



Center for Entrepreneurship Cross Markets Program

Whether you own a bed and breakfast establishment or dream of running an automotive service business, a one-stop resource

awaits you at the Center for Entrepreneurship in 240 Regnier Center, its location since August of 2007.

Aspiring entrepreneurs can find credit courses in entrepreneurial studies, and existing entrepreneurs can tap into free and confidential consulting services and attend for a nominal fee workshops offered by the Kansas Small Business Development Center.

Credit classes and noncredit resources in the entrepreneurship program merged in 2003 with the help of a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and the permanent location maximizes offerings for both programs.

“We know people want to be entrepreneurs,” said Donna Duffey, chair, Entrepreneurship. “If you train that spirit and train that student through ongoing activities, that business is more likely to grow and be sustainable. Your yield is economic vitality.”

Four full-time SBDC business consultants, a director and administrative assistant staff the noncredit activities at the Center. Two full-time professors and nine adjunct faculty members provide credit classes. The center also houses an office for the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization, a resource center and conference room.

“The lifetime of the service by this partnership is ongoing,” Duffey said. “It’s unique.”

Duffey said the entrepreneurship program can better serve the community by offering credit courses to both credit-seeking students and non-credit-seeking clients, allowing for cross marketing. Duffey added that the community better understands the entrepreneurship program under one umbrella.

“It demonstrates the commitment of the college,” Duffey said.

Malinda Bryan-Smith, director of the SBDC, helps clients move their business plans to the next level whether they are starting a business as a young entrepreneur, a retiree or an existing business owner who wants to grow, buy or sell a company.

She pointed to several advantages of combined forces.

“You have the synergies of both operations,” Bryan-Smith said. “It gives us a full menu of options.”

Kay Smith, a speech therapist, came to Bryan-Smith a year ago with a dream of creating and selling infant and toddler collegiate costumes.

“I wouldn’t have a business without this department,” Smith said. “You need someone who knows your company and with whom you can be in contact. This program provides that for you.” 🌸

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Malinda Bryan-Smith, director of SBDC, and Donna Duffey, professor and career program facilitator, Entrepreneurship, provide leadership and resources for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs.

by Linda Friedel

