

Izard advises entrepreneurs 50 and older

Based on research for her new book, Mary Beth Izard, professor emeritus, entrepreneurship, and president, Achève Consulting Inc., will present *BoomerPreneurs* from 6-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 24 and 31, in room 145 of the Regnier Center, sponsored by the JCCC Small Business Development Center.

Izard's book, *BoomerPreneurs: How Baby Boomers Can Start Their Own Business, Make Money and Enjoy Life*, was published in January. Aimed at retirees, soon-to-be retirees, displaced workers and those who have always dreamed of owning their own business, *BoomerPreneurs* is a realistic guide to assessing those dreams before investing a nest egg.

Izard includes stories and strategies from 15 entrepreneurs who started businesses after age 50 — five from the Kansas City area including three from Lenexa and Shawnee and the rest from across the country, action steps for researching and evaluating ideas, and the how-to of writing an abbreviated business plan. She examines types of businesses that fit baby boomers' life situations and caveats for starting a business.

"There is a strong need for this type of analysis as according to research reported by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the 55- to 64-year-old age group is the group most likely to start new businesses," Izard said.

Using herself as an example, Izard says many boomers find it a good idea to start their own business before retirement. She started her consulting business, Achève, five years prior to retiring, allowing her to save money, retire at age 55 and pay for her daughters' college tuition.

In the seminar, participants start the following four-step process from *BoomerPreneurs* to identify and evaluate business opportunities that fit their goals and specific life situations:



Mary Beth Izard is herself a boomerpreneur.

- What should baby boomers consider before starting a business?
- Recognize the opportunity that is right for you
- Refine your idea and do your research
- Determine if your idea is viable and get started

Izard taught at JCCC for 25 years and continues teaching as an adjunct. She was responsible for developing and launching the JCCC entrepreneurship program in 1990. She has been a scholar in residence at the Kauffman Foundation and a member of its curriculum development team for their FastTrac programs. She also authored the book, *Opportunity Analysis, Business Ideas: Identification and Evaluation*.

Baby boomers have different considerations than their younger counterparts, according to Izard. While boomers have more contacts, experience and resources, they need to choose businesses with low start-up costs and higher than average success rates in order to protect their savings. Her biggest piece of advice to boomerpreneurs?

"At this age, do something you are passionate about," Izard said.

Cost of the SBDC seminar is \$50. Pre-registration is required by calling 913-469-2323, or online at www.jccc.edu/ksbdc