burds with their next adventure in drinks: hard cider. Cider has become the hottest cold drink on the market as many are now skipping the carbs and gluten in beer and switching to crisp ciders.

“We just started producing hard apple cider. The apple growers in Northern New Mexico haven’t had a large market, and there are hundreds of thousands of trees between Espanola and Taos, and the apples are falling to the ground,” Jerry said. “We have been buying apples from our neighbors and making cider. We went to Julianna for help.”

Julianna Barbee, the Director at the Small Business Development Center at Northern New Mexico College, has been helping the Burds find new business opportunities for the cider, as well as marketing help.

They make dry, sweet, raspberry and Capulin flavors, as well as seasonal specials of cider.

“Mostly, we’re trying to figure out marketing trends and what we’re going to do,” Lynda said. “And, get labels that pop with color.”





FARMINGTON

E SECURITY, LLC

Everett Howe

Years in Business: 7

Type of Business: Security Services

Number of Employees: 30

Community: Farmington & the Navajo Nation

SBDC: San Juan Community College



Everett Howe (Owner of E Security, LLC)

The words "Protect and Serve," Everett Howe said, are the goal of his company E Security, LLC.

Based in Farmington, E Security works across the Navajo Nation, in New Mexico and Arizona. The company provides security services at local schools, Navajo Technical University, oil fields, county and regional fairs, family events and much more.

Howe is a U.S. Marine Corp. Sergeant, and a retired McKinley County Sheriff's Deputy. Security made sense, he said.

"I wasn't going to get involved in anything, and a lot of people on the Navajo Nation wanted security. I should start a security company. I thought it was a good idea." - Everett Howe

But, he said, after a couple of years of struggling to get the business off the ground, he started looking for help. He first went to the Navajo Nation Small Business Development Department who recommended the SBDC at San Juan College.

"That's where I met them all. I was getting my SAM number, and they helped me," Howe said. A SAM, or System for Award Management, number is necessary for businesses that contract with the federal government. Carmen Martinez, the director of the SBDC at SJC, also helped Howe register his company with Arizona Public Service, with bookkeeping, and showed him how to develop the business.

"I want to expand through Arizona and all through the Reservation. I'm going slowly I don't want to rush it," he said.

The company has grown quickly and so far he has 30 employees but that might not be enough: E Security is going to be providing security at a new helium mine, a solar facility and an oil field in the coming year.

But first, he said, he wants to make sure of the "serve" part of the company's "protect and serve" mission. He wants to encourage more Navajo youth to go into law enforcement and to that end, he's working to establish a scholarship to encourage more Navajo and tribal police officers, as well as sponsoring local youth athletics.





Jacqueline Ahasteen (Owner of I Knead Sugar)

I KNEAD SUGAR

Jacqueline Ahasteen

Years in Business: 4

Type of Business: Cupcakery

Number of Employees: 2

Community: Gallup

SBDC: University of New Mexico Gallup



GALLUP

When you find a job you love, you never work a day in your life could be Jacqueline Ahasteen's motto.

After spending 15 years in the I.T. industry as a systems analyst in Gallup, all she wanted to do was bake.

"It's been a lifelong thing. I started baking when I was 16 for my brothers and sisters and kids and loved it. It was just a curiosity, and I'd make things for baby showers and things." - Jacqueline Ahasteen

She quit that I.T. job and opened her dream cupcakery, I Knead Sugar, off Boardman Drive three years ago in Gallup.

Today, her elaborate cakes, cupcakes, cookies, and pastries are in demand in Gallup. Her cookies are soft, chewy, and full of chocolate chips. Her cupcakes are piled high with frosting, sprinkles, and flowers and look like sweet edible gardens.

But unlike many bakers who refuse to share their secrets, Ahasteen wants to see a new generation of bakers grow up in Gallup. She teaches the Little Taters Unicorn Class for kids that shows them how to bake some of their favorite treats.

"I love the classes, and it teaches kids some basic skills. The older kids come back and teach the younger ones how to measure," she said. "Those are like tutorials, and we talk to them about measurements, and how to pipe, and how to make things from scratch."

Business is going so well, Ahasteen said, I Knead Sugar has signed a new three-year lease on the building and is planning to add a new parfait and waffle bar three days a week at I Knead Sugar. She's also going to launch a Navajo Tea Time where she hopes to introduce people to Navajo Tea, where it comes from, how to make it, and how it can heal.

"Rather than scones, we'll do blue cornbreads and mash, and introduce a Navajo Tea environment," she said.

But, she said, she couldn't have done it without her SBDC Gallup advisor Cynthia (Cyndi) Jarvis, the Director of the center.

"We met her when we first started. We had gone to get our business license and papers, and we went by to talk to her," Ahasteen said. "We've had a long-term relationship since then. We've been doing a lot of classes with her and she's become a big resource for us."





GRANTS

SNAP FITNESS 24-7

Monique Santistevan

Years in Business: 8

Type of Business: Fitness Center

Number of Employees: 5

Community: Grants

SBDC: New Mexico State University Grants



Monique Santistevan is a fitness nut, the kind of person who would be in the gym 24/7 if she could be, and that's likely why she loves owning her gym, Snap Fitness 24/7.

"I've been a personal trainer for 24 years and I love it. I love being in the gym, teaching classes, working out."

