



WASHINGTON SBDC
WE BUILD
COMMUNITIES

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



MESSAGES



Most of us would be happy to never hear the word “unprecedented” ever again, but my vote for the defining word of 2020 would be “resilient” and that applies especially to the small business community.

For the past 12 months, Washington SBDC advisors have been witness to, and in many cases, key resources for, some of the most inspiring examples of resiliency imaginable. Business owners who managed to stay open by the skin of their teeth, sacrificing their own salaries or income so that they could pay employees; businesses that changed their business model nearly overnight to comply with public health guidelines and meet the emerging needs of their customers; business owners

who were forced to close their business, and then came back with a plan for how to start over.

Recognizing resiliency in no way diminishes the pain and suffering this pandemic has caused and continues to cause in families and communities across our state. Early on, my message to SBDC advisors was that action is the antidote to despair and we needed to focus on helping clients figure out the next step forward.

As our data shows, SBDC advisors provided tangible assistance that helped business owners obtain more than \$62.5 Million in SBA COVID-related disaster assistance. Advisors assisted with cash flow management, especially in the early weeks and months. They helped clients set priorities, understand root problems and envision new opportunities. For many of our clients, the qualities that made SBDC advising indispensable during this time is that it was both expert and empathetic.

As one client wrote us in December, “(T)he help and guidance I have received from programs and assistance offered through SBDC has been a game changer for me and my business.” The client said she still wasn’t sure her business would survive, but the availability of SBDC advising is “just the type of encouragement I need to make it through these extremely trying times...one hour at a time.”

With spring fast approaching, and vaccine distributions picking up, we are seeing even more signs of hope—and resiliency. In January, more than 8,000 people in Washington state applied for a business license. The Washington SBDC will be there to assist those new small business owners just as we have been there for small businesses at every stage of the business cycle for more than 40 years.

On behalf of the entire Washington SBDC network and our clients, I thank you for your ongoing support. When small businesses succeed, our communities thrive.

Duane Fladland
State Director
Washington SBDC



MESSAGES



As the District Director for the Seattle district of the US Small Business Administration, I commend our valued partner, the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC), for helping thousands of small businesses sustain through an unprecedented year with an abrupt economic hardship resulting from the pandemic. Thru the SBDC's network of nationally recognized Certified Business Advisors, small businesses across Washington receive high-quality, confidential business counseling, training, and business research that is vital to our state's economic vitality and job retention.

I also want to recognize the SBDC's other investors whose investment is matched by SBA. The importance of this investment is backed by surveys that conclude the majority of individuals receiving SBDC's pro-bono services could not afford to pay for the equivalent private consulting. This is monumental when small businesses in Washington create 52% of our jobs and in rural areas, the percentage is even higher.

On behalf of SBA, I'd like to thank the Washington SBDC for their exceptional accomplishments in 2020 and look forward to our continued partnership in 2021 and beyond.

Kerrie Hurd
District Director
Seattle District
U.S. Small Business Administration



As Washington State's land-grant research institution, the mission of Washington State University (WSU) is to advance knowledge through creative research, innovation, and creativity, extend knowledge through innovative educational programs, and to apply knowledge through local and global engagement. WSU improves the quality of life of citizens in Washington State and enhance the economy of the state, nation, and world. It lives out its public service mission in part through the Small Business Development Centers, which has partnered with WSU for over 30 years to serve the small business and entrepreneurial community in Washington State.

The Washington Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), a member of the national America's SBDC program, is governed by a cooperative agreement between WSU, which is the statewide host of the program, and the U.S. Small Business Administration. With more than 25 advisors working in communities throughout the state, the WSU-SBDC collaboration yields meaningful local impact for our local stakeholders and community partners.

Brian Kraft
Assistant Vice President
Innovation & Research Engagement Office
Washington State University



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

WE BUILD COMMUNITIES

Washington SBDC helps make the dream of small business ownership a reality for more Washingtonians – creating jobs and opportunities that build communities throughout the state.

In more than 30 communities across the state, SBDC business advisors provide no-cost, one-on-one, confidential advising to help entrepreneurs and small business owners start, strengthen or buy/sell a business.



Mission

Helping Washington businesses grow and succeed through advising, education and research.

Vision

To be Washington's world-class business advising service.

Values

Innovation – We educate and empower businesses to develop creative solutions, data driven decisions and best practices.

Integrity – We embrace responsible stewardship of public resources and serve the best interest of Washington businesses.

Collaboration – We cultivate partnerships to ensure entrepreneurs have the resources and tools to thrive.

STATEWIDE NETWORK

The Washington SBDC provides assistance in every stage of business development and in just about every industry.

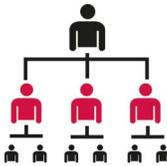
Services include:

- Planning or growing a business
- Analyzing financial statements
- Acquiring capital and managing cash flow
- Buying or selling a business
- Exporting to markets around the world
- Market research
- Business systems and record keeping
- Getting and keeping customers
- Cost-cutting strategies
- Finding and keeping qualified employees
- Succession planning
- Tech Commercialization



ECONOMIC IMPACT | STATEWIDE

The Washington SBDC Network delivered substantial advising services that resulted in a significant return on investment. Below are the economic impact results for the Washington SBDC Network since 2011.

