



## **NH Small Business Development Center CY 16 Annual Report**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The NH SBDC is pleased to submit its CY16 Annual Report. 2016 was my second year serving as State Director, and I'm thrilled with our performance. To begin, we set 5-year benchmarks in client capital infusion and revenue increases, and were second only to 2014 within the past 5 years in total clients advised, advising hours, and business starts.

Following our accreditation in 2015, we cleared our conditions in advance of the September ASBDC conference, and we collaboratively built an entirely new strategic plan, which is much more focused than our previous plan. The new plan focuses on intentionality in client selection, improved data systems, and stronger brand positioning, among other foci; it involves every staff member in advancing the plan through peer accountability.

Next, we continued to make advances in our push to build a truly "data driven" organization. This was manifested in our Data Dashboard project, which is mentioned in the body of our report. The Dashboard tracks numerous internal metrics, and overlays these with external data, such as EMSI industry data sourced from our state economic development partner, the NH Division of Economic Development. EMSI provides industry-level economic growth data by region, which we have used thus far to allocate staffing resources, and to develop professional development goals for our advising staff.

Data efforts are not restricted just to New Hampshire. I led an initiative in 2016 to organize the "minimally funded" SBDC states into a group called "small but mighty," which works to, among other information sharing, share data for the purpose of benchmarking and process improvement.

Staff-wise, we have been able to secure funds to grow our staff, and we are now successfully meeting the demand of New Hampshire's entrepreneurial community. Our longest wait times for new clients at the beginning of 2016 approached 6 weeks, and now all of our centers have new client wait times of less than 3 weeks. We are grateful to the SBA for your flexibility with respect to carryforward funding, which allows us to seek additional irregularly-distributed grant funding to keep these staff members funded.

We also continue to pursue a diversify of funding opportunities for our clients. In 2016, our clients won \$100,000 worth of cash and in-kind prizes from business planning competitions.

Next, our relationship with our host, the Peter T. Paul College of Business & Economics, is only getting stronger. The Assistant State Director and I led an initiative this year in collaboration with our Associate Dean called the "Paul College Honors Project," which matches students with small businesses throughout the state in experiential learning projects. Additionally, we highlight new research collaborations in the

body of this report, and we continue to develop workshops and other opportunities for small businesses as part of our working relationship.

**To summarize, our key focus areas for the NH SBDC in 2016 included the following:**

- Meeting Demand – We continued to build capacity in the field, and we added client-facing staff to reduce wait times, which now range 1-3 weeks.
- Creating & Implementing New Strategic Plan – Our plan went “live” in fall, 2016, and we are using a system of peer accountability to assign roles and follow up on tasks.
- Data Dashboard – We continued to build out a “Data Dashboard” to enable us to make data-driven decisions, and plan for the most effective resource allocations.
- Collaborations – We worked hard to strengthen relationships with all of our partners in the state, especially our host, the Paul College.
- Funding – The Lead Center worked diligently to develop new funding sources to augment our federal and state revenue.

**Looking Ahead – Key Projects & Programs in 2017:**

- Building Staff Capacity – We do not anticipate the need to add new staff members, especially in uncertain budgetary times. We are emphasizing our New England Professional Development this year, and other professional development opportunities, for our staff to continue to gain skills and industry-specific knowledge.
- Strategic Plan Implementation – Continued work on our implementing our strategic plan.
- Data Dashboard – This is an ongoing initiative, with monthly updates, and we occasionally thoughtfully add new data points.
- e-Learning – We will be working to review our course offerings to determine which should be emphasized going forward, and which, if any, should be eliminated.
- Improving Survey Data – As part of our strategic plan, we are in the process of implementing a new quarterly impact survey (as opposed to one annual survey), and a client feedback survey that automatically goes to each new client within 30 days following an initial advising appointment. Our hope is that these measures will improve our survey response rate, and yield better data.
- Funding – We will continue to aggressively develop new funding streams to ensure that our current staff capacity can remain stable.

Our SBDC is performing on all cylinders right now, with a strong team working hard every day on behalf of New Hampshire’s entrepreneurs. Throughout this document you will see signs of that, and I invite you to reach out to me should you have any questions or if you would like to discuss any of the information contained herein. Thank you for your support of our program and we look forward to continued support in future years!

Best regards,



Richard G. Grogan, MPA, PhD  
State Director, NH SBDC

## **BUSINESS ADVISING**

### ***CY 2016 Impact***

**NH SBDC Business Advisors delivered 6,330+ hours of in-depth business counseling to 699 clients in CY 2016 (an average of 9.05 hours/client)- an increase over CY 2015 (682/5,388).** Analysis of counseling hours continues to indicate demand for business start-up, business planning, international trade and government contracting, marketing & sales, marketing plans, sources of capital, loan package development, and financial analysis and review. This is a reflection of the economy, with many existing businesses seeking to expand into exporting and government contracts, build sustainability into their strategy, refocus their marketing efforts and repackage existing debt.

## **STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The NH SBDC Education Program complements and amplifies our in-person business advising services. The website, e-Learning for Entrepreneurs program, Resource Center (which resulted from our most recent Portable Assistance Grant), in-person workshops, and large events are designed to supplement learning for client business owners and for New Hampshire residents who are thinking about starting a business, have a new or young business, or are looking for vetted material on a more advanced topic.

The education program reaches approximately 2,000 individuals annually who are not advising clients, providing them with what they need without committing to in-person advising time, or repetitive workshops.

Most of our education programs are online, allowing an advisor to recommend an e-course, blog article or resource to a client, and allowing people to find the SBDC and the information for which they are searching. Entrepreneurs can access our online materials 24/7. Online availability also allows us to more completely cover our sparsely-populated, predominantly rural state.

### **Online Opportunities**

Our signature education program is e-Learning for Entrepreneurs. This program launched in 2008 with 20 courses leased from SmallBizU. We still lease these knowledge building courses, and have developed and built over 20 more courses ourselves. Portable Assistance grants, the Small Business Jobs Bill, and private sector partnerships have funded the development of several e-courses. Approximately 1,400 courses are taken annually, and as of January 2017, over 12,000 courses were taken by over 8,350 distinct individuals.

During 2016 we updated our *Starting a Business in NH* and *Financing a Business in NH* e-courses. They are our most popular courses, and were developed in 2008 and 2009, respectively. As such, they were in need of both a cosmetic and technical update.

### **In-person Workshops and Seminars**

When we offer in-person workshops, we often work with partners to create the sessions and fill the seats. NH SBDC has two ongoing, established in-person series:

- General Industry Safety Roundtables – a partnership between NH OSHA, OSHA Training

Institute Education Center at Keene State College, and NH SBDC's Business Sustainability Program. This program regularly sees 40-50 attendees at its 9-10 roundtables per year. Each month, roundtables feature safety topic-specific presenters and networking.

- How to Start a Business in NH Workshop Series – This series, presented by community experts, attracts people interested in starting a business from central and southern New Hampshire. Pathway to Work clients (program explained elsewhere in this report) are encouraged to attend, and there is no cost to them. Others pay \$35 for the whole 4-week series. SBDC offers this series in partnership with Manchester Community College.

NH SBDC staff are asked to participate on panels, give presentations, and attend roundtables, finance fairs, job fairs, and other outreach opportunities by regional and statewide partners and stakeholders. For example, the Education Director spoke at the NH Business Education Association's annual conference and the Keene Business Advisor presented at a crowdfunding workshop, both in November.

## **Statewide Events**

Our strategic plan, which we implemented in fall 2016, focuses our staff's limited non-advising capacity, time and resources on targeted events and e-Learning, rather than large, statewide events. However, there are exceptions. For example, we plan to participate with partners on events such as Small Business Day at the State House, which SBDC helped establish eleven years ago with the NH Business & Industry Association.