- Monique Santistevan

But she only started to realize her dream when, after working for several years at a corporate-owned gym as a trainer, the corporate owners told her they were closing the gym she loved in Grants.

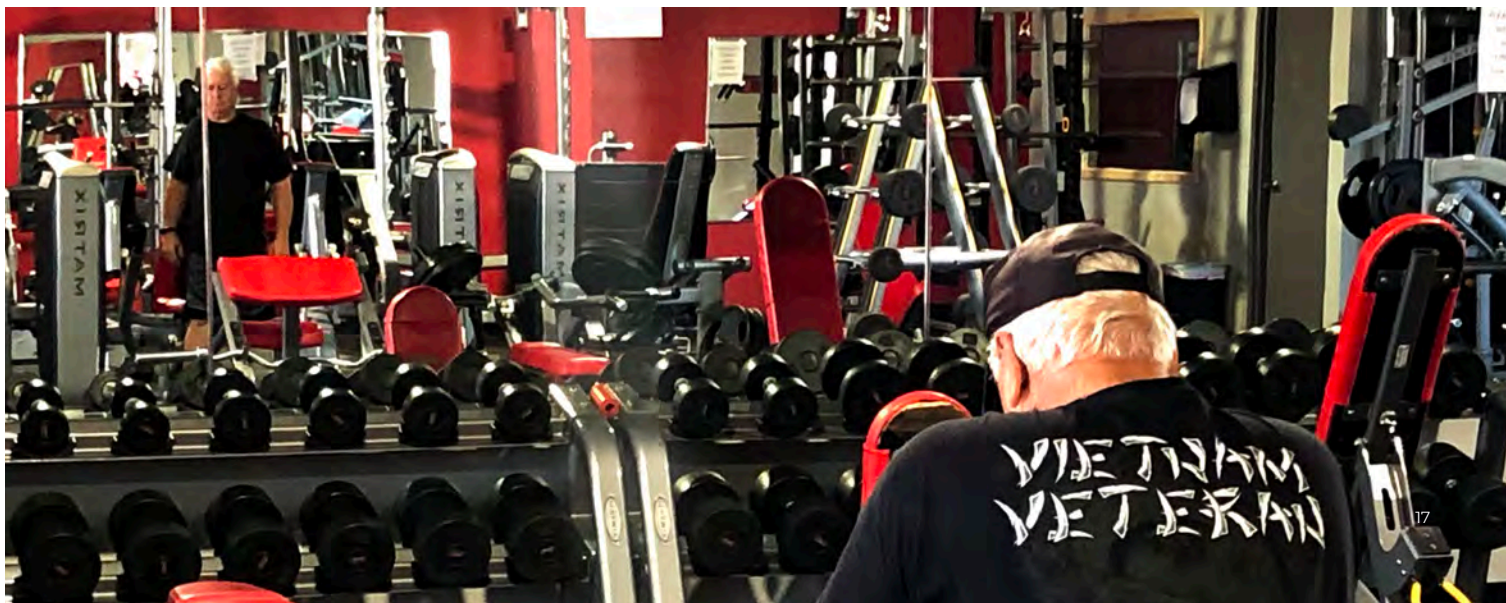
"Corporate told me it was for sale and I had to buy it. This was my dream. This town is small, there's only two gyms here, and I wanted to own one," Santistevan said.

The gym has several amenities that others don't have, including private bathrooms, that make it more comfortable for gym-goers. She also offers yoga, Zumba, specialty classes, circuit training, has a push sled, and more.

Though running a gym was a dream come true, she didn't have any experience as a business owner. So, Santistevan called Denise Chavez at the SBDC New Mexico State University Campus in Grants for help.

"Denise (Chavez) is awesome. She helped me do the LLC, which was a nightmare, and she helped me with the EIN number," Santistevan said. The basics of owning and operating the business were tough to learn at first, but with Chavez's help, she was able to get all of her ducks in a row and now has five part-time employees. Now, as Santistevan is preparing to expand, possibly to Gallup, she is again leaning on the SBDC for guidance.

But, she says, there is one thing she doesn't need guidance on; "I used to power lift. I was able to squat 520 pounds. That was stupid, I had to have a knee replaced. Now, I would never let someone do that," she said.





Joel Perez (Owner of Black Gold Energy Services)

BLACK GOLD ENERGY SERVICES

Joel Perez

Years in Business: 1.5

Type of Business: Oil field maintenance

Number of Employees: 10

Community: Hobbs

SBDC: New Mexico Junior College Hobbs



Many young men and women who live in Southeast New Mexico can smell their futures just by driving around the Permian Basin with the windows rolled down. Oil does have such a distinct scent. For Joel Perez, the smell didn't just signify the industry that dominated the area and largely supported families like theirs; it was a perfume beckoning them to call their own shots.

With high school degrees and a tank full of ambition, he and a partner decided to buy a hydroexcavation truck and start their own company, Black Gold Energy Services, in March 2018.

“Basically, we wanted to have a future for our kids.” - Joel Perez

Indeed, the company grew quickly, seeing revenue of about \$445,000 the first nine months to about double that in the second nine months. Both attribute the leap to a loan that allowed them to expand their services to include oil field maintenance.