 **7,796**
Jobs Created

 **7,871**
Jobs Saved

 **1,401**
Businesses Started

 **17,330**
Clients Counseled

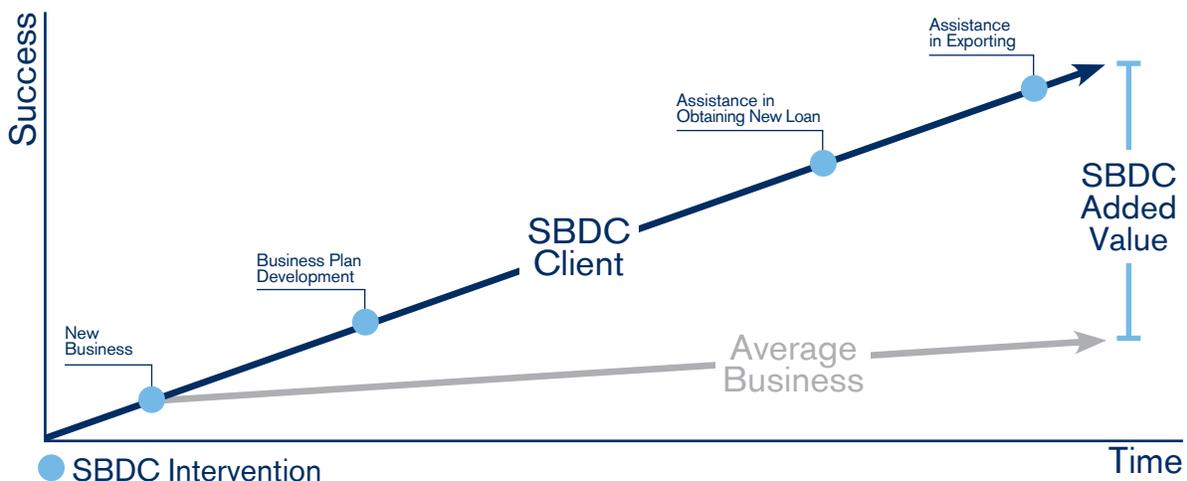
 **\$679,513,494**
Total New Capital

Fast Mobile Service

David Ruelas, owner
Grandview, WA



"(The SBDC) is not going to give you money, but they are going to give you advice. Advising is one of the main things we need as a business owner."



ECONOMIC IMPACT | STATEWIDE



97% of our clients say they would recommend SBDC services to others.

Compared to average Washington businesses, Washington SBDC clients increased revenue & created jobs at significantly greater rates than other Washington businesses.

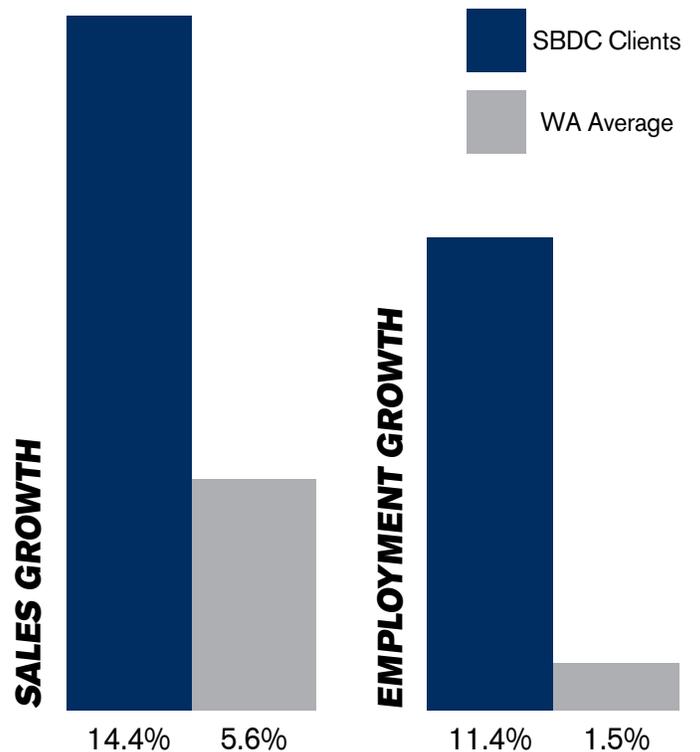
MILLIANNA

Arianna Brooke & Sharmilla Persaud
co-owners
Spokane, WA



"SBDC advisors have such a breadth of experience. Sometimes you don't even know what you don't know. They can point out things that you never thought to look at."

- Arianna Brooke



Washington SBDC clients generated **\$6,106,423** of State tax revenue & **\$2,626,532** of Federal tax revenue... totaling **\$8,732,955!**



For every **\$1** invested in the Washington SBDC program, our long-term clients generate **\$3.61** in incremental tax revenue.

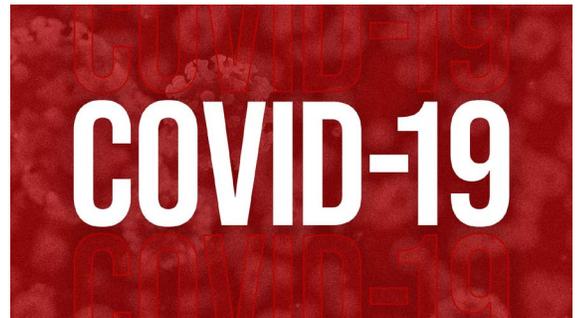
COVID-19 RESPONSE | STATEWIDE

The global pandemic hit small businesses hard, forcing many companies to pivot in order to survive. In these difficult times, current and prospective business owners have turned to the Washington SBDC more than ever for our guidance and resources.



18,482

Webinar Participants



4,090

Clients Counseled



\$62,528,770

SBA COVID-Related Capital



Three Trees Yoga

Karen Schwisow, co-owner
Federal Way, WA

"The SBDC helped us navigate the financial challenges of COVID with advice on what loans to apply for, how to apply and how to apply for forgiveness. We continue to find the SBDC to be an invaluable business partner."

OLYMPIA ENTREPRENEURS NAIL IT WITH CONTINUED SBDC ADVISING

OLYMPIA, Wash.— Ana Seidel had been experimenting with developing and selling nail care products since 2012. When her husband, Cory Seidel, got laid off from his IT job a few months after she started selling her homemade nail oil, the two decided their best opportunity for supporting themselves and their four children, then ages 14, 11, 9 and 6, was to grow Bliss Kiss™ from a hobby business into a business of value.

With the help of the Washington SBDC, they have done just that and are continuing to grow. Bliss Kiss now supports 8 jobs, they are beginning to outgrow a 2,000 square-foot production facility and have annual revenues around \$1 million. They are currently working with SBDC advisors to explore growing their wholesale business and possibly expand sales into China and other foreign markets.

The nail care industry is huge in the U.S., with total spending on nail salon services topping 8.36 billion U.S. dollars in 2018. Bliss Kiss has a full product line of nail and skin care products along with manicure tools and Ana Seidel has become a recognized expert in

the field. Her NailCareHQ website promises, “No Hype...No Lies. The Truth is Here.”

She is currently writing a nail care book with her mentor, Doug Schoon, who is an internationally recognized scientist, author, and educator with over 30 years’ experience in the cosmetic, beauty, and personal care industry. Doug has entrusted Ana to proofread and edit some of his nail care articles knowing that Ana can write to the general public in a way that is easy to understand.

The Seidels began meeting with an SBDC advisor when they were averaging \$3,000 in sales each month, which wasn’t enough to meet living expenses. Their advisor at the time, Ron Nielson, didn’t sugar-coat anything, Ana said, but his ability to analyze financial statements and point out promising trajectories enabled them to stay positive and focused.

