Spotlight on Success – Keli Krueger & Illinois PTAC at Bradley University

Brett Fugate of Fugate Inc. (a musical instrument manufacturing company) worked with the Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at the Bradley University Turner Center for Entrepreneurship in the Foster College of Business to prepare a proposal in response to a solicitation by the National Park Service for Chime Fabrication. The scope of work involved fabricating and delivering aluminum wind chimes and related components to be installed in the Tower of Voices at the Flight 93 National Memorial located in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. This is the last major phase in the development of the monumental, 93-feet tall musical instrument holding 40 wind chimes, representing the 40 passengers and crew members on United Flight 93 on September 11, 2001. Of the 4 flights hijacked on September 11, 2001 United Flight 93 was the only one that did not reach its target. This musical instrument is intended to be a landmark feature which marks the gateway to the Memorial site and serves as a living tribute in sound to remember the 40 through their ongoing voices. Please visit https://www.nps.gov/flni/getinvolved/tower-of-voices.htm for more information on the Memorial. Also, for a time lapse video of the construction of the Tower of Voices check out http://www.flight93friends.org/plan-your-visit/webcams.

Fugate Inc. and IL PTAC Director, Keli Krueger-Huhra, tuned a response ensuring all costs were fairly compensated under the firm-fixed priced contract and all terms and conditions requested by the solicitation were being met. Progressive payments were written into the response to assist this small business with its cash flow which resulted in a Solicitation amendment under FAR Subpart 32.5. Fugate Inc. competed with 5 other companies and was successfully awarded this contract by price and technical capability to meet the government requirement. Mr. Fugate
commented, “Bradley has excellent resources available to the local business community. Ms. Huhra is very helpful and knowledgeable on a wide range of topics and strategies. I strongly recommend that businesses contact PTAC, the Turner Center, and the International Trade Center for business consulting.”

Fugate Inc. will participate in the installation of the chime tubes projected for the end of May 2018. On September 10, 2018 the National Park Service will host a “Sound Breaking” for the Flight 93 Memorial.

**SBDC’s In The News – Southern Illinois University Edwardsville - Western Illinois University**

Program aims to help businesses grow

The Illinois Small Business Development Center for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville is collaborating with WRS Solutions LLC to bring the highly acclaimed Kauffman Foundation FastTrac Growth Venture series to the Riverbend. The series is a flexible program with a proven framework to help established companies and entrepreneurs realize the full potential of their businesses through sustainable growth and operational efficiency. This eight-part series will bring local resource partners together to help small businesses grow and expand operations. “This is an opportunity business owners will not want to miss,” SBDC Director Jo Ann DiMaggio May said. “Chambers of commerce, business-building and networking organizations are all encouraged to invite their members.”

The city of Alton, the Riverbend Growth Association, the village of Godfrey, SCORE of Southwest Illinois, and Confluence Business Advisors and its subsidiary What’s Next Business Hub are sponsors of this inaugural event. It will take place in Godfrey and provide local business resources to support small business owners. The series runs from 9 a.m. to noon for eight consecutive Fridays beginning Jan. 12. The first four sessions (Jan. 12, 19, 26 and Feb. 2) will be at the Reliance Bank, 2810 Godfrey Road. The last four sessions (Feb. 9, 16, 23 and March 2) will be at the RiverBend Growth Association, 6722 Godfrey Road.

**Broadening economic base may be key to stabilizing regional economy**

Jan 20, 2018

Why This Matters: The Institute for Rural Affairs and (WIU) President’s Executive Institute have been at the forefront of recognizing regional economic and demographic needs.

Editor’s Note: This is the third installment in a series of articles outlining topics of concern in a regional economic stability report released in 2016 by the Western Illinois Regional Council. The series looks at what area entities are doing to stabilize and improve the regional economy.

MACOMB — A broad economic base may be the answer to slowing or reversing economic decline. Along with other economic development agencies and community leaders, Western Illinois University has taken part in helping to address regional economic declines. The task has been taken on for nearly three decades by the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, and recently has been given an extra boost through the President’s Executive Institute, which oversees the IIRA and other departments within the university.

**President’s Executive Institute**

Joe Rives is the Co-Chair of the PEI, and Vice President of the WIU Quad Cities Campus and Planning. Along with Becky Paulsen, he helps oversee the work of the IIRA, as well as a number of different initiatives and programs related to community economic development. Among these initiatives are economic development summits, rural and urban economic development
initiatives, the Creating Economic Opportunities (CEO) program with the Midland Entrepreneurial Institute, The Small Business Development Center, and others.

The main purpose of the Community and Economic Development Summits is to “align institutional resources (expertise, program, services, people) with community and regional needs,” Rives wrote in an email to the Voice. “Elected officials, economic development professionals and members of business and industry are invited, and the general public through media announcements” are invited to participate. “CED Summits are important to the state’s economy as we work to recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce for the 21st century in Illinois. Our work is achieved by helping to advance community and/or regional goals expressed in existing economic development plans.”

The PEI is in the process of introducing the CEO program, an entrepreneurship development program which trains high school students to start their own businesses through hands-on experiences with local businesses. Currently, the program is in the fundraising process, and has received the support of local community leaders. The Institute also oversees the Small Business Development Center, which operates under the auspices of the IIRA. The SBDC operates a location in Macomb, and as of January, 2017, also operates a location on the Moline campus, which also houses the International Trade Center. According to wiusbdc.org, they “provide free, confidential advising and training to help entrepreneurs and business start, grow, prepare to export and sustain their businesses.”