“With that loan, we bought the hot oil truck, which took us into a different type of work than before,” Perez said, explaining a dangerous job that requires lighting burners near oil on a regular basis. The truck then pumps hot oil into wells, freeing up any wax buildup and removing gas so that when workers conduct welding, they are at lesser risk of anything exploding.

Before obtaining financing from Western Commerce, Black Gold sought guidance from the Small Business Development Center at New Mexico Junior College. “They helped us a lot,” Perez said. “If it wasn't for Brandon (Hunt's) help, I wouldn't have gotten it done. With his help, I was able to put the business plan together.”

Black Gold Energy Services employs 10, including the owners, provides benefits such as health insurance and generally strives to be a place known for treating employees well.

“It gives you a sense of pride,” Perez said. “I've worked for bosses that didn't care about their guys, that treated us like nothing, like we were replaceable. Every time me and my business partner talked, we said we didn't want to treat our guys the same way we were treated before.”

The men anticipate creating three more jobs by the end of the year as they hope to expand once again, buying yet another truck.





LAS CRUCES

TAQUERIA CHAVEZ

Gonzalo Chavez

Years in Business: 16

Type of Business: Restaurant

Number of Employees: 22

Community: Las Cruces

SBDC: Doña Ana Community College



Gonzalo Chavez (Owner of Taqueria Chavez)

Diners at Taqueria Chavez wouldn't be far off to think they taste a little bit of heaven in Gonzalo Chavez's food.

The way the restaurant's chef and owner tells it, the eatery's existence is the result of divine guidance and unconditional love. It was his wife, Alejandra, who suggested he leave his welding job, get a truck and start selling food. She had seen how much her husband enjoyed helping a friend run his taco business every now and then.

"When she got sick, I told her I was going to do this so I could spend more time with the kids," Chavez said. And so, he followed her suggestion, buying a food truck in 2003 - about a year after losing Alejandra to cancer.

Needing a change of scenery on New Year's Day 2004, he drove the mobile business to Las Cruces for no real reason except that he was sad and believed God was leading the way. Fifteen years later, with loans from Capital CDC for \$220,000 and The Loan Fund for \$275,000, Chavez began building the restaurant of his dreams on property he owned and celebrated the grand opening of Taqueria Chavez on Sept. 3.

"That was something I always wanted to do ever since I bought that little trailer. I kept saying, 'Someday, someday I get my own restaurant.' This restaurant is a dream come true. The kitchen is so big, so roomy." - Gonzalo Chavez

Chavez attributed his ability to qualify for the loan to the Small Business Development Center at the Dona Ana Community College. "JoAnn (Garay) did all the paperwork and made sure everything was perfect," he said of his SBDC consultant. "She was awesome. Thanks to them, the loan went through." Chavez said he had approached lenders before getting help from the SBDC, but "they don't trust me. They said, 'A taco truck? No way.'"

In addition to himself and two of his grow children, he employs six. Customers receive a beeper when they order and pick up their tacos at the counter when signaled - often with a bit of Alejandra's heart added in the form of extra cilantro or other toppings, which he believes customers feel.

While Chavez' focus is on ensuring the restaurant succeeds as it is, he believes growth is possible. He'd especially like to create more jobs for people in the community. "The sky is the limit," he said. "Once you've got God on your side, what can go wrong?"





Glena Ortega (Owner of Jefita's Restaurant)

JEFITA'S RESTAURANT

Glena Ortega

Years in Business: 1.5

Type of Business: Mexican Restaurant

Number of Employees: 7

Community: Las Vegas

SBDC: Luna Community College



Glena Ortega goes grocery shopping daily to ensure the food she serves is as fresh as it can be. Her regular trips to the store would be plenty for someone simply putting food on her family's table, but Ortega has eight tables that seat a constant turnover of hungry customers at her Las Vegas, N.M., restaurant, Jefita's.

"I've always liked to cook since I was little," Ortega said. "I wanted to have my own little restaurant, nothing big, just homey, just to serve my food. The only thing I order is the Bueno (Foods) truck, which brings tortillas and green chile. Everything else, I go to Walmart every day."

Ortega has, in fact, been cooking for the Las Vegas community for decades, just not in any formal capacity. When she operated a day care from her home, taking care of a half dozen children at a time, she'd simultaneously make sopapillas from 9 a.m. to noon for residents who wanted them. While employed at the San Miguel Detention Center, she'd fill orders for people working at the courthouse and the police department. The story was the same when she worked for Northeastern Regional Hospital, then Walmart.

"People from the offices would start ordering, and I would make burritos and sopapillas. Each place would order 15-20 items," she said.

A few years ago, doctors diagnosed Ortega with cancer, and when she entered remission, she decided not to put off her dream any longer.

"When they told me I was cancer free, I thought, 'I'm going to go for it,'" Ortega said. She opened Jefita's in February 2018 in a small rented building in the neighborhood where she has lived for 62 years. Every morning begins at 4 o'clock, when she begins cooking tamales. The restaurant opens at 7 a.m., and she and her son run the kitchen till 3 p.m. closing.

"I thought at first I'm a little old for that, but God has been good," she said. "I was only going to use the front part (of the building) to do to-go orders, but from day one we had a good crowd."