“With the help of the SBDC, we have been able to build something that makes us proud.”

- Ana Seidel, owner

Ana’s social media and marketing experience combined with Cory’s background in IT has enabled them to fully embrace the potential of online marketing. Their Facebook



Cory and Ana Seidel, owners

page for Bliss Kiss has more than 100,000 “likes”. Their Instagram account has more than 139,000 followers and they’ve produced over 150 videos for their YouTube channel.

“I can say without a doubt that if we did not have the SBDC, both Cory and I would have had to go back to working for other people,” Ana said. “With the help of the SBDC, we have been able to build something that makes us proud.”

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The Washington SBDC network, hosted by Washington State University, is an accredited member of America's SBDC. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, institutions of higher education, economic development organizations and other public and private funding partners.

FAMILY-OWNED FOOD DISTRIBUTOR WINS SBA NW REGION EXPORTER OF THE YEAR

BELLEVUE, Wash.—Pacific Valley Foods of Bellevue has been named the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 2020 Pacific Northwest Region Small Business Exporter of the Year. Pacific Valley Foods was chosen from exporters in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington and is one of 10 finalists for the SBA National Exporter of the Year Award.

The family-owned business was originally founded in 1975 by husband and wife team Scott and Lynn Hannah to distribute frozen foods processed in Washington state to markets across the U.S.

Today nearly 95% of their total sales are international and the company is headed by son John Hannah, president, and daughter Susan Hannah, senior vice president.

Starting in the basement of their family home, the business has grown into a multi-million-dollar food distribution company with 11 employees and offices in China, Japan, Europe and New Zealand to help manage accounts in more than 25 different countries.

They both say it was their mother who led the way into exporting when she followed up on a lead that a distributor in Japan was interested in their line of frozen broccoli. It was a bold move for two reasons. One, it was unusual for a woman to be involved in trade deals in the late 1970s and two, Asia was not a big market for frozen vegetables.

Their parents closed the deal after hopping on a plane and flying to Japan to meet with the distributor face-to-face and the lesson of that story has guided the company for more than four decades.

"It's the relationships we have with our customers who become our friends as well," Susan said. "It's the bedrock of our company." In fact, Susan said, she and her brother have known some of their overseas trading partners for decades.

"Family is very important in other cultures, so I think that is one thing that has resonated with our buyers in other cultures," she said. "They see the bond of our family and appreciate that extra dimension it brings to the business."

With that first contract for frozen broccoli, the Hannahs became one of that first U.S. companies

to export frozen foods to Japan. In 1981 they began supplying the second largest retailer in Japan with French fries made from potatoes grown and processed in Washington State. Several years later, John and his father jumped on a plane to close a deal to supply frozen vegetables for a global restaurant chain in China. That's when they began focusing on export and haven't looked back.

Establishing trust is essential, John said. When people fail at exporting, he said, it's often because "they don't follow through on the final step of getting on a plane and flying to the country to meet face to face." Meeting in person isn't optional, John said, "in our business it's required."

The Hannahs were nominated for the SBA award by Ellie He, an international trade business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Pacific Valley Foods has a distinct company culture, said Ellie He, who has worked with the Hannahs for the past nine months. "It's the most human, humble, and open-minded exporter I have worked with," she said. "I believe it is their secret to success."

Because establishing trust with potential trading partners is so critical, the Hannahs applied for a grant through the SBA-funded State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) administered by the Washington Department of Commerce to attend a food trade show in Indonesia in 2018. As a Pacific Rim country, Indonesia is a logical market for exports from Washington state, but the Hannahs didn't have contacts there and were having trouble getting a toe hold. The STEP grant helped defray the cost of the trip and was an important first step in making connections and establishing their company credentials.

The pandemic has interrupted trade all over the world, including the progress they were making in Indonesia, but that's the way of international trade. It's always something.

Earlier this year Pacific Valley Foods applied for and received an SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan to keep their employees on staff while they pursue strategies for replacing lost revenue. While sales have slowed, they continue to be in regular contact with long-time customers and they continue to look for new opportunities.



Scott and Lynn Hannah, owners

The world of export is huge, John said, so trying to figure out where to focus their energy is always an issue. "Which product? Which market?" John said. "That's always our main challenge."

With Ellie He's assistance, they requested a report from the Washington SBDC market intelligence research team to help them make those decisions. "Their team did a really nice market research report for us," he said.

The Washington SBDC has been assisting entrepreneurs and small business owners in good times and bad since 1980. SBDC advising services are provided at no cost and are confidential and tailored to the needs of each SBDC client. The Washington SBDC is a network of more than 30 business advisors working in communities across the state to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs who want to start, grow or buy/sell a business.

Washington State University (WSU) is the statewide host of the Washington SBDC and funding for SBDC services are provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), WSU, and other institutions of higher education, economic development and civic and business organizations, including chambers and ports.

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OLYMPIA PEST SERVICE WINS SBA VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESS AWARD

OLYMPIA, Wash.—PCI Pest Control in Olympia has been named the 2020 U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Seattle District Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year.

Owner Matthew Purcell Sr. started the business in 2007 after retiring from the military, where he spent 20 years in the Active Guard Reserve Program supporting National Guard units in Alaska, Virginia and Washington.

PCI Pest Control provides residential and commercial pest and weed control services in Thurston, Pierce and Mason counties and contract work with state governments in Alaska, Oregon and Washington.

Purcell was nominated for the honor by Ron Nielsen, a business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) who worked with Purcell from 2013 to 2019.

The Washington SBDC is a network of more than 35 expert business advisors working in communities across the state to help entrepreneurs and small business owners start, grow or buy/sell a business. The SBDC center in Olympia is supported by and co-located with the Center for Business and Innovation at South Puget Sound Community College.

"It's truly an honor to assist veterans like Matt Purcell as they grow their business from a one-person operation to a thriving small business of value," said Duane Fladland, state director of the Washington SBDC. "Businesses like PCI Pest Control, with its focus on doing the right thing for customers and employees, make our communities better."

Purcell credits his military experience with pushing him out of his comfort zone and instilling in him leadership skills, a growth mindset and the determination to persist in the face of challenges. When obstacles arise at work, he said, he reminds himself, "I can do this. I've had to do way worse and it was way harder."

Purcell started doing pest control work on a limited basis while still in the military, mostly to support a friend's small business and earn some

money on the side. After retirement, he decided to lean into what he was already doing.