Rives told the Voice that the PEI is expanding the SBDC through focusing on increasing outcomes. To date, the Macomb location has helped create 54 jobs and retain 27, and has helped 10 businesses start. The Moline location has helped create four jobs, retain eight and start seven businesses.

Rives said the PEI is also working with “businesses and industries of all shapes and sizes, from an individually owned and operated company, to Forbes Fortune 100 companies.” Employee recruitment and retention are employers’ greatest priorities, he said. PEI encourages employers to use any tuition reimbursement programs they have at WIU to help “support, develop and maintain a highly-skilled workforce” and is seeking to grow WIU’s internship program in order to help meet employers’ needs, he said.

The Institute promotes the use of sponsored credit, which business and industry will often use for employee training purposes, and which schools often use for their teachers. The PEI is also building partnerships with business and community members with an aim to develop and expand external funding for the university, he said. “All programs and services at WIU benefit from increased funding...all Illinois public universities are recovering from the two-year historic and unprecedented statewide budget impasse. In fact, the state of Illinois has been reducing appropriation to public higher education for over 15 years.”

Maximizing Neoserra – What is a Pre-Client and How Do I Convert Them To A Client

The pre client designation is usually used for two types of entities:

✓ You can use Neoserra to track your relationship with local banks and lenders; congressional members; or other resource organizations such as your local chamber of commerce or Lion’s Club. These organizations are not clients and probably will never be clients, but you can use Neoserra to track your professional communication with as pre-clients.

✓ You can also use Neoserra to track communications with a company or individuals who has not yet completed the necessary steps to formalize their relationship with your program but who is interested in obtaining your services. These entities can be considered marketing leads for your organization and they should also be entered as pre-clients in Neoserra.
While the former type of entity would probably never become a client, the latter type of pre-client may need to be promoted to client status when they fulfill the necessary requirements. Learn more at the FAQ at: https://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n71

**Valued Resources – Alignable**
A social network for small business owners. A place for entrepreneurs and small business owners to network with their industry peers online. Read more → What The Heck Is Alignable?

**Network News and Moves – Governor’s Visit to Illinois SBDC at Bradley University Innovation Center**
Governor Bruce Rauner recently attended a small business roundtable at Bradley University in Peoria. University president, Gary Roberts, spent some private time with the governor, and observed the roundtable too. The governor emphasized on ‘how critical higher education is to support innovation’.

Nine clients made it to the event and many of them were featured in the ‘Top Ten Startups to Watch in 2018’: http://www.peoriamagazines.com/ibi/2018/jan/10-startups-watch-2018
Founder of Bump Box (#1) also got to speak at the press conference. Watch video here à Governor’s Visit Jan 12, 2018

**Franchising 101 – Prepare for Tax Season**
Franchising 101- Starting a Business - Have you seen clients intrigued to open a franchise, but have not proceeded due to the unknown? Tell them to attend this one-hour webinar to learn the definition of what a franchise really is. The webinar also covers:

- The benefits of owning a franchise
- The power of franchising
- The size of franchising
- The costs associated with a franchise
- Identifying the right franchise for you
- Questions to ask yourself as well as a franchise developer

**DATE** : TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2018
**TIME** : 09:00 AM – 10:00 AM CST
Link for registration: https://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/29599

**Prepare for Tax Season**
Are your clients ready to file their business taxes? Having a healthy understanding of their business financials is essential to helping your clients succeed in their business. Encourage the clients to Attend this free workshop.

**DATE** : WED, JANUARY 31, 2018
**TIME** : 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM CST
**LOCATION** : THE SHOPS AT NORTH BRIDGE - MICROSOFT STORE
520 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60611
Link for registration: __https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-properly-prepare-for-tax-season-tickets-41850360555?aff=erelpanelorg
Blogs - America’s SBDC - SBA

How to Consolidate Your Business Loans

If you’re like many small business owners, you’ve taken on some debt in order to cover the costs of starting or growing your business. According to the Federal Reserve’s latest figures in the 2016 Small Business Credit Survey, 64% of loan applicants sought funds for a new business opportunity or to expand an existing one. Whether you applied for a small business loan, used business credit cards or even sought out investors, you needed that initial cash infusion to get your business off the ground or to the next level. But what happens with that debt should your business hit a slow period?

While paying back that debt may be going well for you now, it can be wise to consider how you’ll continue making those payments should sales go down and those debt repayments become uncomfortable. If you’d like to get your debt out of the way faster and save money at the same time, debt consolidation could be worth considering. → Read More

How Retargeting and Remarketing Helps Your Advertising → Read here

America’s SBDC Annual Conference - Call for Presentations

Just a friendly reminder that the call for papers is now open - this link is open until 09 February 2018. Please use the link below:

Call for Presentations for 2018 Americas Small Business Development Centers

Connect With Us on Social Media

Please connect with the Illinois SBDC on social media. Listed below are the links to the social media sites for the Illinois SBDC Network.

LinkedIn  https://www.linkedin.com/in/illinois-sbdc-network/
Facebook  https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisSBDCNetwork
Instagram  https://www.instagram.com/illinoissbdcnetwork/
Twitter  https://twitter.com/IllinoisSBDC

Illinois SBDC, Illinois SBDC ITC and Illinois PTAC Listing

Please see the latest listing for the Illinois Small Business Development Centers, the Illinois SBDC International Trade Centers and the Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Centers.