To handle the constant bustle, Ortega employs five people full time and two part time, some of them family. Many of her customers might as well be relatives, too, for as long as she has been a fixture of the community.

"I just love to be around people and we come from a big family. I'm always cooking every day. That's what makes me happy." - Glenna Ortega



KNOZE JR. CORP.

Cliff Han

Years in Business: 2

Type of Business: Allergy Lollipop Manufacturer

Number of Employees: 1

Community: Los Alamos

SBDC: University of New Mexico Los Alamos



Cliff Han (Owner of Knoze Jr. Corp.)

Cough cough. Sniffle sniffle. When the pollen is in the air, a lot of us can't help it. We sneeze. We cough. We carry around little packets of tissues.

Well, Cliff Han had enough of it. His allergies to whatever is in the Los Alamos air were to the point that he couldn't work like he wanted, and his daily life was full of watery eyes, a sniffly nose, a tight chest and more.

"I had allergies so bad. I was dehydrated all the time, and as you can imagine, I didn't have the energy to work and I was so tired," Han said.

But, being a PhD scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory, he didn't just look on the shelves at the local CVS for a cure. Instead, he started reading and experimenting and discovered that pre-biotics could be a cure. There is research that shows there's a link between pre-biotics and some allergies.

He came up with pre-biotic pops that contain amino acids and sugar, the kinds of things that help "good" bacteria grow in our guts, not the bacteria themselves.

"This is a totally new concept. We are treating the cause of allergies and the symptoms will go away." - Cliff Han

His theory is that modern processed foods have killed off the helpful bacteria in our guts, leaving us unable to fend off basic threats like pollen. Han grew up in China, eating more local foods, and never had a problem with allergies until he started to eat a more American diet in Los Alamos.

When Han came up with his first lollipop, and tried it, it worked for him. "My allergies are gone," he said.

But Han was a researcher, a scientist who has a PhD in genetics, not an entrepreneur.

"It's not in my nature. I was in the research world my whole life," he said. "I didn't prepare to be a business entrepreneur at all. But, in 2017, when I got the positive (research) results, and I made a recipe and it worked so well, it was such a gift to me, I thought I had to carry it out."

He visited with the Small Business Development Center at the University of New Mexico for business help to launch Knoze Jr., which is a play on the words "nose" and "knows," Han said.

"I took leave without pay. Before that, all the R&D was done on my own time and my own money," he said.

And now it's paying off. He sells the pops from his store in Los Alamos, and also on Amazon, where a 12 pack is \$39.99.

"People see the candy, a pop, will cure. I have strategies to get it out to people who need it. My goal for the company in the next five to 10 years, I hope AllerPop will be the prime choice for people to take care of symptoms," Han said.





Amy Lynn and Marcus Miles (Owners of Carlsbad Heating and Cooling)

CARLSBAD HEATING AND COOLING

Amy Lynn and Marcus Miles

Years in Business: 7

Type of Business: Sheet Metal Fabrication Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 5

Community: Carlsbad

SBDC: Eastern New Mexico University Roswell



Excuse the mess at Carlsbad Heating and Cooling. The entire building is getting updated, along with the name, and the owners' attitude.

After owning the company for several years, and seeing it slowly grow until it didn't, Amy Lynn and Marcus Miles were about ready to throw in the towel. Marcus and Amy Lynn were working their tails off at Carlsbad Sheet Metal Heating and Cooling seven days a week, servicing roofing contractors, doing installs at homes and business, and making everything from roofing flashing and gutters to metal raccoon guards.

"We started doing service calls, then three or four, then five, six, seven, eight a day, and then on weekends. We got so busy," Marcus said.

They were putting in the work, but they weren't seeing the returns.

"We were in trouble, and Amy looked up the SBDC in Roswell, and met with Scott Bucher," Marcus said.

Bucher, the Director of the SBDC at Eastern New Mexico University, jumped into action the couple said.

"That day we drove to Roswell, that day we decided to meet with Scott, we'd pretty much decided to throw in the towel," Amy Lynn said. "We went out of desperation. Meeting him that one time has completely changed our business. Completely. Scott was our lucky charm. Literally, the next day, it started turning around."

What did Bucher do?

"He told me to write a book. You have to get it all out of your head and get it on paper so people know where you're at," Marcus said. "I'm not kidding you, it was pretty rough. He had us break the business down. We do so much. It was hard."

The verdict? "He told me we got a hole in the boat somewhere," Marcus said.



"My hat is off to Scott. He said 'Visibility plus credibility equals profitability, and we were credible, not visible,' Marcus said.

Carlsbad Sheet Metal, Heating and Cooling started to transform into Carlsbad Heating and Cooling. The office is getting remodeled. Amy Lynn dove headfirst into social media, even launching a new like-and-follow campaign, as well as making sure Google knew about the business and that it had a five-star rating. Marcus set out to remodel their 70-year-old shop, got a new awning, and even found the original 1942 sign to hang. "It was a breath of renewed air," Amy Lynn said. "He said, 'Go get 'em. You can do this.'"

They did, and are, going to get 'em. Over the last year, the Mileses have felt a renewed sense of the business, and with their renewed visibility - both online and off - and the business is giving back as much as they're putting in.