Additionally, we plan to continue to produce the NH Small Business Matchmaker with partners SBA and NH Government Contracting Assistance Center (formerly NH Procurement Technical Assistance Center). The last Matchmaker was held in December, 2016 and was very successful, with almost 240 participants and dozens of government agencies/prime contractors and resource providers attending (more information is available in the Procurement section below). We and our partners deem this event a success, and SBDC will continue to partner with SBA and GCAC to produce Matchmakers in the future.

## **Actual e-courses, workshops and seminars offered in 2016:**

**The NH SBDC served approximately 2,000 attendees through more than 160 workshops in 2016, with both live and online offerings (eLearning mini-courses are not counted in this total, as they do not meet the SBA's one-hour length guideline).**

### **Sample workshops offered include:**

- Fall Protection Requirements for Snow Removal of Roofs (OSHA)
- Implementing Temporary Worker & Contractor Safety Programs (OSHA)
- Newest Electrical Safety Regulations and Standards (OSHA)
- Social Media for Small Business (online)
- Insurance 101 (PTW)
- Basics of Online Global Marketing (online)
- Legal Forms of Business (PTW)
- How to Apply for a Business Loan
- Utilizing Information Technology to Enhance Your Safety and Health (OSHA)
- Getting to Know Your Financial Statements (PTW)
- How to Start a Business in NH (PTW)
- 44 different eLearning courses and mini courses (online)
- Developing a well-crafted Business Plan
- Preparation, Planning and Response to Potential Events: Insider Attacks, Cyber.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### *100 Capital Formation*

The NH SBDC plays a leadership role in the state by helping small businesses gain access to both traditional and non-traditional sources of capital to finance growth. This continues to be one of the NH SBDC's strategic goals, and staff continue to build new relationships and strengthen existing linkages in the community to advocate for entrepreneurs, and to grow staff knowledge about traditional and non-traditional sources of capital.

### 2016 Highlights:

- **Funding Readiness/Pitch Clinic:** SBDC staff started this forum to assist clients who are ready or near ready to obtain financing. At these meetings, held quarterly, clients present their "pitch" to a panel of SBDC advisors who provide critical feedback to assist the client's capital-formation efforts.
- SBDC Business Advisors continue to be active in support of NH Angel groups. The *Northeast Angels Investment Group*, launched in 2005 with assistance from the Nashua Regional center, currently has more than 20 members. The Nashua Regional Director serves on the Board of Directors and assists companies in preparing for presentations, advises businesses and provides follow up assistance.
- In 2016 the **NH SBDC assisted clients in obtaining \$27.9 million in loans** (SBA and non SBA), and **\$29.9 million in total capital formation** (loans, owner investment, and other capital).
- SBDC staff members continually meet with economic development professionals, EDCs/RDCs, bankers, and lenders in order to cultivate linkages and relationships between organizations. These meetings served multiple purposes, including raising awareness of the NH SBDC program in the finance community, and working to strengthen ties with these groups and institutions.
- In 2016 **the NH SBDC's finance-related e-Learning courses were taken over 300 times**. These include *Accounting 101*, *Creating a Loan Package*, *Creating Financial Projections*, *Finding Money to Start a Business*, *Finding and Attracting Investors*, *Financing a Business in NH*, *Sites That Sell: Building Your e-Commerce Business*, and a 4-mini-course series on *Business by the Numbers* ("101"-level courses focused on teaching the basics of the Income Statement, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement).
- SBDC staff attended numerous **SBA lender roundtables**, focused on helping small businesses gain access to credit. These events also provide SBDC staff the opportunity to interact with individuals in the small business lending community.
- The **Belknap County Business Advisor** remains very active in the region. She has been a panelist at the Leadership Lakes Region Economic Issues Day, a member of Laconia's 125<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee and on the Board of Directors for *Celebrate Laconia*. Additionally she has been active in a community fundraising campaign for restoration of Laconia's Colonial Theatre, which is a key Belknap County EDC initiative in the City's downtown.
- Staff attended meetings and trainings with groups such as the **NH Charitable Foundation, NH Economic Development Association, and regional EDC's/RDC's** to learn more about grant opportunities, KIVA to learn about micro-lending programs, and a series of alternative financing training workshops.
- The Nashua Regional Director is on the **Advisory Board and the Capital Access Committee of Live Free and Start**, a joint initiative of the Governor's Office, the Business Finance Authority and the Department of Resources and Economic Development aimed at creating jobs and making New Hampshire an even better place for innovative businesses to start, grow and succeed. This involvement allowed her to closely follow securities law changes, which have direct applicability for SBDC clients. She also served as a judge in the *Ultimate Connection* project, which provided an interesting preview of some very young tech-based businesses.
- The Nashua Regional Director helped co-found the **"Investing in NH Forums"**, a statewide series of forums which focused on how investors can "invest with impact in New Hampshire." Created by Live Free and Start, the NH Charitable Foundation, and the Community Loan Fund, the forums featured presentations by representatives from the Carsey School of Public Policy at UNH (our host institution) and Alpha Loft, as well as Live Free and Start, NH Charitable Foundation and the NH Community Loan Fund.
- The Keene Regional Director has been collaborating with the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, Monadnock Buy Local, the Monadnock Economic Development Corp., and

the Southwestern Regional Planning Commission to **create a model community-based crowdfunding platform** (1 of 5 nationally) as part of *The Local Crowd's* national demonstration platform.

- The **North Country Business Advisor** continues to strengthen and cultivate key relationships in the region, including those with Northern Community Development Corporation, Coos Economic Development Corporation, the North Country Council, Passumpsic Savings Bank, and Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank.
- The Nashua Regional Director is involved in multiple initiatives designed to increase the number of **women Angel investors** in New Hampshire, and is part of a group of individuals planning a conference on the topic within the next year.
- SBDC advisors worked with clients to help them win a combined **\$100,000 in cash and in-kind goods and services** in various pitch competitions, including *Seacoast NH Start-Up*, and *TechOut*.
- SBDC advisors have increasingly worked with clients involved in crowdfunding campaigns on various platforms. Additionally, the NH SBDC partnered with Millyard Tech Law, PLLC to **publish three crowdfunding blog pieces**: *Crowdfunding Basics-An Overview*, *Rewards-based Crowdfunding*, and *Equity Crowdfunding* on our website throughout the year.
- The NH SBDC partnered with Business NH Magazine to create and publish our 8<sup>th</sup> Finance Guide, titled “Putting Together the Financial Puzzle”, which included articles about angel investors, SBA loans, EDC’s and business competitions. Articles were written or co-authored by several of our economic development partners in the state.



## ***200 Innovation, Technology Transfer and Technology Assistance***

NH SBDC staff recognize the importance of technology in today’s business environment. With the proper education, knowledge and experience, entrepreneurs and small businesses are able to leverage and utilize technology to amplify their efforts; streamline processes and procedures; improve the security, sharability, and accessibility of records; process payments; deepen client relationships via social media; and invest in research & development. To this end, the NH SBDC staff attend myriad events, partner with local, state and regional organizations, and leverage knowledge and resources to educate and inform our clients in this increasingly important and vital sphere.

