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Record-Breaking Year for Winthrop's Regional Small Business Development Center

Winthrop University

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Record-Breaking Year for Winthrop's Regional Small Business Development Center

Quick Facts

- In 2004 alone, the center created or saved about 500 jobs and sponsored 47 small business seminars through which more than 550 people attended.
- They have counseled, on average, as many as 400 clients each year during the past five years.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - During good and bad economic times in the state of South Carolina, the **Winthrop Regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** has worked to help business owners find their niche.

In 2004 alone, the center created or saved about 500 jobs and sponsored 47 small business seminars through which more than 550 people attended. They have counseled, on average, as many as 400 clients each year during the past five years. And capital formation, which is the dollar value of loans generated from the center's business plans, was a record-setting \$16,830,773 for the year.

So what price tag comes with **SBDC** professional services? Virtually none – **SBDC services** are provided mostly free of charge as long as their clients' business status complies with the definition of a small business. Minor registration fees (\$15) may be incurred with some training seminars.

The **center**, located in **118 Thurmond Hall**, has provided management consulting and technical assistance to local small businesses and the community since 1978. Services include one-on-one counseling on matters such as business start up, bookkeeping and marketing strategies. The **SBDC** also offers seminars and training courses on topics such as business policy, ethics, teamwork and accounting.

Dianne Hockett, assistant professor of business administration, directs the **Winthrop Regional SBDC**. Hockett, who has worked with the center for 14 years, was promoted to director in August 2004. Working along side her are five team members who are graduate assistants at Winthrop: Eyo Effion, Matthew Foreman, Latasha Mclwain, Jeff Reeves and Stacey Singleton.

"I truly believe that SBDC assistance increases the success and longevity of new businesses in our service area," **Hockett** said. "And the fact that our consultants are M.B.A. candidates, or from another country, doesn't seem to phase clients. Instead, our clients appreciate the genuine concern, encouragement, excellent work and support that they are receiving to help them get their businesses up and running."

The **SBDC** is comprised of two other South Carolina offices; there's one in Myrtle Beach and the other is in Florence. Together, these three offices serve clients from 15 South Carolina counties.

The center is funded through university, federal and state grants, and is operated by a consortium of four universities – University of South Carolina, Clemson University, Winthrop University and South Carolina State University.

The center's free start-up seminars in Rock Hill are held on the second and fourth Mondays each

month at 6 p.m. in Room 212, Thurmond.

For more information about the **SBDC**, contact **Dianne Hockett** at 803/323-2283.

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