"He just put the fire back in us, and now I can look at retirement." - Marcus Miles



ACHIEVE THERAPY SERVICES LLC

Ludivina Gurule

Years in Business: 4 (opened July 2014)

Type of Business: Speech & Occupational Therapy Clinic

Number of Employees: 12

Community: Roswell

SBDC: Eastern New Mexico University Roswell



Ludivina Gurule (Owner of Achieve Therapy Services, LLC)

Most parents take for granted their child's ability to make friends, play games and perform in school – just like most adults don't think twice about getting dressed or making meals. But for people of all ages who have developmental disabilities, speech disorders and other physical conditions that impact their capacity to socialize, learn and sometimes perform basic daily activities, professional help can make all the difference between a successful, happy, full life and one of perpetual struggle.

Achieve Therapy Services LLC in Roswell provides the kind of targeted attention and occupational and speech therapies necessary to transform the lives of children and adults with special needs. The majority of their clients require help with sensory motor skills, attention to tasks, and self-regulation.

“Hopefully we’ve been able to fill the gaps here. Southeast New Mexico does not have a lot of therapists, and they don’t tend to stay.” - Ludivina Gurule

Her pediatric clinic sees children as young as three. They may have behavioral problems that prevent them from doing well in school or from succeeding socially, for example. The clinic's speech therapy component helps children understand language or improve their oral motor skills. Gurule even offers an Explore Your Senses day camp, with activities developed by therapists to help the children improve sensory awareness. “This year we did a cooking station and they learned how to follow directions, while also having to socialize. ... A lot of our families have to travel to other cities to get these kinds of opportunities, so we're trying to make those.”

Achieve Therapy Services, which opened in 2014, has 12 employees, including Gurule. It has grown from three clients to 75, and revenue has doubled each year.

But money was never the motivator, said Gurule, who previously worked as a therapist in an Albuquerque clinic and for the Roswell public schools. “I saw the gap in services these children really needed, so I decided to offer outside therapy. The kids are what drive me,” she said. “I did not go to school to be a business person; I went to school to be an occupational therapist. But in the back of my mind, I always had the goal to own the business.”

To get guidance on how to start her business, she sought help from the Small Business Development Center at Eastern New Mexico University Roswell. “The SBDC has been my go-to in terms of questions. I don't know that I would be where I am right now (without them). Unless you go to business school or have family that owns a business, you don't know some of these things.”

Among other assistance, the SBDC gave Gurule resources for a start-up loan, which she received from Wells Fargo.

Despite the tremendous growth and the numbers served, Gurule believes more can be done. Achieve Therapy resides in a leased building with adequate capacity, but Gurule says, “It's not in my mind the facility of our future. Really having something custom made for our needs that will specifically allow us to work more on dressing, making a bed, cooking, doing laundry, all of those things we don't have space for right now. We'd like it to be like a home so (our clients) can practice those activities in our facility and then be able to transfer it to a home setting.”

Plus, she said, parents of children who need braces for mobility or support still must drive to other cities to have them custom made. “I'd love to be able to offer that,” she said.



Ron Jones (Owner of Photo Magic)

PHOTO MAGIC

Ron Jones

Years in Business: 2

Type of Business: Photography

Number of Employees: 1

Community: Tucumcari

SBDC: Mesalands Community College



Grabbing his camera is a natural as putting on pants, said nature photographer Ron Jones, owner of Photo Magic.

For several years Jones was a photographer and a feral hog specialist for the USDA. There, he said, he started to fall in love with photography, whether it was shooting sounders of swine from a helicopter or just carrying around his camera to shoot nature.

“It started out as a hobby. I retired two years ago from the federal government. Working for the agency, we did a lot. The more I did it, the more I liked it, and I got more serious about it.” I carry the camera everywhere I go. You never leave home without it. It’s like putting on your pants. When you do leave without it, that’s when a good shot comes up.”

- Ron Jones

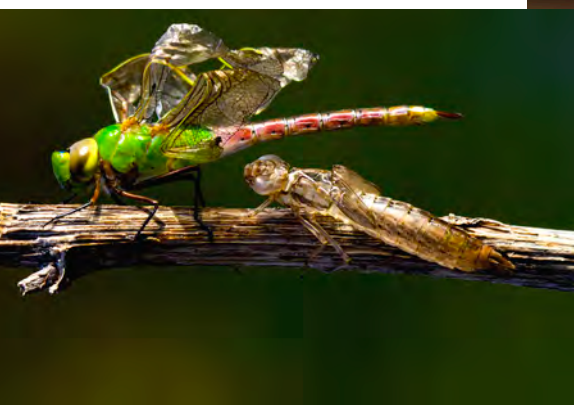
But, he said, he couldn’t have taken it as seriously as he does today without the help of Vicki Watson, Director of the SBDC at Mesalands Community College.

“She helped me get my LLC and navigate the pitfalls of business, and helped me get through,” he said. “She’s done a real good job for me.”

Jones spends much of his time in the wild, sometimes leading hunts in Oklahoma and on a ranch near Tucumcari, but often, he said, he prefers to shoot with his trusty Nikon, and a grip of lenses that help him get up close and personal with everything from big-horned sheep and horned owls to oil rigs backed by a dramatic sunset.

He sells his prints and makes custom frames, and he’s been able to see his work published in wildlife magazines, too. His wildlife photography has been published in Outdoor Oklahoma Magazine, shown in gallery shows and more.