### **2016 Highlights:**

- The State Director served on the **Board of the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, EPSCoR**, which facilitates the state’s access to federal R&D funds, and this year produced a “Science & Technology” plan for economic growth in the State.
- The SBDC staff regularly advise clients on the benefits of utilizing various forms of social media, e-Commerce technology, and cloud computing technologies. These include Square Up technology, search engine optimization, QuickBooks, QuickBooks POS systems, and Dropbox. Staff also assisted small businesses with web development and the creation of a Social Media Guidebook via student interns, which was reviewed by staff prior to release.
- SBDC Business Advisors assisted clients with document submission and pitch development in advance of **TechOut**, a technology-focused showcase and competition held each year, culminating in cash awards and in-kind benefits. In 2016 SBDC clients won \$70,000, taking first and third place in the competition. The Nashua Regional Director also sits on the TechOut Planning Committee.
- NH SBDC Regional Managers and Advisors have worked with multiple clients in 2016 that are seeking **SBIR** funding, connecting them with training and expertise.
- The NH SBDC provides information and education on the use of technology in everyday business activities or processes, including **E-Learning courses and mini courses**: *Social Media for Small Business*, *Advanced Social Media Tools & Tactics for Small Business*, *Pinterest*, *Mobile Marketing*, *Instagram*, *Customer Service (3)*, *Getting Started on Your Small Business Website*, *Considering Consulting*, and *Managing Your Company’s Online Reputation*.

- Numerous SBDC staff members attended online training sessions on how to use **BizIgnite, a cloud-based business planning tool**. Many have begun utilizing this tool with clients, which has improved collaborative efficiency, because clients and advisors can work in the document simultaneously, and write and review any time it is convenient for either party.
- SBDC staff attended a **Cybersecurity Conference** at Manchester Community College, and a Cybersecurity Panel discussion at UNH Manchester. Staff also assisted faculty at our host, the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics at the University of NH, in promoting its 2016 Cybersecurity Symposium as well as identifying small business owners and entrepreneurs who might be interested in attending. Cyber-threats are an unfortunate by-product of the benefits of technology, but our staff takes them very seriously as they relate to both the NH SBDC's security, and that of our clients' businesses. We are continually updating our internal procedures (such as our 2015 conversion of all files from Dropbox to the *encrypted* BOX platform), and this spring our entire advising staff attended a seminar by Fidelity that offered tools and resources to assist our clients with thinking about this issue.
- The Nashua Regional Director continues to work with the **NH High Technology Council's Entrepreneur Forum**. This involvement has provided several SBDC clients with an opportunity to be showcased at the Forum, which consists of structured feedback from potential investors and industry experts.
- The NH SBDC also continues to find and utilize tools to make our work more efficient. We are collaborating via GoToMeeting, and Zoom, both of which save travel time and mileage costs, while still offering meaningful engagement opportunities as a staff, and with clients.



### 300 International Trade

The SBDC continues to work with the NH Office of International Commerce at the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) to promote exporting and to meet small business exporting needs.

#### 2016 Highlights:

- The State Director and the Seacoast Regional Director were part of a select group of international trade experts who met with **Kenneth Hyatt, Under Secretary for the US International Trade Administration**.
- The State Director serves on the Board of the **International Trade Advisory Committee**.
- The SBDC works with the **NH International Trade Resource Center** to assist many start-up and established businesses that export or would like to export to nations such as Canada, China and India.
- The Seacoast Regional Manager is an **SBA Intermediate Level Certified Export Business Advisor**. In that role he assists clients with the creation of exporting business plans, as well as referrals to exporting resources through the SBA, and lending institutions. He works collaboratively with the US Dept. of Commerce, EXIM Bank, the SBA, Granite State District Export Council, as well as the NH International Trade Resource Center to assist small businesses that are exporting. Additionally, he is a member of the NH International Trade Resource Network, a group of NH agencies who work together as an organization to leverage all export resources for NH companies.
- The Manchester Business Advisor assisted a NH consulting business in obtaining a **STEP grant**, which allowed them to open an office in the UK.
- The State Director served as a panelist at an event at the University of New Hampshire focused on sharing information about working with the EXIM bank, which featured EXIM vice chair Wanda Felton.

## 400 Procurement

The NH SBDC is active in fostering opportunities for increasing small business' share of procurement dollars spent by the government and private sector.

### 2016 Highlights

- Throughout 2016, advisors have worked with the **NH Government Contracting Assistance Center** to build programs and assist clients. Efforts this year were targeted to promoting innovation and supporting manufacturing clients, and this partnership continues to thrive through mutual referrals.
- The SBDC held a **joint staff meeting** with representatives from the **NH Government Contracting Assistance Center** in June, 2016, where we shared information about upcoming programs and networked with staff from both organizations. In the past, this type of event has led to an increased number of referrals going forward.
- In partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the NH Government Contracting Assistance Center, the NH SBDC held the annual **NH Small Business Matchmaker** on December 2, 2016, which set attendance records for the event. Nearly thirty government agencies and prime contractors attended, as well as 238 small businesses, which included 28 from veteran-owned businesses, 19 from service-disabled veteran-owned, 48 woman-owned, and 26 minority-owned.



## 500 Manufacturing

Manufacturing is part of New Hampshire's identity, and is represented on our Advisory Board, in our event attendance, through our business advising, and is a special emphasis of our Business Sustainability Program.

### 2016 Highlights:

- The State Director and SBDC staff continue to attend the Governor's annual Manufacturing Summit, which is a day of information sharing, networking, and a chance to meet potential new manufacturing clients.
- The NH SBDC staff continue to promote opportunities for firms to apply for SBIR funding through partnerships and relationships with organizations, such as the NH High Technology Council, EPSCoR (mentioned earlier), the UNH Innovation Research Center, the Dartmouth Region Technology Center (an incubator) and the AlphaLoft accelerator.
- Approximately **10%** of SBDC clients were manufacturing clients in 2016 (compared to 10% in 2014 & 2015), making manufacturers our fourth most popular industry group.
- The Manchester Business Advisor works closely with manufacturing clients to assess environmental compliance in a number of issues including air emissions, oil storage, hazardous waste storage and wastewater discharges as part of the Business Sustainability Program.
- The Nashua Regional Director continues to work with a significant number of manufacturing companies, many in technology, hardware, software, and consumer products. The common theme in consumer products is the challenge of cost accounting, and the common theme in technology is funding. These companies range from start-up to established, multi-generational businesses (including a 5<sup>th</sup> generation business).
- The Nashua Regional Director recently visited **MakeIt Labs**, which is a manufacturing focused incubator in Nashua. It is unique in that it is entirely run by engineers and hobbyists.
- The **NH SBDC's Business Sustainability Program** housed at UNH Manchester, works closely with manufacturing clients to help them incorporate sustainable business practices. The program's director also

helps to develop, market and facilitate OSHA Safety Roundtables for general industry (10 in 2015, and 9 in 2016).

## ***600 Special Emphasis Groups***

### **Student Projects, which benefit regional companies**

- The Keene Regional Center engages students on a regular basis. It continues to successfully place student interns and student capstone projects with NH SBDC client businesses, helping with research, strategic planning and analysis, and business plan development throughout the year. The Regional Center, itself, continues to offer at minimum one in-house internship per year to students seeking training and mentorship in business research and business planning. Additionally, the Regional Director supports faculty and students at the college by participating in entrepreneurship instruction, provision of and access to entrepreneurship resources, and professional networking.
- The Seacoast Office works with Peter T. Paul College interns through a senior level Entrepreneurship Internship course as well as the Executive MBA Program. The students are placed with businesses of various stages of development and gain experience in a variety of areas. The businesses are recipients of students' expertise with mutually agreed upon deliverables. The Seacoast Regional Director helps to manage the deliverables, which include marketing plans, financial projections, financial analyses, and social media marketing strategies.
- The Manchester regional office regularly hosts interns and students from local high schools and colleges, including Manchester Community College, St. Anselm's College, The Derryfield School, and UNH Manchester. Additionally, the office worked with UNH Manchester faculty to discuss selecting SBDC clients for spring capstone computer science projects.
- The Lead Center in Durham continues to develop and strengthen relationships with faculty and staff at its host institution, the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire. Initiatives in 2016 include:
  - Collaborating with faculty to identify SBDC clients who might be interested in attending Paul College events, and subsequently communicating with and inviting those clients.
  - Assisting faculty in identifying small business clients for experiential student projects. This provides much needed assistance for the small business (in areas such as eCommerce, cybersecurity and website development), and crucial experiential learning for the students and the faculty.
  - The State Director met with the Professor overseeing the Center for Social Innovation and Enterprise/Social Venture Innovation Challenge to discuss possible ways in which the SBDC can collaborate.
  - Collaborating with Undergraduate Advising staff and the Dean's Office to lay the groundwork for an undergraduate Honors program which partners Honors students with small businesses, providing them experiential learning. The program is now in its inaugural phase as of spring semester, 2017.

