

Start.
Grow.
Prosper.

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the entire team at the
Duquesne University Small Business Development Center (SBDC),

I am pleased to bring you our annual brochure.

Unlike the typical and more traditional annual report, this is designed to keep the small business community in the know. Here at the Duquesne University SBDC, we remain steadfast in our efforts to be as proactive as possible.

Our consultants work with small businesses on a whole host of services including business operations to strategy development. These services enable small businesses who otherwise might not be able to afford such assistance with a full array of business assistance services. These are offered at no cost to small businesses by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) program financed to focus on the needs of the small business community.

It is a well-known fact that Small Business is the backbone of the Economy. Since 1981, this SBDC has been working with the business community, and this relationship has stood the test of time and remains a vital resource to small business communities.



Director

Richard A. Longo

R.N. FACHE, FACMPE, CTC

Pennsylvania Small Business Development Center

Duquesne University SBDC - Palumbo-Donahue School of Business

OUR TEAM



DEAN McFARLIN

Dean and Professor of Management
Palumbo Donahue School of Business



DOUGLAS HARDING
Senior Business Consultant



RICH LONGO
Director



DONALD LODGE
Senior Business Consultant



JOHN HIGGINS
Marketing, Training, &
Informatics Manager



DENIS OLSON
Senior Business Consultant



TYLER BENNINGER
Video Production &
Content Specialist



**CYNTHIA (CINDY)
OLIVER**
Business Consultant



RAFIQUE IDDRISU
Manager/Business Services &
Business Consultant



SARAH MATTA
Business Consultant



JOHN McMURTY, CPA
Executive in Residence



WHO WE ARE

Duquesne University Small Business Development Center, funded by the Small Business Administration, offers no-cost consulting to small businesses in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Mission

Our mission is to empower entrepreneurs and small business owners with the knowledge they need to start, grow, and prosper.

Vision

Our vision is to turn dreams into successful and sustainable businesses.



BUSINESS
STARTS

193



FUNDING
ASSISTANCE

\$71.53m



CONSULTING
HOURS

23,572



EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS

375



ATTENDEES

8,166

*Between 2019- 2024. Funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration

AREAS WE SERVE

The Duquesne University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers no-cost, confidential consulting services and training workshops in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Main Office

• Allegheny County/Pittsburgh

600 Forbes Ave, Rockwell Hall 108
Pittsburgh PA, 15282

Outreach Offices

- **Allegheny County/Moon Twp** Pgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Allegheny County/Wexford** North Regional Chamber of Commerce
- **Beaver County** Chamber of Commerce
- **Butler County** Community Development Corporation
- **Lawrence County** Regional Chamber of Commerce
- **Washington County** Peters Chamber of Commerce



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Small Business Development Center
Duquesne University
Helping businesses start, grow, and prosper.

OUR SERVICES

Business Consulting

- Buy-Sell, Valuation & Succession Planning
- Funding Assistance
- The Digital Marketing Program:
 - Growth Strategies/Marketing
 - Website and Social Media Review
 - Video & Photo Production
- International Trade
- Startup Assistance
- Technology Commercialization
- Pro Bono Legal Services
- Preferred Business Partners
- Hire a Duke
- CPA Accounting & Related Advisory Services
- Growth Business
- Business Consultants' Extensive Experience at C-Level and Business Ownership

Educational Programs

- First Step: Business Essentials
- Get Your Website Reviewed
- QuickBooks Beginner & Advanced
- The Formula for Social Media Success
- SBA Lending Basics and Lender Match: Tools for Business Success
- So, You Want to Start a Small Business
- Financial Empowerment Program Series



STARTUP ASSISTANCE



The Duquesne University Small Business Development Center consultants can work with you through the various steps of starting a business, validating ideas, registering your business, projecting financial, grand openings, and press releases.

Over the years, The Duquesne University Small Business Development Center has helped more than 900 clients to start small businesses. In 2021, 39 pre-venture clients of the SBDC registered their businesses in the Pittsburgh region. Our consultants helped them secure a total funding amount of \$9.3 million.



**BUSINESS
STARTS**
193
(2019-2024)

"I have received valuable business advice that has helped me run my business properly and has given me unprecedented resources to support my business growth and development."
Maxx Cole Spa & Salon



FUNDING ASSISTANCE



At the Duquesne University SBDC, we know how to get the best funding option for you, which might be a commercial loan, a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan, or a grant. Whether you need a business plan, financial projections, or a letter of intent, we can help you to get there!