“My next step is to keep getting published, he said. “Every photographer’s dream is to be published.”



SCIVISTA, LLC

Simon Woodruff

Years in Business: 2

Type of Business: Data Visualization Software

Number of Employees: 6

Community: Santa Fe

SBDC: Santa Fe Community College



Simon Woodruff (Owner of Sci Vista, LLC)

Imagine being able to step into your own MRI data and walk around inside your own body with virtual reality glasses on. Or, imagine being able to see, and virtually manipulate, the inner workings of a nuclear reactor through VR imaging in 3D.

That's what Santa Fe's SciVista LLC is working on at the Santa Fe Business Incubator.

"It's really data visualization," says CEO Simon Woodruff. "We're developing a platform for general scientific use. Anybody running simulations can use our platform; there's interest from the medical community, the communications industry is looking at how radio frequency waves scatter around buildings, and many other applications."

The company has generally grown via Small Business Innovation Research grants from the Small Business Administration, which act like seed funding for innovative tech companies.

SciVista grew out of Woodruff's other company, Woodruff Scientific which does design and R&D work, and which he moved to Santa Fe three years ago from Seattle. He found the Santa Fe Incubator, which houses tech startups as the company's new home. It was also through SFI that he was introduced to Brian DuBoff at the SBDC at Santa Fe Community College.

"(DuBoff) has been a godsend ever since. This has really resonated. He's been a big help to find market research information, reports for us to use and to bolster the case for the size of the market and where we should put our resources," Woodruff said.

Overall Santa Fe has been a good fit, Woodruff said, thanks to SFI and the tech scene that New Mexico has worked on growing. "There's a super-supportive environment for small business, and this is something I've not seen," he said. "There's a great environment and a great town."

The next steps are for the company are to turn the software into a service that others can benefit from, and to capitalize on a new partnership the company has formed with Intel Corp. that will bring new photo realistic benefits to the software.

"We're about 18 months away from releasing the platform as a commercial software-as-a-service. We are taking on small contracts to help others get the VR. The point is to prove the concept and you make fast tracks to commercialization." - Simon Woodruff





G-Boyz Carolina Reaper Beef Jerky

G-BOYZ JERKY

Andy Gomez IV

Years in Business: 1

Type of Business: Retail/Manufacturing of Beef Jerky

Number of Employees: 6

Community: Silver City

SBDC: Western New Mexico University



Andy Gomez IV got tired of people eating his lunch. Gomez IV worked in the mines near Silver City and every day he'd bring pieces of his home-made beef jerky for his lunch snack.

"I've always liked jerky, so I'd make some," he said. "My co-workers would say, 'Hey, let me try some,' and eventually I said, 'Hey guys, you're eating my lunch!' They said if I brought extra, they'd buy some."

So he did. And they did.

He bought a bigger dehydrator to make more. Then a bigger one. Then another one.

"I just kept getting bigger and more machines until one day I said, 'I should turn this into a business,'" he said.

He launched G-Boyz Jerky with his son Andy Gomez V, who had just graduated from Western New Mexico University with a business management degree.

"I didn't want to go work for anyone else. I wanted to hang out and make this work," Gomez V said. "We basically have the same duties, but he talks on the phone more and I make sure the employees get everything done."

G-Boyz now has two retail stores, one in Bayard and one in Silver City, and sells about 1,800 pounds of certified Angus beef annually in 24 flavors.

"I don't know of any other jerky company that uses certified Angus. A lot use regular Hereford, or whatever's cheaper. We have marbling in ours."

- Andy Gomez IV



The marbling on the beef makes it look, feel, and taste like a high-quality steak.

But both Gomezes want to see their jerky move beyond the Silver City area. They contacted the SBDC at Western New Mexico University, and Business Advisor Mario LaFragola, for advice.

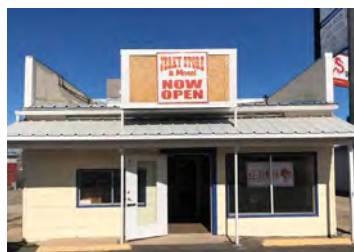
"We're ready to move to the next stage and probably triple our production," Gomez IV said. "We're looking to make a new plant. SBDC helped us get a loan, and since they've helped us, we've been working to purchase our equipment. What they're helping us with now is looking into building a facility large enough that we could USDA certify."

A new facility that would be USDA Certified would open many new doors for G-Boyz Jerky.

"That would allow us to be in stores like Allsup's, Walmart, and that opens it up. Not only that, internet sales. It's a big door that we're going to open and really help us pump up production. We'd bring on three, four, employees and do deliveries," Gomez IV said. "Hopefully we'd create more jobs in our community." Tierra del Sol Housing Corp. of Las Cruces was the lender for G-Boyz.

But if you go to the retail stores, be prepared for La Llorona: The Gomezes made an intense, special, super-hot version of their jerky that, like the fairy tale told to kids, will make you quake in your boots that they challenge customers to eat.

"We do a jerky challenge. Everybody cries when they eat it," Gomez IV said. "It's a two-bag challenge, you have 10 minutes to eat it. No food, no water. We give all of our winners a T-shirt and their picture goes on our Wall of Flame."





