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Massachusetts Small Business Development Center

Semi-Annual Performance Report

October 1, 2023 — March 31, 2024

Massachusetts SBDC
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first half of fiscal year 2024, the Massachusetts SBDC provided no-cost, confidential, one-to-one, in-depth business advisory services and access to capital to 2,041 clients encompassing 7,362 hours of one-to-one advising through sites across Massachusetts.

During this reporting period, advisors helped clients secure \$69,162,213 in financing which is 97% of the annual goal of \$71,500,000. As a result of financing secured, clients started 71 businesses and contributed to the creation and retention of 895 jobs.

The following centers have exceeded annualized capital formation goals: Greater Boston Region achieved 190%, Southeast Region achieved 199%, and the Government Sales Program achieved 132%.

The remaining centers and percentage of annualized goals: Berkshire Region 8%, Central Region 52%, Northeast Region 46%, Western Region 51%, and the Massachusetts Export Center 89%.

The Massachusetts SBDC conducted 72 training units attracting 2,248 attendees.

The Massachusetts SBDC program's success is directly related to a highly skilled professional staff and strong partnerships with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, higher educational sponsors led by the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Isenberg School of Management, and a wide range of supporters in the business community.

100 – CAPITAL FORMATION

During the first half of FY24, a total of \$69,162,213 in capital was secured for 121 clients throughout the Massachusetts SBDC network, creating 343 jobs, retaining 552 jobs, and starting 71 businesses due to financing.

Berkshire Region — \$486,800 in financing was secured for 2 clients, creating 17 jobs, and starting 2 businesses due to financing.

Central Region — \$7,987,500 in financing was secured for 9 clients, creating 38 jobs, retaining 45 jobs, and starting 6 businesses due to financing.

Greater Boston Region — \$2,088,500 in financing was secured for 8 clients, creating 25 jobs, retaining 16 jobs, and starting 3 businesses due to financing.

Northeast Region — \$5,489,316 in financing was secured for 51 clients, creating 69 jobs, retaining 42 jobs, and starting 38 businesses due to financing.

Southeast Region — \$23,856,793 in financing was secured for 31 clients, creating 105 jobs, retaining 173 jobs, and starting 12 businesses due to financing.

Western Region — \$2,374,500 in financing was secured for 10 clients, creating 44 jobs, retaining 11 jobs, and starting 6 businesses due to financing.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program — \$26,432,754 in financing was secured for 13 clients, creating 43 jobs, retaining 32 jobs, and starting 4 businesses due to financing.

Massachusetts Export Center — \$446,050 in financing was secured for 4 clients, creating 2 jobs, and retaining 233 jobs.

Financing Summary by Type:

- **Women** — \$9,120,820 was secured for 67 clients, creating 111 jobs, retaining 456 jobs, and starting 36 businesses.
- **Minorities** — \$13,424,779 in capital infusion was secured from loans to 63 clients, creating 92 jobs, retaining 388 jobs, and starting 31 businesses.
- **Veterans** — \$ 864,670 in capital was secured from loans to 9 clients, creating 34 jobs, retaining 48 jobs, and starting 5 businesses.
- **Disabled** — \$990,840 in capital was secured for 9 clients, creating 16 jobs, retaining 65 jobs, and 6 business starts.
- **SBA Loans** — \$17,230,624 for 29 clients.
- **Equity Financing** — \$46,944,589 in equity financing,

