



School of Continuing Education
Marketing

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UW-MILWAUKEE SBDC WILL PLAY REGIONAL ROLE IN GOVERNOR DOYLE'S NEW ECONOMIC INITIATIVE

MILWAUKEE -- The Small Business Development Center at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has a new role as a key component in Governor Doyle's newest economic initiative -- The Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN). WEN is a partnership of the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, the WiSys Technology Foundation, and the Agricultural Innovation Center.

Funded by \$1 million from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, WEN will bring together the people, resources, technology and capital to help small Wisconsin companies at each stage of growth. WEN will create four new regional business assistance and technology transfer centers and will operate 25 or more intake centers to serve existing businesses and startups. Since December 2004, representatives from organizations throughout the state have been working together as the WEN Operations Task Force.

According to UW-Milwaukee SBDC Director Lucy Holifield, a member of the WEN Task Force, bringing representatives from 25 diverse organizations can be challenging. "Surprisingly, the 25 WEN partners have shown a high level of interest, good will and willingness to participate," she says. "Together we can show how vital a role entrepreneurship and small business success play in our Wisconsin communities."

The UW-Milwaukee SBDC has been named an intake center and the home of the new regional center for Southeastern Wisconsin. Other regional centers are at UW-Madison, the Northeast Wisconsin College in Green Bay, and UW-Eau Claire. Through this network of assistance, entrepreneurs and small businesses will have access to more information and stronger skills to help them better plan, manage and grow their businesses.

This new UW-Milwaukee SBDC role is just one aspect of its ongoing transformation to meet the changing needs of the marketplace. "In the past, we often were perceived as a great resource for 'start-up' businesses only," says Holifield. "The fact of the matter is that the SBDC serves high-growth enterprises, technology-based businesses, as well as traditional companies. We are helping at all levels of development."

Holifield notes that her team has assembled a roster of business experts available to assist entrepreneurs and business owners. "We've expanded our offerings to provide clients with exciting new programs to tackle business problems by providing real solutions -- such as peer learning, technology transfer, franchising, securing angel and venture capital. We have a 25-year track record of helping clients succeed. And our success is in large part due to our being flexible enough to meet the continually changing needs of our clients."

Plans are to open the Milwaukee regional center by June 2005

For more information about WEN and the "new" SBDC call 414-227-3240 or visit www.sce-sbdc.uwm.edu.

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