### **Young Entrepreneurs**

- **The SBDC Manchester business advisor** mentored, coached, and assisted **6 high school teams** in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **BizGen Competition** sponsored by the UNH Paul College of Business and Economics. Additionally, she mentored UNH's business club, **Enactus**, at the Manchester campus, and participated in a panel discussion on owning a small business at the **Pittsfield High School Career Day**.
- **The NH SBDC's Pathway to Work Business Advisor** also mentored a team at BizGen (Derryfield School) and served as a judge for the **Souhegan High School** BizGen competition. Additionally, she serves on the **STEAM Committee** at the Derryfield School working to bring the students and business community together to foster student engagement.
- **The Nashua Regional Director** did a presentation at **Souhegan High School** on entrepreneurship and was invited back to judge a competition just a few months later.

- Advisors in the Seacoast region in particular have recently worked with a lot of young entrepreneurs, as well as those starting a 2<sup>nd</sup> career.
- The State Director works with students at the Monadnock Waldorf School on an annual basis to help them develop business plans as capstone projects. He then serves as a judge during their presentations later in the semester.

## Recently Unemployed

In July 2103, NH Governor Maggie Hassan signed into law a piece of legislation that created the **Pathways to Work Program (PTW)**, a **partnership program of NH Employment Security (NHES)** and the **NH SBDC**. The PTW program allows a small subset of individuals – identified as eligible by NHES to participate (after review by NH SBDC and approval by NHES) – to work full time on starting a small business instead of job-seeking, all while still collecting their unemployment compensation.

- Since inception, the NH SBDC has reviewed approximately 480 applications from individuals eligible for the PTW program.
- In 2015 alone we worked with 126 PTW clients and provided almost 1,000 hours of business advising assistance. In 2016 the NH SBDC worked with 134 PTW clients, providing almost 1,000 hours of advising.
- The program was signed into law without any funding attached and has created a large amount of increased demand for SBDC services (at one point, as much as a 15% increase in clients). The NH SBDC has been able to obtain CDBG funding through the NH CDFR for funds to support the PTW program statewide.
- The SBDC worked with NHES in 2016 to develop an “activity plan” to introduce more accountability into our work with PTW clients. The plan requires PTW clients to be more proactive in their work with us by establishing accounting mechanisms. This means that they will end up looking more like our typical clients, and thus be strategically consistent with our brand in the State.

## Industry Sectors

NH SBDC staff continue to work with small businesses that have developed as a result of growth in specific industries/sectors in various regions throughout NH.

- A number of small business clients have been assisted by our **Nashua Regional Office** that fall into technology industry-specific groups: gaming industry, software industry, and the technology hardware industry. Part of the reason why these specific industries are concentrated in the Nashua region is because of its proximity to the Greater Boston region.
- The Manchester Business Advisor/Business Sustainability Program Director continues to cultivate a partnership with the **NH Grocer’s Association**. In 2016 she worked with the Association, the EPA and a private consultant to draft an online WIKI for grocery stores on the topic of resiliency and preparedness.
- Looking ahead, our Nashua Regional Director will participate in a study by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development to examine ways to build out workforce capacity in NH’s IT industry.
- The Data Dashboard project uses data from EMSI to predict economic growth by sector, and by region. Looking ahead, we will more closely align advisors’ professional development goals with anticipated growth in their respective regions. This work began with advisors’ 2016 performance evaluations.

## Clients with Disabilities

The NH SBDC provides business advising services to disabled clients who are referred by the NH Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. In 2016, approximately **4%** of NH SBDC clients served had disabilities.

## 2016 Highlights

- The Manchester office continues to focus on entrepreneurs with disabilities. Several clients are supported by NH Vocational Rehabilitation and NH SBDC works closely with these individuals as well as their support team to improve their business management skills.

- The Grafton County Business Advisor is currently advising a start-up whose business will provide social, physical, and artistic activities for people with disabilities.
- The State Director was selected by the SBA to participate in this year's Civil Rights Audit related to our work with clients with disabilities. We participated and are working to implement the suggestion to add more inclusive language to our website.

### **Business Sustainability Program**

The Business Sustainability Program, located at the Manchester Regional Office of the NH SBDC, provides confidential business advising in environmental management to promote sustainable business practices. This program also helps small businesses access resources and develop tools they need to effectively manage environmental and workplace safety requirements.

### **2016 Business Sustainability highlights:**

- In partnership with the OSHA Training Institute at Keene State College and the Department of Labor OSHA, the NH SBDC Manchester Regional Office organized and facilitated **nine General Industry Safety Roundtables with over 360 participants in 2016.**
- Started discussions with **Manomet** ([www.manomet.org](http://www.manomet.org)), a non-profit centered in Boston, MA with a satellite office in Brunswick, ME, to bring U360 to numerous University System of NH campuses. U360 will use students to reach out to business and industry in order to ultimately make these businesses more sustainable.
- Obtained funding from Eversource (NH's largest electric utility) to study business resiliency in the State.
- Partnered with the EPA, the NH Grocers' Association and Manomet (a non-profit organization) to bring a sustainability initiative to the NH business community: the **Grocery Stewardship Certification**. This program surveys strategic features of grocery store operations in order to improve their profitability through sustainability-related improvements. In 2016 the NH SBDC met with five corporate-owned Associated Grocers of New England stores, performing site visits and providing reports.



### ***700 Minority Small Business Development***

The NH SBDC serves a higher percentage of minority clients than are present in the NH population (approximately **5.0% - 6.0% of clients compared to 4.5% of the population**).

### **2016 Highlights/Goals:**

Refugees: our Manchester Regional Office has a special focus on **refugee and immigrant populations**. For the past two years the NH SBDC has collaborated with the International Institute of New England on:

- World Refugee Day: a day-long community centered event
- Day long training for the Burundi, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of Congo refugees about an in-home childcare center.
- In 2016, The Manchester Business Advisor and the Director of Education and External Relations met with individuals at Manchester Community College to discuss how the NH SBDC can better serve “New American Entrepreneurs”, specifically by providing educational opportunities and technical assistance.

## ***800 Women-owned Businesses***

The NH SBDC has traditionally served a higher percentage of women-owned businesses than the **32.6 % that exist in the state** (based on **SBA Profile 2014-2015**). **In 2016 businesses with some degree of ownership by women accounted for 43.7% of clients, and 47.2% of clients were women.** In addition to direct service to women-owned businesses, the NH SBDC has worked closely with three organizations – the Center for Women’s Business Advancement (formerly Women’s Business Center), the Center for Women and Enterprise (WBC), and the Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) – which provide education, mentoring, and other services, as well as supporting SBA initiatives for women entrepreneurs.

### **2016 Highlights**

- SBDC staff **maintain close relationships with Women’s Entrepreneurship** groups across the state, and have attended many of their events, including *Social Media Simple* and *Marketing Canvas*. Staff provide numerous referrals to, and receive referrals from, these organizations as well.
- The Nashua Regional Director, who sits on the NH Live Free and Start Advisory Committee, is active in that organizations’ **Women Investors Initiative**.
- The Belknap County Business Advisor was a speaker at bi-monthly meetings of the *Barnstead Area Women in Business* group – the topic of discussion was Business Planning 101.
- The North Country Business Advisor presented a class on writing a business plan to potential entrepreneurs for **WREN (Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network)**.