Still, he said, in the early years he viewed his work more as self-employment than an opportunity to build a business of value. In his first year as a business owner, as a one-man operation, he earned \$35,000. Then he met with an advisor with the Washington SBDC and started looking at things differently.

"(The SBDC) really helped me to grow and develop the business side (of the business)," he said. At the time, he was most comfortable just doing pest control work, he said, but his SBDC advisors encouraged him to spend more time on his business plan, financial spreadsheets, cashflow management, marketing and other aspects of business development that would help him grow.

Today PCI Pest Control employs 10 people and in 2019 posted revenue of \$900,000. With the help of his SBDC advisor, Purcell applied for the SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) disaster loan and has been able to keep all his employees working without a reduction in hours.

Purcell's first SBDC advisor was Celia Nightingale (now a Small Business Liaison at Washington State Department of Labor & Industries). In 2013 he began working with Nielsen, who recently moved from the SBDC in Lacey to the SBDC in Wenatchee. Purcell now meets with SBDC advisor John Morosco and says he's benefitted from all three of his SBDC advisors.

"It's always really good to have an outside perspective," he said, "an outside voice."

While an outside perspective is crucial in developing business strategy, much of Purcell's focus is on employee development. Purcell's mantra has become "Take good care of the customer and take good care of the team." Along with providing on-going training and professional development opportunities, PCI Pest Control also offers healthcare and retirement benefits.



PCI Pest Control Staff

And giving back to the community is also a priority. Each year, PCI Pest Control completes two community service projects a year where they identify a partnership in the community and volunteer their services for free for an entire day. In 2019, PCI Pest Control volunteered with both the Lacey Community Senior Center and the YWCA in Olympia. Purcell has also been offering limited pest control services to people who have lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

"We aren't just here to make money," Purcell said, "we are also here to integrate with our community."

The Washington SBDC network has been hosted by Washington State University since 1980. Funding is provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Washington State University and other institutions of higher education, economic development organizations and civic and business groups, including chambers of commerce and ports.

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PPP WAS 'SAVING GRACE' FOR BAKERY IN BELLINGHAM

BELLINGHAM, Wash.—When cases of COVID-19 started emerging in the United States, Washington state was the epicenter of the emerging public health and economic disaster. When Washington Gov. Jay Inslee issued his Stay Home, Stay Safe order in mid-March, Andi Vann, owner of Pure Bliss Desserts, was alarmed, but not panicked. February had been their biggest grossing month yet. They could weather two or three weeks of low sales.

After being a one-woman catering company for a number of years, Vann had opened Pure Bliss Desserts in 2008 with the help of her husband, Nick, a veteran and a full-time firefighter in Bellevue, Wash. That's when she first began working with SBDC business advisor Eric Grimstead. Over the next decade, Vann relied on SBDC advising to help her build her business to more than \$1 million in sales and 26 employees in a 5,500 square-foot bakery and cafe in downtown Bellingham.

By late March, alarm was turning to panic. Her husband's work as a first responder meant she was the sole caregiver for their two children, ages 3 and 6, for days at a time, even while she was consumed with trying to save her business. In a moment of despair, she texted Grimstead saying, "I'm dying. I don't think I can do this."

Grimstead responded, "I'm available this afternoon. Call me." When they talked later that day, Vann remembers Grimstead asking her, "What is one really productive thing you can do for your business today? Just one thing."

Vann had already trimmed her menu to the most popular items, reduced the number of employees coming to the bakery to just 11 in staggered shifts to enable social distancing and reduced the hours of operation. They focused on three channels of service: grab and go, where customers placed an order at the front door, but didn't enter the shop; whole cake pre-orders; and dessert delivery service.

In the beginning, she said, sales didn't even cover the cost of labor, let alone the cost of the ingredients. Nevertheless, Vann and her husband made the decision to keep the shop open, in hopes that sales would pick up. "Nick and I always said loyalty and commitment are

the highest attributes we are looking for in employees," Vann said. "We don't just hire warm bodies."

But as the pandemic dragged on, Vann wondered if she was delaying the inevitable. "It took a lot of persistence to keep going," she said, "to believe we were doing the right thing."

Vann said she communicated regularly with her staff and she also stayed in touch with Grimstead. "He always took the panic out of the conversation," she said. If she worried about something that couldn't be fixed, he'd say, "Let it go, Andi. That's not even worth it. We need to focus on this right now."

When the SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) was announced, she said, she felt a glimmer of hope. She and her husband had many conversations with Grimstead over several days to discuss details of the program and whether it would work for their business. Once they decided to apply, they immediately called their business banker, Adam Lervick at Peoples Bank, for help getting their application in early.

In 2018 the Vann's had gotten a \$1.8 million SBA-backed 504 loan with Peoples Bank to buy the building where they had been leasing space, so they were already familiar with the SBA and already had a good relationship with Lervick.

Vann's application was submitted the day the portal opened and Lervick texted Vann at 1:30 a.m. to say, "You're in." A little later she learned that disbursement would start April 15.

"Knowing that was coming was a big relief," she said. Vann said she worried that the employees called back to work would resent the employees who stayed home and still got paid, but that didn't really happen. Vann says her leadership staff stepped up to the challenge and the whole team was willing to do what needed to be done so that the business could survive and they'd all be back at work together when it was safe to be there.

With the cushion provided by the PPP, she could be strategic about which employees she brought back and for what hours, again with a focus on keeping people safe. When sales were slow, staff worked on projects that they'd wanted to do



Nick and Andrea Vann (owners) with SBDC advisor Eric Grimstead (L)

before, but hadn't had time for.

Because of the PPP, she said, she had well-trained employees who were ready and eager to get back to work when she needed them. If she'd had to hire new employees, she said, it would have been much, much more difficult to seize opportunities and move forward.

The eight-week period of the PPP ended on June 1, and by that date Vann had all 26 employees back at work. In some cases hours have been reduced and duties have shifted—with less foot traffic and in-person dining, front of house employees spend more time cleaning and taking phone orders—but everyone is back at work.

And while Vann knows she isn't out of the woods, sales have increased as well. She isn't back to February revenue, but she isn't losing money and her business is back on track for long-term sustainability.

"The PPP was a saving grace," she said. And so is her SBDC advisor.

"His help has been monumental," Vann said.

