ILLINOIS SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT KASKASKIA COLLEGE
JULY-AUGUST 2010 NEWSLETTER

ASBDC Research shows SBDC clients create jobs, start businesses and grow the economy!
America’s Small Business Development Centers helped in-depth
(5 hours or more of annual consulting services) clients to:

Create 58,501 new jobs
Start 12,124 new businesses
Save 88,889 existing jobs
Obtain $3.1 billion in financing

SBDCs are a partnership that includes Congress, SBA, the private sector, and the colleges, universities and state governments that manage 1,000 SBDCs across the nation.

America’s SBDCs provide management and technical assistance to more than one million small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs each year who can go to their local SBDCs for free, face-to-face business consulting and training on writing business plans, accessing capital, marketing, regulatory compliance, international trade and more.

SBDC in-depth clients generated an estimated $2.72 in Federal tax revenues for every $1 the Federal Government spent on SBDCs. In other words, the SBDC program generates more revenue – as a result of economic growth – than it costs the government to fund the SBDC program. (Research based on survey of 58,127 SBDC clients who received five hours or more of SBDC consulting services in 2007; report developed by Professor James J. Crisman of Mississippi State University and made available by tee.rowe@asbdc-us.org)

OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST TO SMALL BUSINESSES

“DON’T BE A VICTIM OF BAD CHECKS”, a program under the direction of Edward Deters, State’s Attorney/Effingham County states that “The Bad Check Restitution Program works because bad check reports are easy to file and follow-up action is prompt; upon recovery, 100% of the face value of the check is returned to the merchants; there is no minimum dollar restriction; bad check offenders must complete an eight hour education class at their expense.” For more information regarding Effingham County’s Bad Check Restitution Program contact: Beverly White, State’s Attorney’s Bad Check Restitution Program; 877-236-9973; bwhite@checkprogram.

US Small Business Administration Q & A for VETS: The US Small Business Administration will host a Q & A Session for Vets on Thursday, September 2, 2010 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Illinois WorkNet office at 1300 S. 9th Street in Springfield. The session will provide veterans interested in starting or expanding a small business the opportunity to meet with SBA and SCORE counselors who can advise you in areas such as business planning financing and government contracting. For more information contact Stephanie Schatz: 217-793-5020 x 114 or StepheanieSchatz@sba.gov.

SALES TAX HOLIDAY: The Illinois General Assembly passed Illinois’ first-ever sales tax holiday that will run nine days from August 6, 2010 to August 15, 2010. The State's Use Tax of 5% will be will be suspended on eligible items but the 1.25% rate (that portion of the 6.25% Use Tax that goes to local governments) will still be charged. Eligible items include school supplies and clothing items. Supplies do not include items such as computers/supplies, PDAs, cameras, etc. The Holiday applies to clothing with a retail selling price of less than $100. Discounts can push the selling price of an item below $100 but not manufacturer’s coupons. Questions? Contact Katy Khayyat, Office of Entrepreneurship, Information and Technology; Katy.Khayyat@Illinois.gov or call 800-252-2923.

SBA TOOLS TO HELP EXPORTERS SUCCEED: The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering new, free tools for new and established small businesses to help them grow and succeed in international trade. Small businesses will now have access to six-part podcast series, an introduction to exporting You Tube video and an online training course. The podcast series is available online at: http://www.sba.gov/tools/audiovideo/Podcasts/INTL_TRADE.html and focuses on Growing Your Business Through Exporting; Developing an Export Strategy; Preparing for Global Markets; Conducting Market Research; SBA Exporting Loan Program; and a Small Business Success Story. The Introduction to Exporting video is available at: http://www.youtube.com/user/sba#p/u/O/UFQIAszjWN4, and the online exporting course, “Take Your Business Global,” is available at: http://web.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/index.cfm?Courseld=72.

IRS OFFERS DETAILS ON NEW SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH CARE TAX CREDIT: The IRS issued new guidance to make it easier for small businesses to determine whether they are eligible for the new health care tax credit under the Affordable Care Act and how large a credit they will receive. The guidance makes clear that small businesses receiving state health care tax credits may still qualify for the full federal tax credit. Additionally, the guidance allows small businesses to receive the credit not only for regular health insurance but also for add-on dental and vision coverage. Notice 2010-44 provides detailed guidelines, illustrated by more than a dozen examples to help small employers determine whether they qualify for the credit and estimate the amount of the credit. More information about the credit, including a step-by-step guide and answers to FAQ is available.

AMEREN ILLINOIS OFFERS ENERGY INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESSES: Ameren Illinois announced $10.5 million is available for business energy efficiency projects through an Act on Energy initiative. Eligible projects must be completed between June 1, 2010 and May 31, 2011. As of June 1, the business incentives will be expanded to include commercial kitchen equipment, grain and livestock operations, and motels/hotels. Additional info is available at actonenergy.com, by calling 800-0747 or e-mail: actonenergybusiness@ameren.com. Ameren Illinois utilities include Ameren CIPS, AmerenCILCO and Ameren IP. For more information go to: http://www.actonenergy.com/for-my-business/business-incentiveprograms/.

WHY BOTHER? DISASTERS DON’T HAPPEN HERE!

Disaster preparedness information was provided in the May-June issue of the ISBDC newsletter in order to keep small business owners informed as well as alert regarding different types of weather conditions that can interrupt “business as usual.” We hope that you took some time to begin the process of developing your business disaster preparedness plan.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the National Weather Service (NWS) have joined together to expand efforts by observing Lightning Safety Awareness Month as part of IEMA’s 12-month Disaster Preparedness Campaign. In support of this effort, more information is being provided for your use along with some websites for reference in the development of your business disaster preparedness plan.