## ***900 Veterans***

The NH SBDC is committed to providing business counseling to our men and women who have served in the armed forces. **Veterans accounted for 7.3% of the total clients** who received counseling from the NH SBDC in CY 2016. The NH SBDC also collaborates with other organizations to provide more comprehensive services to veterans, including special outreach events.

### **2016 Highlights:**

- The Seacoast Regional Director taught 2 modules of 2 **Boots to Business** Workshops in the region in spring of 2016, and the Manchester Business Advisor/Business Sustainability Program Manager also taught at Boots to Business later in the year.
- We are actively engaged with our SBA District Office’s Veterans’ outreach specialist to plan for Boots to Business coverage over the next year.

## ***1000 Rural Assistance***

**38%** of New Hampshire’s population lives in rural communities (compared to 16% nationally), making the state the 11<sup>th</sup> most rural in the nation. The NH SBDC has consistently provided service through regional offices and satellite locations to the most remote areas of the state, serving clients in **190+ of NH’s communities**.

### **2016 Highlights**

- **E-Learning for Entrepreneurs, launched in 2008**, offers an alternative to long-distance travel and increases access to NH SBDC’s business management education. **In July 2015 we reached a major milestone – 10,000 courses taken, and that number is now well over 12,000 courses.** Many of these business owners are from rural locations in NH, and are now able to easily access NH SBDC’s services via the Internet.
- Through a partnership with the Wentworth Economic Development Corporation, the SBDC continued to serve businesses in the low income, distressed area served by WEDCO (Carroll County).
- **Counselors use email and GoToMeeting** to conduct counseling online, and utilized Business Model Canvas, NH SBDC’s **Business Plan OnLine**, and BizIgnite to develop business plans virtually with clients.

- **Business Services North (BSN)**, which operates in the three most northerly counties in New Hampshire, has entered its fifth year of operation. BSN is an operating strategy shared by **White Mountains Community College (WMCC)**, **Northern Community Investment Corp. (NCIC, a CDC)**, and **NHSBDC**. The three entities agreed to reduce redundant services, utilize the strengths of each member, and provide the consumer with a single point of entry for persons seeking business assistance. Inquiries are made to a single phone number. The receptionist taking the call determines which of the participating entities is best suited to provide the needed services. The receptionist then, after getting the contact information from the consumer, tells the consumer that he/she will be contacted soon by an advisor. BSN characterizes this process as a “warm referral.” The consumer is not burdened with contacting the advisor and retelling his/her story. BSN has seen changes over the years with WMCC contracting its services and WREN (Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network) expanding its number of referrals. As of the end of 2016, we were in discussions with WREN about expanding their training opportunities for pre-venture businesses. In this arrangement, our North Country business advisor would provide guest trainings.
- In the center of the state, two traditionally underserved and rural areas, Belknap and Grafton Counties (and within the Counties, *Belknap County Economic Development Council* and *Grafton County Economic Development Council*) continue to contract with the SBDC to fund two part-time business advisors to serve small businesses in these areas. They are funded by a combination of CDBG, United Way, and County dollars.

## ***1100 Economic Development, Faith Based and Community Initiatives***

### **Economic Development**

Part of the NH SBDC’s vision is to be “**an integral part of New Hampshire’s economic development community.**” To this end, the State Director and staff actively engage in statewide and regional economic development programs. The SBDC enjoys productive relationships with such partners as the State Department of Resources and Economic Development, the NH Economic Development Association, NH’s business incubator and accelerator network, the NH Manufacturing Extension Partnership, NH Employment Security, NH Community Development Finance Authority, the NH Business Finance Authority, and the NH Business and Industry Association.

#### **2016 Highlights**

- The **Keene Regional Center** remains an active participant with the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene where business advising is offered regularly. The Center is responsible for approximately 25% of Keene Center referrals. The SBDC receives in-kind support in the form of office space, and is a presence there at least twice / week, including one dedicated day / week.
- The State Director attended numerous **economic development and community partner events**, including meetings with local incubators, chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, and the NH Institute of Politics’ Forum on the Future events. Additionally, he actively and regularly participates in scheduled meetings with our State partner, the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, and the current Governor’s signature economic development initiative, *Live Free & Start*.
- SBDC staff collaborated with partners and legislators and NH Employment Security on the **Pathways to Work Program**, including fine-tuning program processes and procedures, and drafting formal rules (RSA’s). As referenced earlier, PTW allows a specific subset of unemployed individuals to continue to collect unemployment benefits while working with the SBDC and Employment Security to start their own business. **Over 480 applications** have been reviewed by SBDC staff to date. The SBDC has also been successful in obtaining CDFA grant funds to help support this program.
- In **Grafton County**, the **SBDC Business Advisor** is deeply involved in regional economic development, attending numerous events in the area including: the NH Economic Development Association’s annual, a NH Travel and Tourism event presented in collaboration with the Central NH Chamber of Commerce, the Bristol Economic Summit, and the NH Dept. of Resources & Economic Development Annual Meeting.
- The State Director and Assistant State Director continue to cultivate relationships with the **Tillotson Foundation** in **NH’s North Country** (which provides financial assistance to our Business Services North program) and the **NH Community Development Finance Authority**, which provides grant funding for 3 part time Business Advisors (directly and indirectly).

- The NH SBDC continues to partner with **Northern Community Investment Corporation** and **White Mountains Community College** via **Business Services North**. BSN provides a full range of business advising services at four North Country locations: Berlin, Littleton, Lancaster and Colebrook. The North Country-based Tillotson Foundation will continue to provide financial support for the program through 2017.
- The Manchester Business Advisor participated in numerous activities related to economic development: she attended a **KIVA** information presentation (a non-profit that makes interest free micro-loans to small businesses), an **SBA Microloan Webinar**, and numerous grant funding programs presentation by the NH Charitable Foundation. Additionally, she continues to work with a **revitalization effort in the City of Franklin**.
- The Nashua Regional Director participated in monthly “grapevine” meetings with representatives from the **City of Nashua and the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce**.
- The **Belknap County Business Advisor** is very active in the economic development and community initiatives of the Lakes Region. She has participated in a number of Main Street events, is a member of many local Steering Committee and Boards of Directors, and has attended the 2016 Lakes Region Business Roundtable and the Belknap EDC’s Annual Meeting, among others.

## ***1200 Research***

The NH SBDC recognizes the importance of gathering and utilizing information about small business needs and issues, as well as collecting feedback concerning SBDC programs. Information is gathered through workshop evaluations, client counseling evaluations, and the ASBDC impact assessment of SBDC services, as well as pre-counseling data (as a baseline for future client surveys). In addition, each center tracks important impact information (jobs created and saved, loans received, new companies started, sales growth, etc.) and conducts client-specific research utilizing various electronic resources.

As we continue to explore ways to add value to our host Institution’s core educational mission (and given the State Director’s research background), we are working with professors at UNH Manchester and at the flagship Durham campus to collaborate on peer-reviewed research projects. As such, we hope to participate in adding to the small business knowledge base in academic circles, and subsequently act as translators of the results of that research to our clients and peer organizations.

### **2016 Highlights:**

- The NH SBDC continues to work with **the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire** to develop short and long-range impact measures for our business advising services in the North Country. We continue to develop a Logic Model, which ties each of our grant objectives to specific, measureable outcomes, in addition to traditional measures such as job growth and revenue generation. We eventually hope to implement this model statewide.
- A Business Advisor working on the **2014-2015 Portable Assistance Grant** developed a substantial database as part of a pilot program: the *Business Improvement Program*. The database is comprised of online resources that provide access to instructional and educational materials focused on management practices for small businesses. The contents of this database are on our website, [www.nhsbdc.org](http://www.nhsbdc.org), as individual resources in our Resource Center. A Paul College of Business and Economics student employee continues to maintain and curate the list, and vets and adds additional resources as well.
- The Business Sustainability Program Director connected staff at EPA Region 1 with UNH Professor Peter Masucci to assist with marketing research for the EPA’s Safer Choice Initiative roll out.
- Additionally, the Business Sustainability Program Director helped the SBDC obtain a grant which will fund a survey of NH businesses on the topic of resiliency.
- The State Director collaborated with two faculty members at the Paul College (UNH) to submit a proposal to NSF to study cybersecurity preparedness among small businesses.