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SMALL BUSINESS TAKES FLIGHT WITH HELP FROM SBDC ADVISING

RENTON, Wash.—The irony is not lost on Gordon Alvord or his business partner Bradley Donaldson.

They lost their jobs as pilots because of the recession but ended up founding a flight school that is thriving today.

“People told us, ‘You guys are either insane or geniuses,’” Alvord said. “Who starts a flight school in a recession?” (Founded during a recession, the business is weathering the pandemic as well. As an essential business, they have not had to close.)

Rainier Flight Services at the Renton Municipal Airport has a fleet of 30 aircraft and prior to the pandemic they employed 48 full-time employees and had an active enrollment of about 350 students.

The remarkable growth of this company is an “only in Seattle” story, Alvord said.

In 2009, after being furloughed from their jobs as pilots for Alaska Airlines, Alvord and Donaldson started giving private flight lessons to keep busy until returning to commercial flying.

They thought their stint as flight instructors would last a month or two, but the furlough dragged on. Fortunately, demand for flight instruction remained strong during the recession, Alvord said, particularly among employees at companies such as Microsoft, Amazon and Boeing.

Even so, Alvord and Bradley never planned to start a full-fledged business and they did not have significant resources to invest. That’s why the assistance of the Washington Small

Business Development Center (SBDC) was so critical.

In the early days they leased an airplane from a former student, but by late 2009 they decided they needed to buy their own aircraft if they wanted to establish themselves as a serious flight school.

Alvord called a few banks to see about a commercial loan but did not get any traction. That’s when he called John Rodenberg, the SBDC business advisor in Pierce County. Rodenberg assisted with the loan application, including helping Alvord with a business plan.

While working on the business plan with Rodenberg, Alvord said, they realized there were advantages to leasing additional aircraft rather than buying. “We would not have realized the financial implications without discussing the strategy with John.”

In 2012, when they finally got the call back from Alaska Airlines, they met with Rodenberg again to discuss strategic planning.

Could they keep the business going with full-time jobs? How could they continue to grow the business if they were no longer on site every day? What revenue streams could they add?

“It was challenging,” Alvord said, “but the key was finding the right people. We have always been fortunate to find and retain individuals that do a fantastic job implementing our culture.”

Over the years, Rodenberg has continued to provide assistance, including talking with them about taking



Gordon Alvord and Bradley Donaldson, owners (l-r)

on debt to finance growth.

Alvord said he and his partner were reluctant to take on debt, but in 2015 they applied for and received a \$300,000 loan which enabled them to renovate a larger space at the Renton Airport. “It was a very wise decision because it allowed us to grow our company 10-fold,” he said.

Alvord recently completed an executive development program at the University of Washington.

“Now I understand why the decisions we made with John’s assistance were the right course of action,” he said. “Most small business owners are not MBAs so the service provided was invaluable to help steer us towards success.”

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Wheel Line Cider

Ellensburg, WA | Washington's 8th District
Success Story



ELLENSBURG CIDERY RECEIVES 2020 SBA RURAL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

ELLENSBURG, Wash.—Wheel Line Cider, an Ellensburg-based cidery, has been named the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Seattle District Rural Small Business of the Year.

The public got its first taste of Wheel Line Cider at the Windfall Ciderfest in Ellensburg in 2018, but owner Susie Jensen has been planting rootstock, tending her expanding orchard on Upper Badger Pocket Road, and experimenting with cider making for nearly a decade.

Wheel Line Cider is available at more than two dozen locations across Central Washington, including farmers markets in Wenatchee and Ellensburg, and at their tasting room and cider garden adjacent to the cidery.

"It's very peaceful," Jensen says of the outdoor space she has created with panoramic views of the Kittitas Valley. "It's a place to linger."

Jensen, a former art teacher who loves to garden and entertain, has worked to create a destination that will attract guests from across Central Washington and perhaps much further.

"Just as a wine enthusiast looks for a Tuscany wine or a Napa Valley wine, I think we can see in the future cider enthusiasts looking for Yakima Valley and Kittitas Valley cider and heirloom orchards," she said.

Sarah Truglio, a business advisor

with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) nominated Jensen for the SBA award. Not only does the business provide good-paying jobs in a rural community, she said, but it brings visitors to the region, showcases local agriculture and food products, is committed to environmental stewardship and has a zero-waste production process. Truglio called it a "perfect rural business."

Jensen's family has been involved in agriculture for generations. Her father-in-law created a rolling wheel irrigation system (hence Wheel Line Cider) and her husband, Don Jensen, has been growing Timothy hay on the family's 300-acre farm for more than 20 years. Jensen's vision for Wheel Line Cider as a sustainable agribusiness with value-added potential did not start to blossom until after her retirement from teaching in 2014.

In 2018 she entered the Enterprise Challenge, a business plan competition sponsored by the Yakima County Development Association and the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce. That's where she met Sarah Truglio, a business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC in Yakima is supported by the Yakima County Development Association.

Jensen originally reached out to Truglio for help with spreadsheets and financial statements for the competition, but they've continued



Susie Jensen (owner) and Maryanna Schane (l-r)

working together as Jensen has expanded her business.

In a letter to Truglio, Jensen wrote that before entering the competition she didn't have a business plan, a financial plan or a mission statement and had been running the business by putting out one fire after another. The assistance she received from Truglio and others helped her develop all three and set up systems that have been a huge help in managing personnel and workflow.

"Each of our areas of expertise are now building upon each other," she wrote, "and the flow of growing, harvesting, producing a product and marketing it, now run more smoothly."

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The Washington SBDC network, hosted by Washington State University, is an accredited member of America's SBDC. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, institutions of higher education, economic development organizations and other public and private funding partners.



www.WSBDC.org



SBDC Day shines light on small business success across the country

SPOKANE, Wash.— For 40 years the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which is hosted by Washington State University, has helped aspiring and emerging small business owners achieve success.

The many faces of small business success will be celebrated on March 18, the fourth annual SBDC Day sponsored by America's SBDC, the national organization representing more than 63 SBDC networks and more than 1,000 SBDC centers across the country.

Some of the businesses being celebrated include:

Fast Mobile Service in Grandview, where owner David Ruelas has grown his business from one guy and a service truck to three service trucks, 16 employees and a 14,000-sf repair shop and parts store on nine acres at the Port of Grandview. Read David's story [here](#).

Lake Chelan Artisan Bakery, where Caterina Jimenez saw a help wanted sign in the door in 2013 and five years later was able to buy the business from her employer, making her the first person in her family to own a business. Read Caterina's story [here](#).