TURQUOISE TOURS & EVENTS INC.

Lindsay Mapes

Years in Business: 4

Type of Business: Tours and Sightseeing,
Mountain Bike Shuttles

Number of Employees: 9

Community: Taos

SBDC: University of New Mexico Taos



Lindsay Mapes (Owner of Turquoise Tours & Events Inc.)

Lindsay Mapes loves starting businesses. She loves finding niches where none have existed before, and she loves serving needs that aren't being met.

But if it wasn't for the SBDC, and Taos' Anwar Kaelin, she said, her fourth startup might not have been able to take off.

"I'm not sure I would still be in business if it weren't for the SBDC. As a solo, female, CEO it's hard. If I didn't have (Kaelin) in my corner, I wouldn't be here," she said.

Mapes' company Turquoise Tours & Events Inc. offers van tours of Taos and Taos Pueblo, a winery tour, as well a mountain bike shuttle "to the best trails in the country," Mapes says. The company has grown steadily over the last four years and now has nine part-time contractors driving people all over Taos to some of New Mexico's most historic, and most beautiful, sites.

"After being a tourist in Taos, I realized the economy of Taos is over 50 percent tourism-related. There's no tour companies. So I said, 'We should do tours.' I saw the need." - Lindsay Mapes

But in the modern world, being just a tour company doesn't cut it.

"I bought a van, but I learned about online marketing really quick, that was a difficult and painful thing. I started a website, buying ads, and started networking with hotels and B&Bs," she said.

Mapes' goal, she said, is to make the company more self-sufficient, so it can operate without her constant supervision so she can focus on developing it outside of Taos and growing it in a new direction. Kaelin and Mapes are trying to figure out how to take the business beyond Taos with a new app.

"I want to focus on the app, and I've been working with Anwar (Kaelin). It's daunting. Anwar has been pushing me and helping me set goals, and he's been my accountability factor," she said.



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DOLLAR**

**\$2.12 Federal
Revenue**

**\$2.91 State
Revenue**

**\$5 total
revenue**

Federal Revenues Generated:

\$1.21 BILLION



State Revenues Generated:

\$1.66 BILLION

+ JOBS +

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new jobs created

A new job every 5.7 minutes

Over ONE MILLION trained

Source of Statistics: The "Economic Impact of Small Business
Development Center Counseling Activities in the United States: 2016-2017,"
by Professor James J. Chrisman of Mississippi State University

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Office: (575) 461-4079
pat@tucumcariadc.com

MATTHEW AND GERI HUGHBANKS (BOARD VICE CHAIR)

Red Rock Security & Patrol
Owners
124A S. Boardman Avenue
Gallup, NM 87301
Office: (505) 728-9114 Cell: (505) 879-2053
redrocksp@gmail.com
m_hughbanks@redrocksecurity.net

RICK JACKSON (PAST CHAIR)

American Document Services, LLC
Owner
300 N. 17th Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005
Office: (505) 647-0060 Cell: (505) 642-9696
rick@adslcnm.com

DEBBI MOORE

Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce
President & CEO
505 South Main Street
Ste 134
Las Cruces, NM 88007
Office: (575) 524-1968
dmoore@lascruces.org

SANDRA LEYBA

Century Bank
Senior Vice President/
Commercial Lender
8220 San Pedro Drive NE
Suite 200
Albuquerque, NM 87113-2476
Office: (505) 798-5935
Sandra.Leyba@centurybnk.com

F. LEROY PACHECO

President & CEO
The Loan Fund
423 Iron SW
Albuquerque, NM 87103
Office: (505) 243-3196 ext 10
leroy@loanfund.org

REGIS PECOS

Leadership Institute
Co-Director
1501 Cerrillos Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87505 Office
of the House Majority,
NM House of Representatives
Senior Policy Advisor
490 Old Santa Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Office: (505) 986-4780
regispecos1@gmail.com

ERROL BAADE

Jack's Plastic Welding, Inc.
CEO
115 S. Main Avenue
Aztec, NM 87410
Office: (800) 742-1904 or (505) 334-8748
ebaade.jpwinco@gmail.com

JASPER RIDDLE

Noisy Water Winery
President
2342 Sudderth Drive
Ruidoso, NM 88345
Office: (575) 937-1296
jriddle@noisywaterwinery.com

CHARLOTTE GARCIA

Shipping Receiving Fulfillment Service
President/Owner
210 Enterprise Road
Rio Rancho, NM 87124
Office: (505) 891-4294
charlottesrfs@gmail.com

PHIL ARCHULETTA

P&M Signs, Inc.
President
P.O. Box 567
Mountainair, NM 87036
Office: (505) 847-2850
Fax: (505) 847-0007
general@pmsignsinc.com

ROSEANNE ARCHULETTA

RM Roberts & Associates, LLC
Owner
4305 Sierra Blanca
Santa Fe, NM 87507
Office: (415) 567-5415
rmroberts1@aol.com

PETE CAMPOS

New Mexico State Senator
418 Reynolds Avenue
Las Vegas, NM 87701
Office: (505) 986-4311
petecampos@newmexico.com
pete.campos@nmlegis.gov

REBECCA LONG

Lee County Board of
County Commissioners
Chair
226 W. Vega Drive
Hobbs, NM 88240
Cell: (575) 390-1160
rlong@leacounty.net