We have a network of SBA-certified lenders, and we will help you find the best lender that fits your needs.

We have served more than 5,000 small businesses in our area, and we have helped our clients to get total funding of \$165M.



**FUNDING
ASSISTANCE**
\$71.53m
(2019-2024)



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BUSINESS GROWTH & MARKETING

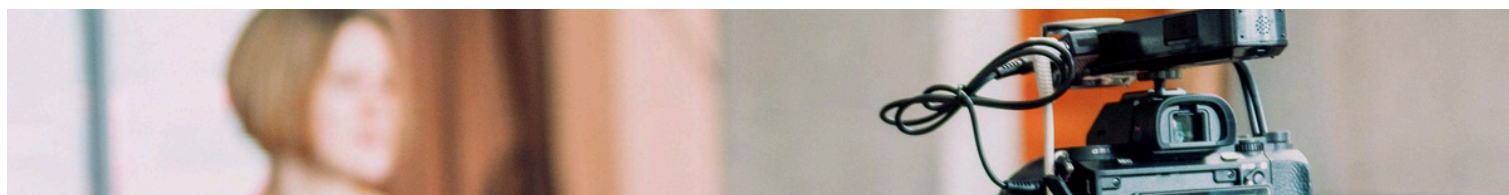


We help established businesses identify growth opportunities with our research tools and help them to take their business to the next level with Search Engine optimization (SEO), keyword research, website review, and successful marketing campaigns.

Our Digital Marketing Program bridges the gap between small businesses and content marketing. We aim to help small businesses with their social media needs by education and providing them with the tools they need to manage their social media channels successfully and create engaging content. We develop sample social media posts, and an editorial calendar, shoot videos and create ad campaigns for our clients.

"I cannot express my gratitude enough for the exceptional-looking videos, and thumbnails that they sent to promote the videos. They exceed the word professionals by delivering quality with everything that they do."

ITS Security Solutions, Inc.



TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION



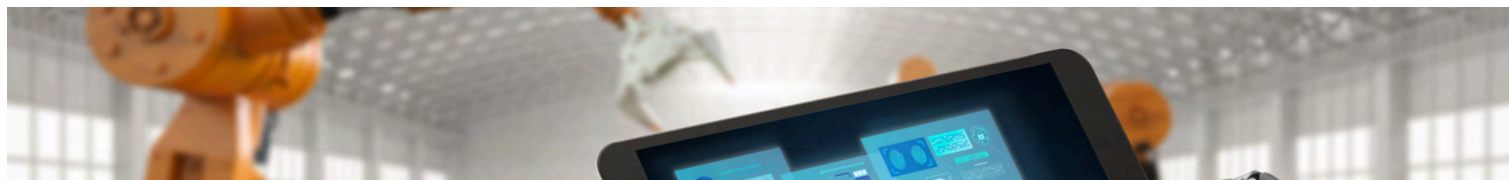
Duquesne University SBDC assists technology and life sciences startups to get to the next level whether it is an idea validation or a growth strategy.

Our specialized business consultants have an extensive background in healthcare and technology commercialization. We help companies raise capital, build high-growth business models, launch products, and implement successful exit strategies. We offer no-cost and confidential one-on-one consulting with early-stage technology & life sciences companies.

Our more than 20 years of experience in business consulting offer tremendous opportunities to connect with other businesses, industry leaders, mentors, and investors.

"The Duquesne University SBDC has had a profound impact on the success to date of Advanced Optronics. I can confidently say that this would not have been possible without their help."

Advanced Optronics



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VALUATION & SUCCESSION PLANNING

A valuation can be extremely important for buying, selling, or even effectively managing and growing a business. Whether you are planning to transition or not, our Business Valuation program can help you make an informed decision. Our access to several valuation tools and databases can help you save money and do your due diligence before making key decisions. Our consultants can guide you through all the steps of a successful valuation and transition including benchmark analysis, business expense deductions, exit strategies, and succession planning.

"we were uncertain about the determination of a fair asking price. We have confidence that we are asking a fair price and when we told prospective buyers that SBDC assisted with the valuation, no one questioned our asking price."