Ami Adult Family Home in Federal Way, where owner Catherine Kamau was able to realize her own American dream by buying a home and starting her own business. Read Catherine's story [here](#).

Call Luke in Port Angeles, where Luke Groves and his wife, Rebecca Besherse, were able to start their own business

rather than move out of the area to find jobs. Read their story [here](#).

The Washington SBDC includes 30 business advisors and two international trade business advisors located in 24 communities from the Canadian border to the Columbia River and from Pullman to Port Angeles. SBDC advisors provide one-on-one advising, education and research to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs who want to start, grow or buy/sell a business.

In 2019, Washington SBDC business advisors worked with 2,779 clients and helped them start 209 businesses, save or create 3,703 jobs and access more than \$110 million in capital. Clients also credited SBDC international trade advisors with helping them increase export sales by more than \$4 million. For every \$1 invested in the Washington SBDC, our clients generate \$3.92 in incremental tax revenue.

SBDCs have also supported small business in ways beyond business development. SBDCs are key partners in disaster recovery, working with SBA, FEMA, and state agencies to improve resiliency and speed recovery in disaster-stricken communities. Whether it is flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes or wildfires you will find SBDCs staffing the Business Recovery Centers and reestablishing communities. In addition, SBDC advisors teach classes in business resiliency, export, cybersecurity and more.

Small business owners and those who support the small business community are invited to share their stories on social



media, using the hashtag #SBDCDay and #WSBDC.

The SBDC was created by Congress in 1980 to give small business owners access to expert business advising at no cost to the business owner. Each SBDC network must raise half of its funding from state and local sources, most often institutions of higher education, economic development agencies and other civic and business organizations in communities where the SBDC center is located. That funding is then matched with funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBDC network in Washington has been hosted by Washington State University since it opened in 1980 and receives both funding and administrative support from WSU.

For more information about the Washington SBDC, go to www.wsbdc.org

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The Washington SBDC network, hosted by Washington State University, is an accredited member of America's SBDC. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, institutions of higher education, economic development organizations and other public and private funding partners.

Support neighborhood businesses by joining the Support Small Business 5-Day Challenge

SPOKANE, Wash. –The Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is joining with other SBDC networks across the country to promote a five-day challenge in support of the country's 30 million small business owners.

Starting Monday, April 27, the Washington SBDC will launch the Support Small Business 5-Day Challenge on social media to promote one activity each day for people to show their support for small businesses, both those still operating as essential businesses and those that have been closed as part of the governor's Stay Home Stay Healthy order.

According to Business News Daily, there were approximately 600,000 small businesses in Washington state before the pandemic began, and they employed approximately 1.4 million employees, which is more than half of the state's private-sector workforce. These small businesses represent 99.5% of all Washington-based businesses.

"The SBDC is here for small businesses in good times and in bad," said Washington SBDC State Director Duane Fladland. "We've

seen the difficult decisions small business owners are being forced to make right now, and we hope this initiative creates a some light and some hope for better times ahead.

Examples of the challenge include tagging small businesses on social media, purchasing gift cards, writing online reviews, and sending caring messages to small business owners. The public can find out more about the Support Small Business 5-Day Challenge by following the Washington SBDC on Twitter at @wsbdc and Facebook @washingtonsbd.

The Washington SBDC is a network of more than 30 business advisors working in more than two dozen communities across the state to provide assistance to business owners and entrepreneurs who want to start, grow or transition a business. Beginning in early March, SBDC advisors were answering an estimated 4,000 calls or emails every week from small business owners who needed assistance



with disaster loans, debt relief, shared work and furlough programs, business survival tips and cash flow management.

The Washington SBDC is hosted by Washington State University and has been an integral part of the small business community since 1980. SBDC advising services are provided at no cost to the client. Funding is provided by state and local partnerships and a matching grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

For more information about the Washington SBDC, go to www.wsbdc.org

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Grimstead awarded 2019 Small Business Development Center State Star

SPOKANE, Wash.—Eric Grimstead, a certified business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Bellingham has been named the state's small business advising service's State Star. He will be honored for his achievement at the America's SBDC national conference in September.

Grimstead, who became an SBDC advisor at Western Washington University in 2008, worked with more than 183 clients in 2019 to help them start, grow or buy/sell a business. Those business owners credited Grimstead with helping them obtain nearly \$6 million in capital funding in 2019 and create or save more than 90 jobs.

In announcing Grimstead's selection for the statewide network's most prestigious award, the selection committee lauded Grimstead for being an exemplar of the network, someone who can help explain financing options or creative marketing strategies with the same enthusiasm and expertise.

"Business advising is an art and a science and he's the whole package," said Washington SBDC State Director Duane Fladland. Business owners must be disciplined in financial management, Fladland said, but need to be innovative and creative when it comes to marketing, social media and meeting customer needs.

"What we hear over and over from clients is that Eric has the technical expertise they need to succeed, and also provides the encouragement and support to help them move forward," Fladland said.

Washington State University is the statewide host of the Washington SBDC and, along with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), provides administrative support and oversight of state's two dozen SBDC centers.

CJ Seitz, director of the SBDC at WWU, said Grimstead is a tremendous asset to Whatcom County's small business community. "His passion for helping businesses start and grow, technical expertise, and contagious energy result in tangible outcomes for our local small businesses," she said.

Jeff Caldwell, owner of Heating Green in

Bellingham, started working with Grimstead in 2008 and continues to meet with him several times a year to discuss business challenges.

Owning a small business can be a lonely road, Caldwell said, but working with Grimstead makes it less so. "The thing about Eric is his chemistry with people," he said. "He's a good advocate."

Grimstead says he is "cheerleader-esque" in his work with small business owners, but his support is grounded in data. A former accounting major who switched to degrees in business administration and marketing at the University of Puget Sound, Grimstead says it's critical that business owners understand the numbers.

Grimstead said he first got the entrepreneurship bug while working at a small family-owned boat manufacturing business right out of college. Originally hired to do marketing, over the next decade Grimstead eventually came to understand and be involved in everything from HR to inventory to financial management, and, eventually, to business acquisition and real estate transactions.

Grimstead has owned a number of businesses over the course of his career and he said that experience gave him an early appreciation for the challenges and rewards of being a small business owner. After leaving the boat business, Grimstead spent the next decade working in financial services, marketing consulting, web development and direct mail marketing.