- The Keene Regional Director created a market research internship program at Keene State College, whose participants assisted 5 start-up businesses and 2 existing businesses with industry and market research for business modeling and business plan making.
- The NH SBDC was awarded a \$15,000 grant from public utility Eversource, to survey four industry sectors in NH: hospitality, manufacturing, professional services and retail. The survey will assess the level of business continuity and preparedness within these sectors, and will be conducted in collaboration with the University of NH Survey Center.

### 1300 Online Activity

Most of our education programs are online, allowing an advisor to recommend an e-course, blog article or resource to a client, and allowing people to find the SBDC and any information they need.

### Online Opportunities

**e-Learning:** Our signature education program is **e-Learning for Entrepreneurs**. This program launched in 2008 with 20 courses leased from SmallBizU. We still lease these knowledge building courses, and have developed and built over 20 more courses and mini-courses ourselves. Portable Assistance grants and the Small Business Jobs Bill funded the development of several e-courses. In 2016 we were able to post revised and updated versions of two of our most popular courses - *Financing a Business in New Hampshire*, and *Starting a Business in New Hampshire*. We are also working with a translator to create a French version of our most popular course, *Starting a Business in New Hampshire*, based on demand from our economic development partners who work with New American-entrepreneurs. Approximately 1,400 courses are taken annually, and as of January 2017, over 12,000 courses were taken by over 8,350 distinct individuals.

“Your website is the best resource I’ve seen for people thinking about a small business. It’s obvious people put a lot of thought into what entrepreneurs need to know and brought a lot of great stuff in one place. Thanks for a great website!”

**Website:** According to Google Analytics, we had fewer page views, but by more targeted visitors compared to the year before. We attribute this to fewer single page “bot” visits, which is a more realistic view of our site traffic. Page views were also down by 36%, but, unlike in our prior report, session duration was up over 20% and pages/session is up 14.5%. In addition, our bounce rate for this period was down 10.5%, from 47% to 42%, which is a significant shift in the right direction. These changes are certainly due to the new site and our management of navigation and, ultimately, solid and useful content.

**PR/Media/Blog:** We have written and published one client story a month during 2016, and plan to continue that effort. Now that our homepage features a section on client stories, we can feature those stories much more frequently and prominently on our blog. We reinvented the blog, and are publishing an article or client story approximately every two weeks. These include / will include reprise editions of articles on crowdfunding, periodic articles for young businesses written by SBDC business advisors, and an upcoming series this fall on financing.

**Advising Resources:** NH SBDC business advisors increasingly utilize online and tele-conferencing tools to enhance the advising experience. We use email, Skype, Zoom, GoToMeeting, and a number of other tools, including our website, to connect with clients and to offer online learning opportunities. Our staff continually vet possible online tools for use in their advising, and share the findings internally, through an internal SBDC sub-committee. Advising hours utilizing these tools in CY16 totaled 1833 hours.

**Social Media:** Our Facebook page is active, as is our Twitter feed. We share posts about NH SBDC and our partners and stakeholders on social media. We have developed policies around content creation and management of our social media accounts. 1,231 people have liked us on Facebook, and our posts are seen about 3,000 times per month. 613 people follow SBDC on Twitter.

## 1500 *Success Stories*

- *Excell Mobile Distributors, Nashua:*

Fast growth is the name of the game at Excell Mobile Distributors of Nashua. Providing mobile devices is a fast-moving business, with new models being released every six months. The company sells consumer electronics, including phones and tablets, to businesses in the U.S. and abroad, and direct to consumers online. Its growth is fueled by the constant need to trade in and to upgrade those devices. The company was founded in 2008 as a local supplier and quickly grew to become the largest distributor in New England.

*Business New Hampshire Magazine* listed the company as #24 on its list of the top 100 Private Companies list for the state, with an average of 56 percent growth annual growth in each of the last three years. This fast growth accounts for Excell Mobile also being named the #1 fastest-growing company in New Hampshire by *Business New Hampshire Magazine*. The company also made the 2015 *Inc. 5000* list.

According to Amber Logue, head of operations at Excell, the company got connected with Hollis McGuire at NH SBDC in mid-2014 when they had a need for more financing. Growth had been steady since the company was founded in 2009, a testament to the mobile device market and constant changes in technology.

“We were looking for all types of resources in the state, and we were seeking more funding, more capital. We reached out to the NH SBDC and asked if they could help us in our uncharted growth,” Amber said. “In our very first meeting with Hollis we found great contacts to jump from.”

Hollis’ suggestion brought Amber and company CEO Eli Posner to Provident Bank, and the two organizations have partnered ever since.

At this point, Amber says they still need resources to develop the core of the company, setting up leadership processes and working on the functional use of space. “We’re working with NH SBDC to grow the foundation of this company and to make better use of the space we have,” Amber said.

“Hollis is just an unbelievable resource,” Amber said. “With her contacts and understanding, she’s able to see right through our questions to determine what we need. She’s really helped us.”

Amber and her team have met with Hollis several times each year, with email conversations in between. “An exciting element working with a high growth company is not knowing which road will open up next in that growth path. You have to remain open and aware for the right indicators and partners to help move that process forward. I do not know going in to our next conversation what we will explore. Amber is open to this growth process, and it is a privilege to work with her.”

With about 16 employees, the company had another record-breaking year last year.

“We’re so grateful,” Amber says of the NH SBDC advice. “It’s shown us that we’re part of the growing business community in this state. When you’re an up-and-coming business, you feel like you’re alone with your own challenges. But now we know there’s a supportive community that wants to see us do well. To know that our challenges are not unique; it’s just very reassuring and important to our continued success.”

- *Popzup – Dover:*

Julie and Marty Lapham are the husband and wife team behind Popzup, a company that is pioneering a reusable microwave air-popped pop-per, engineered to pop chemical-free popcorn - no oils, no flavorings, and no questionable paper products.

After launching a successful \$17,000 Kickstarter campaign in November 2015, the Laphams had the capital they needed to move and install automation equipment at 1 Washington Street in Dover, where they work with the non-profit Community Partners to employ people with disabilities who help with packaging.



Julie and her husband have decades of experience in business, marketing and product development, but they still sought advice when they decided to take Popzup to market. NH SBDC advisors collaborated and helped Julie and Marty on pricing the product, financing, and distribution plans - Popzup is now in Whole Foods and other regional grocery stores - and coached them for their first-place \$30,000 cash and in-kind services win in the Seacoast Start-up Challenge in November 2016. Popzup was also awarded New Hampshire Magazine's 2016 Best of NH.

"I just feel so lucky that I was able to find the SBDC and that they had somebody to work with me, like having a personal advisor," Julie said. "I'm thankful for what they've done and for this opportunity."

- *Outdoor New England - Franklin:*

Marty Parichand came to NH SBDC with an abundance of ideas and the energy and skills to make them happen. His vision for an outdoor education center would offer classes in white water rafting and paddle boarding, while also renting out equipment, selling products in a retail store, and working with local schools to inspire young children to go outside.



In June 2016, Outdoor New England (ONE) held its grand opening in Franklin, New Hampshire. This past summer the company offered stand-up paddleboard lessons, after-work boating lessons, classes in the basics of whitewater rafting, and a special class in doing yoga on a paddleboard out on the river. Meanwhile, Marty finished up some serious renovations on his retail space, in a formerly fore-closed downtown property.