Courtney-Laughlin Frame Studio & Gallery



PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

All active clients can have access to up to ten hours of pro bono legal services. Several of the largest Firms in Pittsburgh and Western PA are participants in the program. Any services then needed beyond these hours the Firms have agreed to then negotiate with the client on a rate based on the then P/L.



PREFERRED BUSINESS PARTNERS PROGRAM

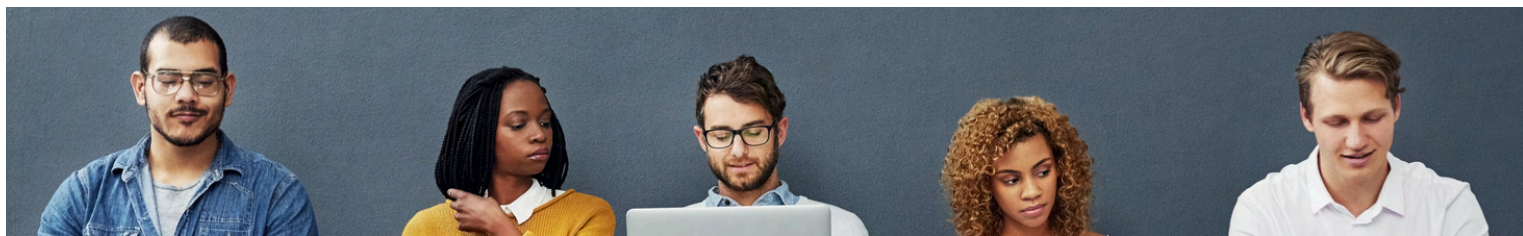
Often and beyond general business operations consultation there clients who require in-depth assistance with certain business specialty areas. These typically being needs over and above what the business consultants can generally provide. Examples include in-depth assistance with HR needs, tax and accounting assistance, IT/network development, etc. The Duquesne University SBDC has arrangements with these types of service providers whereby if you are an active client of the SBDC you can receive up to a thirty percent discount from billable rates from these service providers.





HIRE A DUKE

Often small businesses need to hire, whether on a part time or project specific basis, talent with the requisite business knowledge needed. Both students from the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs in the School of Business often seek these learning and experiential opportunities. For a reasonable level of compensation, small businesses can have access to skilled talent without the hassle of recruitment and compensation associated with the open job market. Experience to date demonstrates it is a win/win for both the small business owner and student. In several scenarios these students went on to be employed by the business.



MEDIA CENTER

The former way of marketing by knocking on doors has quickly given way to digital and outbound marketing, public relations and promotion strategies. Video sound and social media and live action have become the new marketing norm. The Duquesne University SBDC offers to each of its active clients the ability to have a complete video, script and marketing approach prepared for use. What typically would cost thousands of dollars in the open commercial market is provided to all active clients at no cost. Visit the Duquesne University SBDC web site to see for yourself the quality of these videos.



CPA ACCOUNTING & RELATED ADVISORY SERVICES

The Duquesne University SBDC is fortunate to have as part of its Staff a CPA who assists all active clients with a variety of tax and general accounting issues.



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SUCCESSION PLANNING

The Duquesne University SBDC offers a comprehensive program to businesses who are at a point when succession planning is becoming a prevalent next step. While succession planning should be an integral component of a businesses' life cycle it is often relegated to a later time in the evolution of the business. The Duquesne University SBDC provides a full range program including how to assess readiness: available talent/resources; potential buyers; seller's notes to attract employees who may want to takeover the business etc. Start early and the Duquesne University SBDC is here to assist you.



GROWTH BUSINESS

How many small business owners ask the questions of: Am I ready to grow? Am I ready to diversify my products or services? Am I ready to grow from a talent and financial perspective? What are the external environmental signs that might be suggesting readiness for growth? These are key questions that need to be addressed if any success in growth is going to be realized. The Duquesne University SBDC has a plan and process to assist you in this endeavors at no cost to active clients.



PREVIOUS BUSINESS OWNERS AND/OR C SUITE EXECUTIVES WHO SERVE AS BUSINESS CONSULTANTS TO THE SBDC

All of the business consultants who work with clients either have previously owned and operated a business and/or who have been C Suite level Executives. These "second career" folks provide real business life and in the trench's experiences to all SBDC clients.



DATA RESOURCES

The Duquesne University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers a range of data research resources to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. These resources are designed to help with market research, business planning, and decision-making.