While acknowledging the hard realities that are forcing some business owners to close their business because of the pandemic, Grimstead said he is inspired by business owners who have been able to pivot to new opportunities.

"This is forcing people to think differently and explore how businesses can look," he said. "You have to be willing to try things. I recommend that people test, test, test and adjust accordingly."

While the pandemic has changed consumer behaviors across many industry sectors, fundamentals of business development are the same, Grimstead said.

For those seeking to start a new business,



Eric Grimstead

Grimstead said, the essential questions are "Why this? Why you? Why now?"

Grimstead, a long-time resident of the Pacific Northwest, lives in Bellingham with his wife of 25 years, Kristal, who is a real estate broker with Compass. Together they have three adult children and enjoy an active outdoor lifestyle and frequent travel.

SBDC advising is provided at no-cost to the client, is completely confidential and is customized to the needs of each client. The [Washington SBDC](http://WashingtonSBDC.org) network includes more than 35 business advisors and two international trade specialists working in communities across the state.

The SBDC at Western Washington receives funding from City of Bellingham, the Port of Bellingham, Whatcom County and the City of Blaine, as well as federal grant money from the U.S. Small Business Administration administered by WSU. For more information, visit their website at sbdc.wvu.edu. Learn more about the statewide SBDC at wsbdc.org.

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Make the most of Small Business Saturday and this holiday season

SPOKANE, Wash.— Despite the challenges of this year, it's still possible for small businesses to end the year strong, especially if everyone—businesses and consumers—embrace Small Business Saturday on Nov. 28.

That's the message from the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) which is working to help business owners maximize opportunities this holiday season while also helping raise awareness of the Shop Small movement.

"Locally owned small businesses are and always have been the lifeblood of vibrant communities," said Duane Fladland, state director of the Washington SBDC.

"Even while the Governor is encouraging people to restrict travel and avoid social gatherings to protect public health," Fladland said, "there are still many ways to shop local and support those businesses that contribute so much to our communities, including goods and services, jobs, tax revenues and philanthropic contributions."

For instance, Fladland said, gift certificates to local restaurants, curbside pickup at retail stores, and online shopping on Facebook or other digital platforms are all ways to support local businesses while staying safe.

On Tuesday, Nov. 17, SBDC advisors Mia Johnstone and Julia Lara will be presenting a webinar titled "How to Make the Most of Small Business Saturday." Topics will include, how to safely prepare for in-person shopping, how to sell online without an e-commerce site, and ways for service-based businesses to get involved in the holiday. Register for the no-cost webinar [here](#).

"Despite the challenges that small businesses have faced this year, it's still possible to end the year strong," said Johnstone, who provides one-to-one business advising in Grays Harbor as well as presenting frequent statewide webinars with Lara on marketing and other small business topics.

Small Business Saturday was founded by American Express in 2010 and American Express now heads up a Small Business Coalition that supports the Shop Small movement. For additional information, resources and tools to support Small Business Saturday, go [here](#).

The Washington SBDC is a publicly-funded network of more than 30 business advisors working in communities across the state to help small business owners and entrepreneurs start, grow or buy/sell a business. SBDC technical assistance is provided at no cost and advisors in the Washington SBDC



network have experience in every industry sector and at every stage of business development.

The Washington SBDC is hosted by Washington State University and receives major support from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Washington SBDCs also receive support from local community colleges, economic development groups and civic or business groups.

For more information about the Washington SBDC, go to www.wsbdc.org.

MEDIA NOTE: If you are looking for a small business owner to profile in advance of Small Business Saturday, your local SBDC business advisor is a great resource for finding people who are contributing to their communities in truly remarkable ways. You can find the advisor in your area at www.wsbdc.org



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

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SBDC business advisors helps entrepreneurs make best of difficult situations

WENATCHEE, Wash.—The Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) serving Chelan and Douglas counties provides no-cost, confidential, expert business advising to small business owners and entrepreneurs in every industry and at every stage of business development.

“If you are one of the tens of thousands of business owners in this state who is struggling to survive right now, the Washington SBDC is here for you,” said Ron Nielsen, director of the SBDC center in Wenatchee.

Nielsen, who has been an SBDC business advisor for 20 years, said the current environment for business owners is the most challenging he’s ever seen. Especially now, he said, business owners need to assess their situation clearly and take steps to maximize gains and minimize losses. Meeting with an objective, expert business advisor with no hidden agenda can help them do just that, he said.

“You are the expert on your business,” Nielsen said, but SBDC advisors are business experts. “We can help you look at the data, at past performance and future projections, and make informed decisions about where to go from here.”

The pandemic has created chaos



and confusion by disrupting business norms, Nielsen said, but SBDC advisors can provide an objective sounding board to help business owners find clarity.

“We won’t tell you what you should do,”

Nielsen said, “but we can help you analyze the data, identify options and focus on what matters.”

Nielsen and his SBDC colleague in Wenatchee, John Morosco, are two of more than 30 SBDC advisors working in communities across the state to assist business owners and entrepreneurs working to start, grow or buy/sell a business.

Since the pandemic began, SBDC advisors have been meeting with clients via Zoom or other online platforms to provide technical assistance on diverse issues including financial literacy, cash flow management, access to capital, marketing plans, selling online, strategic planning, business systems or starting an export program.

Prior to joining the SBDC in 2016, Morosco had spent decades in the hospitality industry, working in restaurants, hotels and resorts. Throughout the pandemic he has been focused on helping restaurants pivot to carry-out dining and finding other ways to diversify their



Ron Nielsen and John Morosco (l-r)

revenue stream.

“During this pandemic and beyond, I encourage small business owners and operators to find ways to make their business fun, unique and exciting,” Morosco said. “This benefits your customers, but it may also help you find innovative ways to create new revenue streams”.

The Washington SBDC has been hosted by Washington State University since 1980 and receives funding support from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and from WSU and other institutions of higher education and economic development, including ADOs, ports, chambers and civic and business organizations. The SBDC office in Wenatchee receives funding support from the Ports of Douglas and Chelan counties.

For more information about the Washington SBDC go to wsbdc.org. The SBDC in Wenatchee can be reached at 509-992-4027 or john.morosco@wsbdc.org



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NEW SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES COMING TO ISLAND COUNTY

COUPEVILLE, Wash.—Kristina Hines, a business professional with nearly 20 years of experience in business administration, HR and digital marketing, has joined the Economic Development Council for Island County (EDCIC) to provide no-cost, confidential advising to business owners and entrepreneurs who want to start, grow or buy/sell a business.