"(My advisor) helped us in absolutely every facet of what we're trying to build here. She has introduced us to the countless number of people we're working with now, she's helped connect us to marketing agencies, and she's helped us write feasibility studies and economic

impact statements. We developed a business plan, and last year she helped us find interns who really got us to where we are today. It's just a great relationship. I honestly don't think it could be any better."

The NH SBDC actively promotes small business interests through responses to sudden and severe economic changes, special projects, public outreach, and participation in Small Business Week activities. The State Director, Assistant State Director, Education and External Relations Director, Regional Directors, and Business Advisors frequently present information to groups such as legislators, chambers of commerce, media, economic development committees, and industry associations. Additionally, SBDC staff represent and advocate for small business by serving on various committees, boards, and panels, and participate as judges in various contests and challenges.

## 2016 Highlights

### **Public and Media Appearances**

- SBDC staff members and Business Advisors have participated in a variety of issues panels, and presented at numerous board and council meetings including those hosted by SCORE, the National HR Association, local Boards of Aldermen, Main Street Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Business Associations, Lions Clubs, College and University groups (UNH, Keene State College, Nashua Community College), Congressional Offices, bank roundtables, a Federal Reserve Panel, entrepreneur forums, Economic Development organizations, and Angel Finance Groups. Specific examples include: Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, Keene State College, NH Dept. of Environmental Services, Grocers Association, Salem Chamber, WREN, Hannah Grimes Center, NH Business and Industry Association.
- The **State Director** met with Senator Shaheen, Senator Ayotte, Congresswoman Kuster, and Congressman Guinta, as well as their staffs to discuss small business issues both in NH and in Washington D.C.
- **Regional Directors** met with local bankers, economic development corporations and organizations, and community leaders to discuss the issues that are impacting communities and small businesses.
- SBDC staff have served as **judges, panelists and committee members** for many competitions and committees, including: TechOut judge, Ultimate Connection judge, panelist on Entrepreneur Academy (Dover Chamber of Commerce education series), Entrepreneur of the Year judge, BizGen, the Paul J. Holloway Prize Competition, and others.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** advocated for the NH SBDC and small businesses in various media formats this year, including: blog posts on small business start-up growth; the NH SBDC's new initiative, the Funding Readiness Clinic (discussed earlier); and she has helped develop and co-host a local radio show, Business IQ Radio 105.1 WBNH, focused on small business topics, which airs twice a week.
- The Seacoast Regional Director is a member of **Dover Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee**. As a member of the Government Affairs Committee, he participated in meeting and planning of event(s) that include the town's small business community. He is also a member of the **Durham Economic Development Committee**, which recommends economic development projects to the town planning board.
- The State Director participated in Senator Ayotte's Innovation Day at St. Anselm College in spring 2016, where he was afforded the opportunity to explain the SBDC's services in a public forum.
- The Seacoast Regional Director writes regular articles for the newspaper *Foster's Daily Democrat* – "**Business From the Inside.**"
- The **Business Sustainability Program Director** attended the Grocers Association Annual Meeting, where she promoted the sustainability program known as the Grocery Stewardship Certification. GSP is a program designed by the non-profit organization, Manomet, out of Maine.

### **Small Business Week**

The NH SBDC supports the annual New Hampshire **SBA Small Business Awards**. This year it was hosted at the Manchester Country Club by the NH Bankers Association and honored a wide variety of small businesses including some **nominated by the NH SBDC**.

- The Seacoast office nominated 7<sup>th</sup> Settlement Brewery for the Dover Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year, which they won.
- The Veteran Owned Business of the Year, NH School of Mechanical Trades, Inc. of Manchester, is a long-time SBDC client.
- The Financial Services Champion of the Year, Chuck Withee, was nominated by the SBDC.

## *1700 Resource Development*

### **Professional Affiliations and Resource Partners**

The SBDC maintains close ties to many NH organizations. As an organization and as individuals, we are members of the NH High Technology Council, the NH Lodging and Restaurant Association, the International Trade Advisory Board, and many others. The State Director sits on the NH EPSCoR Board (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research), the UNH Peter T. Paul College's Dean's Executive Committee, the International Trade Advisory Board, UNH Innovation's Corporate Advisory Board, the data subcommittee of UNH's APLU economic development certification effort, and he is serving his third term as President of the Board of the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene.

**Regional Directors and advisors** are dedicated to working collaboratively with our affiliated organizations (SCORE, CWBA@ SNHU, Center for Women & Enterprise, NH Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and SBA). They also continue to participate in local groups and associations throughout NH, and are active in numerous organizations such as: local area Chambers of Commerce, Keene State College, the NH Community College System, local community loan funds and EDC's, OSHA, NH Pollution Partnership Advisory Committee, Retail Merchants Association, League of NH Craftsmen, NH Entrepreneur Forum, NH Society of Accountants, and the NH/VT Federal Health and Safety Council.

### **2016 Highlights:**

- NH SBDC staff were actively involved in PR and media, featured in various newspapers (Portsmouth Herald, Seacoast Online, Fosters, The Telegraph, Keene Sentinel, etc.), radio shows and local media.
- The State Director and Assistant State Director, who are located in the Lead Center, have worked to **strengthen ties with host Paul College at UNH** by reaching out to and collaborating with faculty and staff to provide experiential learning opportunities for students, promote events, and connect small businesses with faculty expertise. Staff helped promote and identify small businesses to attend Paul College's Cybersecurity Symposium and Digital Marketing Symposium, identified clients and others to submit project proposals for the College's Information Systems and Business Analytics corporate project, and collaborated with faculty and staff on the Sophomore Honors Project.
- The **Assistant State Director serves as Vice-Chair of the Staff Advisory Committee** of the SBDC's host, the University of NH's Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, and has done so since its inception over 6 years ago. Additionally, he serves on the College's Safety Committee.
- The SBDC received CDBG funds from the Community Development Finance Authority, which is money targeted at assisting low-to-moderate income participants in the Statewide Pathway to Work Program. The SBDC also receives CDBG funds to support part-time advisors in Belknap and Grafton Counties.
- The **Keene Regional Office** engages with multiple partners on an ongoing basis to ensure the ease of small businesses' efforts to grow and thrive in the Keene area: the Hannah Grimes Center, the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, and the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development. The Center meets clients weekly at a permanent satellite office at the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, and as needed at River Valley Community College in Claremont. The Regional Director has also collaborated with Franklin Pierce University and Hannah Grimes Entrepreneurship Center to co-lead workshops and training to expand outreach to the public and potential clients.
- The **Nashua Regional Director** actively works with SCORE, the City of Nashua, the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) and Business Resource Partners, and is a member of the Greater Nashua Chamber, the Hudson Chamber, and the Merrimack Chamber of Commerce. She is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the NH Society of Accountants, and sits on the Board of the Northeast Angels. She works closely with the City of Nashua and Regional Economic Development Corp. (REDC) to assist companies in need of turnaround assistance.
- The **NH SBDC Advisory Board** continues to serve as an advocate for the NH SBDC with advice on program development and legislative issues.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** works closely with the law firm Devine Millimet, which offers small business start-up assistance via its free Launch Program. She also met with management at the Mall of NH

(NH's largest mall), to discuss their small business launch program, which assists small retail businesses in obtaining space in the mall at a reduced price.