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER LIST

DR. KATE O'NEILL

New Mexico Higher Education Department
Cabinet Secretary
2044 Galisteo Street
Suite 4
Santa Fe, NM 87505-2100
Office: (505) 476-8400
Exec.Admin@state.nm.us

JON CLARK

New Mexico Economic Development
Department
Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Joseph M. Montoya Building
1100 S. St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505-4147
Office: (505) 476-3747
jon.clark@state.nm.us

DANIEL SCHLEGEL

Office of the Governor
Small Business Advisor
State Capitol Building
Ste. 400
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Office: (505) 476-2219
Daniel.Schlegel@state.nm.us

RICKY SERNA

New Mexico Department of Workforce
Solutions
Deputy Cabinet Secretary
401 Broadway NE
Albuquerque NM 87102
Office: 505-273-0293
Ricky.Serna@state.nm.us

TY TRUJILLO

New Mexico Association of Community
Colleges
President & CEO
1233 Paseo de Peralta
Santa Fe, NM 87501-2758
Office: (505) 989-7385
trujill8@unm.edu

KATHY ULIBARRI

New Mexico Independent Community
Colleges Inc.
Executive Director
6401 Richards Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87508
Cell: (505) 331-1296
kathy@kulibarriconsulting.com

JOHN GARCIA

U.S. Small Business Administration
District Director
500 Gold Avenue SW
Suite 11301
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Office: (505) 248-8238
John.garcia@sba.gov

NMSBDC STATEWIDE SERVICE CENTERS

STATE OFFICE

New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network

Santa Fe Community College
6401 Richards Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87508-4887
505.428.1362 or 800.281.7232
www.nmsbdc.org
info@nmsbdc.org

Russell Wyrick, Executive State Director
Martin Gutierrez, Associate State Director
Adriene Gallegos, Associate State Director
Stuart Graw, Principal Accountant

SERVICE CENTERS

Central New Mexico Community College - Workforce Training Center

Tim Harjo, Director
5600 Eagle Rock Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113
505. 224.5250 • FAX 505.224.5256

Clovis Community College

Sandra Taylor-Sawyer, EdD., Director
417 Schepps Boulevard
Clovis, NM 88101-8345
575.769.4136 • FAX 575. 769.4135

New Mexico State University

Doña Ana Community College
Jo Ann Garay, Director
2345 East Nevada Avenue, Suite #101
Las Cruces, NM 88001-3902
575 .527.7676 • FAX 505 .528.7432

Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell

Scott Bucher, Director
P.O. Box 6000
20 W. Mathis Street
Roswell, NM 88202-6000
575.624.7133 • FAX 575. 624.7132

Luna Community College

Don Bustos, Director
366 Luna Drive
Las Vegas, NM 87701-9838
505.454.2582 • FAX 505. 454.5326

Mesalands Community College

Vicki Watson, Director
911 South 10th
Tucumcari, NM 88401-3352
575.461.4413 Ext. 140 • FAX 575. 461.4318

New Mexico Junior College

Brandon Hunt, Director
1 Thunderbird Circle
Hobbs, NM 88240-9121
575.492.4700 • FAX 575. 492.4704

New Mexico State University - Alamogordo

Trish Livingston, Director
2400 N. Scenic Drive
Alamogordo, NM 88310-3722
575.439.3660 • FAX 575. 439.3819

New Mexico State University-Carlsbad

Nicholas Melbourne, Director
221 South Canyon
Carlsbad, NM 88220-5734
575.885.9531 • FAX 575. 885.1515

New Mexico State University-Grants

Denise Chavez, Director
701 E. Roosevelt
Grants, NM 87020-2113
505. 287.8221 • FAX 505. 287.2125

Northern New Mexico College

Julianna Barbee, Director
921 Paseo de Oñate
Española, NM 87532-2649
505.747.2236 • FAX .505. 747.2234

Santa Fe Community College

Higher Education Center
Brian DuBoff, Director
1950 Siringo Road
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505.428.1343 • FAX 505.428.1469

San Juan College

Carmen Martinez, Director
5101 College Boulevard
Farmington, NM 87402-4709
505.566.3528 • FAX 505. 566.3698

University of New Mexico-Gallup

Cynthia Jarvis, Director
106 W. Highway 66
Gallup, NM 87301-6225
505.722.2220 • FAX 505. 863.6006

University of New Mexico-Los Alamos

Monther Jubran, Director
4000 University Drive
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544
505.662.0337

University of New Mexico-Taos

Anwar Kaelin, Director
115 Civic Plaza Drive
Taos, NM 87571-7400 575. 737.6214

University of New Mexico-Valencia

Vernon Mulanix, Director
280 La Entrada
Los Lunas, NM 87031-7633
505.925.8980 • FAX 505. 925.8981

Western New Mexico University

Jane Janson, Director
Watts Hall
500 18th Street
Silver City, NM 88061
575.538.6320

International Business Accelerator (IBA)

Jerry Pacheco, Executive Director
2660 Airport Rd. Suite 780
Santa Teresa, NM 88008-9304
575. 589.2200 • FAX 575. 589.5212

Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

Therese Rivera, Program Manager
6401 Richards Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87508-4887
505.428.1362 • FAX 505.428.1469



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