Everyone enjoyed the recent 4th of July weekend spending time outdoors with friends and family. However, it is important to remember that with warm weather and outdoor activities a recent IEMA press release reminds us that nearly 70% of lightning fatalities and/or injuries occur at outdoor recreation events and more than 1,000 people are
injured by lightning each year. There is no safe place outdoors when thunderstorms are in the area. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you and you should immediately move to a safe shelter in a substantial building or inside an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle; and stay in the safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last clap of thunder.

Indoor Lightning Safety Tips are especially important for small business owners and employees and include: staying off corded phones, computers and electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity; avoiding plumbing including sinks, baths and faucets; staying away from windows and doors; and do not lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls. (www.Ready.Illinois.gov) Also stay clear of chimneys and fireplaces due to the fact that lightning will often strike chimneys which then become a lightning stroke path.

Building Protection: Lightning can enter a building in one of four ways: 1) It can strike a metal object on the roof of a building; 2) It can strike a building directly (called a direct strike); 3) It can strike a tree near a building and jump to the building; 4) It can strike a power line or wire fence and follow the line or fence to the building. Choosing to install lightning “arresters” at all electric service entrances to buildings will protect interior wiring and electrical equipment due to a power surge caused by lightning. A small investment will protect employees, family members, property and equipment from lightning devastation. (http://nasdonline.org)

A properly designed lightning protection system safeguards vulnerable structures, equipment, and trees by providing an easy path to a ground, which harmlessly dispels the electrical charges caused by lightning. Installing lightning protection systems is not a do-it-yourself job, and to ensure that a system is safe and effective, it should be designed and installed by trained professionals. Certain codes and standards must be followed when lightning protection systems are installed. For more information, check out this partial listing: LPI-175: The lightning protection code, published by the Lightning Protection Institute; NFPA 78: National Fire Protection Association Lightning Protection Code; 96 AUL: Requirements for Master Label for Lightning Protection, developed by Underwriters’ Laboratories

Information taken from a recent article received states that: “September is National Preparedness Month.” NPM is sponsored by FEMA’s Ready Campaign in partnership with Citizen Corps and the Advertising Council and is designed to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities. September 2010 marks the seventh annual NPM. This year will focus on encouraging Americans to work together to take concrete actions toward emergency preparedness.” For more information visit http://ready.adcouncil.org or www.ready.gov and click on the NPM banner. If you have questions you can e-mail NPM@dhs.gov. You will hear more about this campaign in the coming weeks.

“DISASTERS WILL BE OVERWHELMING WHEN PLANS ARE NOT IN PLACE.”

Webster’s Dictionary definition of preventing is: 1) to be in readiness for; 2) to act ahead; 3) to keep from happening. If the staff at the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Kaskaskia College can be of any assistance as you make plans to prepare your emergency disaster plan, do not hesitate to call 618-545-3260. We can assist you with the steps you need to take to begin preparation of your business plan for continuation of services policies and procedures.

Speaking of, the ISBDC staff has been actively researching information to develop “continuation of services policies and procedures” for our office. This is a “work in progress” and we will continue to develop a plan that will be designed to protect employees, equipment, work areas, etc. if a disaster of any type should occur. In addition, let’s take time to review a new personal disaster preparedness resource at: Prepare My Business; http://www.preparemybusiness.org/

Small Business Jobs Tax Credit Information: Small businesses got a boost from the state on July 1 which will help businesses grow and create new, full-time positions. The Illinois Small Business Job Creation Tax Credit is a one year credit that will help create up to 20,000 new jobs. This new law creates a $2,500 tax credit (that can be carried forward) on withholding tax for employers with 50 or fewer total employees who hire new, full-time Illinois employees during the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2010.

Calculation of the net increase in the number of Illinois employees is based on the employer’s number of Illinois employees as of June 30, 2010. The credit is available to qualifying employers for each new, full-time Illinois job created and sustained for at least one year. It has a cap of $50 million on the total amount of credits issued. To qualify, a job must pay at least $25,000 per year. Credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis through an online application which is available at: [jobtaxcredit.illinois.gov](http://jobtaxcredit.illinois.gov). For more information, check out the Jobs Tax Credit website or call the IEN Business Information Center at (800) 252-2923.

Put Illinois to Work – New Employment Program: Put Illinois to Work is a program created by Governor Pat Quinn and the Illinois Department of Human Services. This program, utilizing state funds and federal stimulus dollars, will provide subsidized wages for eligible unemployed, low-income parents and young adults throughout Illinois. Employers offering entry-level positions are needed to host subsidized workers for up to six months, ending September 30, 2010. Benefits offered by Put Illinois to Work include: no wage expenses for employers; opportunity to train new workers on your unique internal processes/procedures; and the option to hire skilled workers after September 30, 2010. If you are a potential employer or job seeker, visit [www.PutIllinoisToWork.Illinois.Gov](http://www.PutIllinoisToWork.Illinois.Gov).

Illinois Department of Employment Security hosts Employer Workshops/Business Expos around the State. For information regarding in-depth workshops that address Unemployment Insurance claims/protest issues and value-added programs and services available to you, or to schedule a workshop, please contact Bill Harrison, manager of Employer Outreach, at 309.343.3100 ext. 202 or by e-mail: William.Harrison@Illinois.gov. For a list of dates and locations to workshops, visit theIDES website at: [http://www.ides.state.il.us/employer/workshops/default.asp](http://www.ides.state.il.us/employer/workshops/default.asp). Topics of workshops include: Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Programs, How to Receive Tax $$$_$ Credits for New Hires, Illinois Skills Match, TaxNet, IDES Off-site Recruitment Facilities/Services, Illinois Labor Market Information and Re-Entry Employment Services Program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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