- SBDC staff continue to work closely with staff at the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development and its divisions, including Economic Development, International Trade Resource Center, Business Retention Team, and the Procurement Technical Assistance Program.
- The **Grafton County Business Advisor** served on the search committee for the new Executive Director of the Enterprise Center at Plymouth, which houses Grafton RDC and serves as the SBDC's advising location for the county. The SBDC advisor meets regularly with GRDC staff, as well as representatives of Plymouth State University and the Enterprise Center at Plymouth to strengthen partnerships and promote events.
- The **Seacoast Regional Director** is a member of the Durham Economic Development Corp., as well as the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce, where he did a number of presentations as part of its Entrepreneur Academy.
- The **Seacoast office** offers business advisory sessions in offices provided by Rockingham Economic Development Corporation, Wentworth Economic Development Corporation, and the City of Portsmouth Economic Development Department. In addition to office space, WEDCO also advertises SBDC business advising services on their website and in their newsletter.
- The SBDC has referred clients to the **UNH Law School's Intellectual Property Center** for assistance with trademark and contract issues, and SBDC staff have attended multiple trainings and workshops there. The Manchester business advisor also works closely with the UNH Law Clinic to refer low-income clients with legal needs related to business formation and IP.

## ***1800 Collaboration and Leveraging***

Due in part to the nature of the SBDC and also in part to the small size of the State of NH, the NH SBDC has numerous key partners throughout the state, allowing us to collaborate in a number of ways and leverage our own resources as well as those of other organizations. As a statewide organization, we collaborate with our SBA District Office and our SBA funding partner organizations (SCORE, WBC), but we also work closely with a number of governmental agencies on multiple levels, as well as regional organizations. All of these partnerships and relationships are important to us and without them, we would not be able to provide the high level of service that we do today.

- The NH SBDC works very closely with the **NH Dept. of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)**, through which our state funds flow. The State Director meets regularly with the head of the Division of Economic Development, who is on our Advisory Board, and our regional staff work closely with DRED's field staff in the areas of economic development, procurement, international trade, and business retention and recruitment. DRED also provides industry snapshot and projection data for use in our Data Dashboard initiative.
- As partners in the aforementioned **Pathways to Work Program**, our staff, particularly at the Lead Center, work closely with NH Employment Security to administer and run this statewide program. We have been able to leverage CDBG funding for the SBDC to support this program statewide.
- **Higher Education:** Institutions of Higher Education are key partners of ours throughout NH. Our Lead Center is housed at the University of NH, our Manchester Regional Office is at UNH's Manchester campus, and our Keene Regional Office is at Keene State College. Our Grafton County advising location is adjacent to the campus of Plymouth State College, and our advisor there continues to strengthen ties with that institution. Also, we have great connections with the Community College System of NH (CCSNH): our Nashua Regional office is located at Nashua Community College, our Education and External Relations Director is housed at Manchester Community College, and staff in our Keene and North Country offices utilize space at River Valley Community College and White Mountains Community College, respectively. Additionally, Manchester Community College allows us to utilize their facilities for workshops and our annual small business Matchmaker event.
- **EDC's:** We have an excellent relationship with the various EDC's, incubators and similar organizations throughout the state. We utilize space at the Regional Economic Dev. Corp. in Raymond, Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, and Wentworth Economic Dev. Co. in Wolfeboro to provide business advising services at their locations at no cost to us. Additionally, the Executive Directors of the Belknap County EDC and Grafton County EDC's (both of whom worked with us in their former positions at DRED) continue to support the NH SBDC, writing us into grant proposals for CDBG money which has helped to fund 2 part-time business advisors in central NH, an area previously underserved.

- **Business Services North:** This is a crucial collaboration for the NH SBDC in the rural North Country. The SBDC collaborates with White Mountains Community College (WMCC) and the Northern Community Investment Corp. (NCIC) to provide a “one-stop shop” for small businesses, Business Services North. A potential client can call one phone number and speak with someone who will triage their needs and do an internal refer to one or more of the three partner organizations. This makes things easier for the client, more seamless for the organizations, and allows the SBDC to leverage our partners to utilize space to provide business advising as well as someone to answer the phone when a potential client calls.

### ***1900 Unplanned Travel***

No unplanned travel in 2016.

### ***2000 Key Personnel Changes***

No key personnel changes in 2016.

### ***2100 Problems***

- **Funding** – Our funding is always a challenge. Data analysis by a group of small state SBDCs (a group the NH SBDC State Director has built to collaborate on things such as data sharing) shows that average state appropriations in minimally funded SBDC states average about twice that of New Hampshire. In order to meet client demand, this means we must fundraise aggressively. Because these funds flow into our organization on an irregular schedule, we are incredibly grateful to the SBA for your flexibility in allowing us to carryforward core funds in recent years. Targeted cuts to CDBG, Rural Business Development, and Northern Border Commission funds are all potentially negative impacts on the NH SBDC’s budget.
- **Crowded Market** – We always face competitive pressures from other government agencies who work to add “economic development” to their portfolio of services. For example, in 2016, the EPA announced a program to boost economic development in specific service areas. The continual need to refine and communicate our mission is not a “problem,” per se, but this kind of activity calls for clarification from the federal government about the role of existing economic development programs, and analyses to prevent duplication.

### ***2200 Budget to Actual Comparison (NH SBDC CY16)***

#### Federal

#### **Personnel/Fringe Benefits:**

- We hired a full-time business advisor in our Nashua Region in September, 2016, which was several months later than anticipated (and then we had budgeted). This explains part of the “Personnel” variance, and also part of the “Fringe Benefits” variance, as we had originally planned to hire a part-time advisor (benefits-eligible staff fringe rate is 39.9% vs. 8.3% for non-benefits-eligible staff).
- We hired a business advisor for the Seacoast Region later in the year than budgeted, and this advisor also left the organization in early December.
- We had not budgeted to receive a renewal of our Community Development Finance Authority funding beginning July 1, and as such, we had to dedicate those funds to our Pathway to Work advisor, who had been budgeted under “Personnel” for the second half of the calendar year.

#### **Travel:**

- 3 staff who were budgeted did not attend NEPD, and similarly, were not able to attend the ASBDC conference in the fall

- The University of New Hampshire (our host) implemented a new tool, Zoom that allows us to advise clients in an online environment, saving some travel costs (though this tool has limits, and we anticipate travel costs to rebound in CY 2017).
- The University of New Hampshire follows the GSA rate for mileage reimbursement, which fell in CY 2016.

**Contractual:**

- We hired a part-time business advisor for the Keene Region, but she was hired later in the year than we anticipated at budget time.

**Others:**

- We were able to extend the life of some of our technology beyond its expected expiration date, and we were able to leverage University-based software licenses rather than having to procure our own.

**2300 Economic Impact**

The NH SBDC continues to have a significant impact on the NH economy.

**Note: Fewer counseling resources directly impact number of jobs created/saved.**

**CY 2016 Impact (Includes all funding sources):**

- **# of new Businesses created:** 55
- **Jobs:** Created – 173, Retained - 33
- **Growth in Sales:** \$22,440,858
- **Loans:**
- **SBA** - \$3,268,600
- **Non SBA** – \$24,612,600
- **Capital Formation:** \$29,972,416
- **Export Sales:** \$45,641,152
- **Training:** Attendees – 1,979, Hours – 4,206
- **Advising:** Clients – 699, Hours – 6,332

**Progress Towards SBA Milestones – CY 2016**

	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
<b>Long-Term Clients</b>	231	301	<b>130%</b>
<b>Capital Infusion</b>	\$16,411,200	\$29,972,416	<b>183%</b>
<b>Business Starts</b>	50	55	<b>110%</b>

**SBDC: An Investment in New Hampshire’s Economy**

- SBDC assisted businesses have a greater chance of survival than those who do not seek assistance. **After 5 years, 80% of SBDC counseled businesses are still in business. This contrasts with the 44% survival rate of non-assisted businesses.** (Source: Dr. James Chrisman, ASBDC economist)
- Each dollar invested in NH Small Business Development Center business advising returns:
  - **\$158.18 in wages to New Hampshire workers**
  - **\$10.22 in tax revenues to the State of New Hampshire**