- **Market Research Databases:** The Duquesne SBDC has access to databases that offer valuable insights into market trends, consumer demographics, industry data, and competitive analysis.
- **Business Planning Tools:** Resources for developing comprehensive business plans, including financial projections, industry overviews, and competitor evaluations.
- **Customer and Competitor Analysis:** Detailed reports on potential customers and competitors, which can help businesses better understand their target audience and competition.
- **Industry Data:** Industry-specific reports that outline the latest trends, regulations, and growth opportunities within various sectors.
- **Economic Data:** The Duquesne SBDC has access to economic indicators, regional trends, and other critical economic data that can influence business strategies and operations.
- **Demographic Information:** Tools we have help analyze local and regional demographics to tailor products or services to specific customer segments.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE



The Global Business Program at the Duquesne University SBDC offers one-to-one consulting on international business, exports, imports, foreign investors, export financing, and opening a business. Our certified international business consultants, who are specialized in International Trade, can help you simplify the exporting process with their expertise and international trade connections.

We leverage our extensive international business experience, cultural competency, and strong network of relationships to enhance the global competitiveness of small businesses in the Pittsburgh region. Though our primary focus is the markets in Europe, the Middle East, South & East Asia, and Africa, we can also address specific export trade issues in the Mexican & Latin American markets as well.

"The SBDC has been big, I would say it has been very fundamental to giving me the tools to succeed. My consultant has been invaluable with his different outlook and pointing me to experts when I have a question about something say like shipping internationally."

JOYTRVL



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



In addition to our consulting services, we offer webinars and in-person workshops to help small businesses start and grow. Our educational programs bring local experts, industry leaders, and small businesses together.

Our education programs include First Step: Business Essentials, QuickBooks, Get Your Website Reviewed, Mastering Social Media Marketing, SBA Loan Programs, and annual conferences.


EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS
375


ATTENDEES
8,166

"The workshop captured my attention, and the speakers gave specifics on what to do next. Excited to implement what I learned!"

"Excellent webinar! I took plenty of notes and appreciate the supplementary resources!"

"Terrific instruction and instructor! Very pleased with this class!"



OUR CLIENTS

BUDDING SMILES OF BEAVER

In 2013, driven by a desire to expand her horizons and embrace new challenges, Dr. Ntasha Sethi relocated to the United States. She was accepted into the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine, where she completed her Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) degree. Since her graduation, she has worked in several pediatric practices where she applied her extensive training to provide quality care in a gentle manner. She was an associate for Dentistry for Children and Teens in Ohio for over 5 years before deciding to take ownership of the Beaver, PA office. Her bubbly personality and kind demeanor have won the hearts of our patients in Ohio. Her goal in life is to eliminate the phrase “I hate going to the dentist” by providing kids only positive experiences with dentistry. Dr. Ntasha Sethi sought assistance from the Duquesne University Small Business Development Center to evaluate a dental practice. Through their guidance, she successfully acquired the business and has now joyously celebrated its grand opening, marking a significant milestone in her journey to serve the community with exceptional dental care, fulfilling her mission one smile at a time.



MAPLE & METAL

Leslie Michielli, the proud owner of Maple & Metal, LLC, embarked on an exciting journey when she reached out to the Duquesne University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for guidance. Leslie's partnership with Denis Olson, a senior business consultant at the DUQ SBDC, proved to be the turning point she needed. Denis worked closely with Leslie, helping her navigate the complexities of launching a business. Together, they formulated a comprehensive business plan that outlined the vision, goals, and growth strategy for Maple & Metal LLC. By November of 2024, the hard work, planning, and perseverance paid off. Leslie was able to celebrate a monumental milestone—the grand opening of her brand-new business, including DIY space offering workshops and private parties, located in Etna, PA. Congratulations to Leslie Michielli for her incredible achievement! Her success is a testament to the power of determination, expert guidance, and a well-crafted business plan. We are proud to have been a part of her journey and look forward to seeing Maple & Metal LLC continue to grow and thrive in the years to come.



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REQUEST CONSULTING TODAY

Contact Us

☎ 412-396-1633

✉ duqsbdcc@duq.edu

🌐 www.sbdcc.duq.edu

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@DuquesneSBDC



#StartGrowProsper

Office Hours

Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

600 Forbes Ave, 108 Rockwell Hall, Pittsburgh, PA