While located within the EDCIC, Hines is an employee of the Washington Small Business Development Center, a network of more than 30 business advisors working in communities across the state to provide one-on-one assistance in any area of business development. This is the first time an SBDC advisor has been located in Island County.

“With her skills and expertise, Kristina will be a tremendous asset to business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the county,” said Sharon Sappington, executive director of the EDCIC.

Sappington, who was an international trade advisor with the SBDC before joining Island County EDC, said SBDC advisors provide in-depth assistance to business owners in any industry, from retail to restaurants to professional services, and at every stage of business development. And now with COVID, this assistance is even more important than ever for our small businesses in Island County.

“SBDC advisors have no agenda but helping businesses succeed, so SBDC clients can trust their advisor to be objective, transparent and focused on what matters,” Sappington said.

Hines said she is looking forward to working with business owners and

entrepreneurs in Island County and intends to offer “best-in-class” business advising.

“Every small business has its own unique story, a tale of grit and unmatched determination, and with that story comes a dynamic set of circumstances and individual challenges,” Hines said.

“There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to the decisions business owners must make,” Hines said, and that’s why having an expert business advisor to help identify and evaluate options is so important.

“I am a firm believer that collaboration yields the best results,” she said.

Hines’ experience includes five years as a business consultant in Pennsylvania, as well as executive and leadership positions at Pratt & Whitney, a global aerospace manufacturer, Vulcan Capital and Baran Telecom.

Hines earned a master’s degree in mass communications from the University of Florida with a specialization in integrated marketing and social/digital media. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Delaware in international relations, with a specialization in international political economy. She is also a trained mediator with the Skagit, Snohomish & Island County Dispute Resolution Center.

SBDC business advisors provide technical assistance to address any challenge business owners face, including financial literacy, cash flow



Economic
Development
Council
for Island County

management, access to capital, marketing plans, selling online, strategic planning, business systems or starting an export program.

While SBDC business advisors are located in more than 20 communities across the state, they collaborate frequently to ensure that every SBDC client has access to the best expertise in the network. While one advisor might have special expertise in social media, another might have decades of experience in banking.

Meeting with an SBDC business advisor is easier today than it has ever been. All Washington SBDC advisors are working remotely and use a variety of ways to connect with clients, including Zoom, other online platforms, telephone calls, and emails. The network includes people fluent in Spanish, Mandarin, French, Swahili, Laotian and Thai.

Washington State University is the statewide host of the Washington SBDC and provides administrative and funding support. The Washington SBDC receives half its funding from state and local stakeholders and the other half from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Hines’ position is supported by the Economic Development Council for Island County.

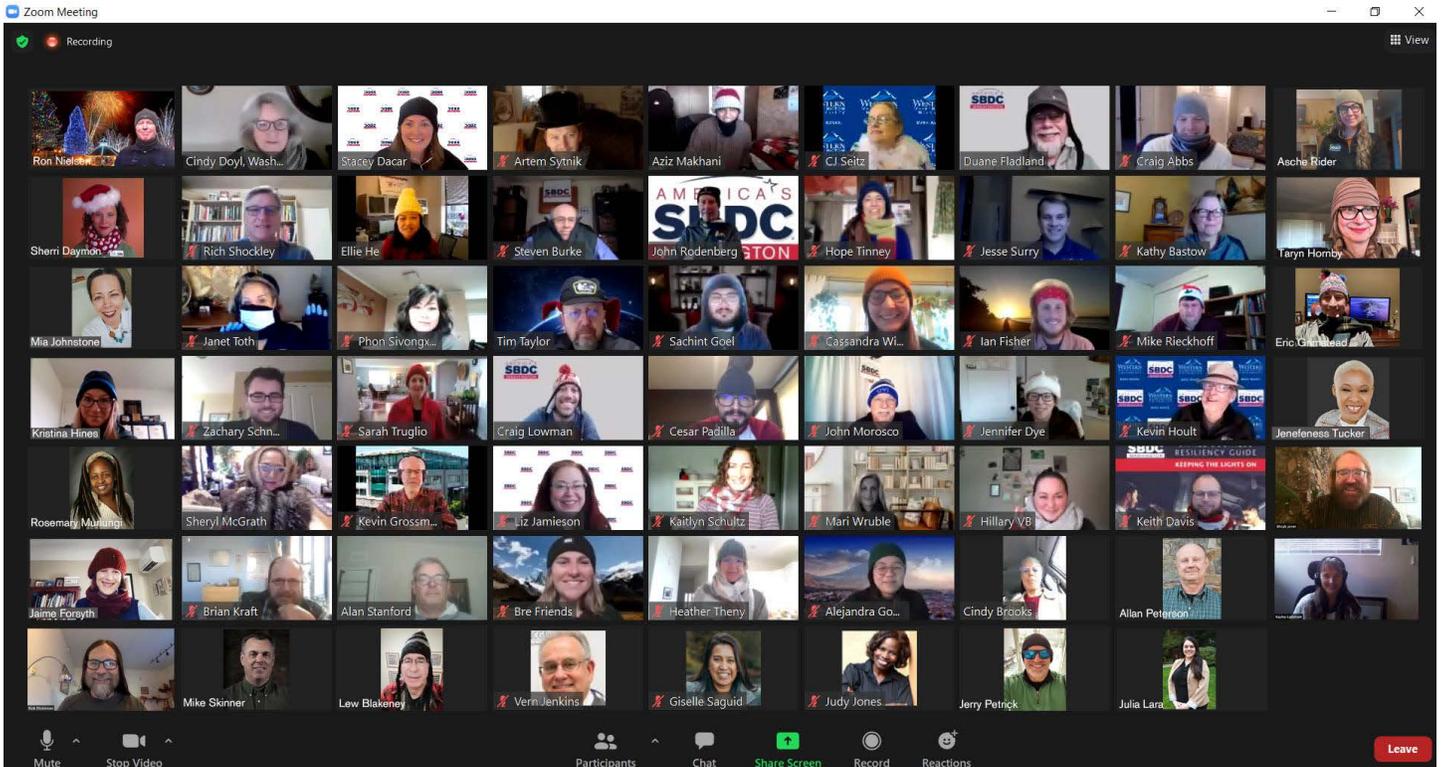
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THANK YOU

The Washington Small Business Development Center appreciates your support as we continue serving our communities. Thank you!



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