Massachusetts SBDC Network
FY24 Network Achievement Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	CLIENTS ADVISED				HOURS ADVISED				TRAINING EVENTS				TRAINING ATTENDEES			
CENTER	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	208	139	66.8%	50%	1,440	328	22.8%	50%	6	1	17%	50%	80	9	11%	50%
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE																
Clark University	406	232	57.1%	50%	2,976	920	30.9%	50%	26	14	54%	50%	490	292	60%	50%
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	269	210	78.1%	50%	1,968	404	20.5%	50%	20	7	35%	50%	240	46	19%	50%
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE																
Salem State University	350	543	155.1%	50%	2,928	1,189	40.6%	50%	36	19	53%	50%	1,080	539	50%	50%
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	399	354	88.7%	50%	3,168	1,509	47.6%	50%	9	7	78%	50%	126	160	127%	50%
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	418	312	50.7%	50%	2,880	865	30.0%	50%	32	11	34%	50%	360	402	112%	50%
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	2,050	1,690	82.4%	50.0%	15,360	5,215	34.0%	50.0%	129	59	46%	50.0%	2,376	1,448	61%	50.0%
MASS EXPORT CENTER	120	128	106.7%	50%	2,000	1,435	71.8%	50%	6	8	133%	50%	200	667	334%	50%
GOVERNMENT SALES	180	223	123.9%	50%	1,200	712	59.3%	50%	4	5	125%	50%	50	133	266%	50%
NETWORK TOTAL	2,350	2,041	86.9%	50.0%	18,560	7,362	39.7%	100%	139	72	52%	50.0%	2,626	2,248	86%	50.0%
PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	BUSINESS STARTS				CAPITAL FORMATION				JOBS CREATED				JOBS RETAINED			
CENTER	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED	GOAL	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	% OF YEAR ACCRUED
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	18	2	11.1%	50%	\$5,850,000	\$486,800	8.3%	50%	45	17	37.8%	50%	43	0	0.0%	50%
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE																
Clark University	24	8	33.3%	50%	\$10,800,000	\$5,615,000	52.0%	50%	88	23	26.1%	50%	89	26	29.2%	50%
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	22	3	13.6%	50%	\$1,100,000	\$2,088,500	189.9%	50%	66	25	37.9%	50%	66	16	24.2%	50%
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE																
Salem State University	75	39	52.0%	50%	\$12,000,000	\$5,489,316	45.7%	50%	105	75	71.4%	50%	165	97	58.8%	50%
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	25	12	48.0%	50%	\$12,000,000	\$23,856,793	198.8%	50%	120	105	87.5%	50%	135	173	128.1%	50%
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	22	8	36.4%	50%	\$9,250,000	\$4,747,000	51.3%	50%	100	63	63.0%	50%	150	20	13.3%	50%
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	186	72	38.7%	50.0%	\$51,000,000	\$42,283,409	82.9%	50.0%	524	308	58.8%	50.0%	648	332	51.2%	50.0%
MASS EXPORT CENTER	0		0%	50%	\$500,000	\$446,050	89.2%	50%	100	6	6.0%	50%	150	2,028	1352.0%	50%
GOVERNMENT SALES	2	4	200.0%	50%	\$20,000,000	\$26,432,754	132.2%	50%	45	45	100.0%	50%	100	52	52.0%	50%
NETWORK TOTAL	188	76	40.4%	50.0%	\$71,500,000	\$69,162,213	96.7%	50.0%	669	359	53.7%	50.0%	898	2,412	268.6%	50.0%

Massachusetts SBDC Network
FY24 Clients Advised with Capital Formation Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	NON-SBA LOANS				SBA SECURED LOANS				EQUITY FINANCING				TOTAL FINANCING			
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS	TOTAL BUSINESS STARTS
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 365,000	1	1						\$ 121,800				\$ 486,800	3	2	17
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE																
Clark University	\$ 2,716,500	6	5		\$ 4,110,000	3	3		\$ 1,161,000				\$ 7,987,500	10	9	38
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 140,000	2	2						\$ 1,940,500				\$ 2,088,500	9	8	25
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE																
Salem State University	\$ 8,000	1	1		\$ 3,098,661	11	11		\$ 1,582,655				\$ 5,489,316	52	51	69
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 672,000	5	4		\$ 8,505,963	13	11		\$ 14,678,820				\$ 23,856,793	38	31	105
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,077,500	3	3		\$ 716,000	4	4		\$ 581,000				\$ 2,374,500	10	10	44
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,987,000	18	16		\$ 17,230,624	31	29		\$ 20,865,785				\$ 42,283,409	122	111	298
MASS EXPORT CENTER									\$ 446,050				\$ 446,050	7	4	2
GOVERNMENT SALES									\$ 26,432,754				\$ 26,432,754	21	13	43
NETWORK TOTAL	\$4,987,000	18	16		\$17,230,624	31	29		\$46,944,589				\$69,162,213	150	121	343

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024		WOMEN CLIENTS						MINORITY CLIENTS						VETERANS						CLIENTS WITH DISABILITY					
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLS ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1													\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1	
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	\$ 1,098,500	4	4	24	10	3	\$ 3,859,000	5	5	12	19	3		1	1	1		1		1	1	1		1	
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 134,500	2	2	1	3	1	\$ 867,500	4	3	2	3	1													
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	\$ 619,305	31	31	25	67	19	\$ 3,749,016	30	29	36	79	18	\$ 159,670	4	4	4	5	3	\$ 20,040	4	4	2	7	2	
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 4,260,349	16	16	31	109	5	\$ 1,524,263	13	10	19	40	4							\$ 626,000	3	2	3	3	1	
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,341,500	6	6	16	7	4	\$ 1,002,000	7	7	17	10	5	\$ 705,000	1	1	27		1							
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 8,300,954	61	60	102	196	33	\$ 11,091,779	59	54	86	151	31	\$ 864,670	6	6	32	5	5	\$ 692,840	10	8	11	10	5	
MASS EXPORT CENTER		7	6		260		\$ 260,000	8	7		235			3	3	2	43			1	1	5	55	1	
GOVERNMENT SALES	\$ 819,866	4	3	9		3	\$ 2,163,000	2	2	6	2								\$ 298,000	1	1	5		1	
NETWORK TOTAL	\$9,120,820	72	67	111	456	36	\$13,424,779	69	63	92	388	31	\$864,670	9	9	34	48	5	\$990,840	12	9	16	65	6	

See pages 1-2 of attachment for full-size charts.

Berkshire Region staff accepted an invitation to attend a Berkshire Innovation Center event for Stage Two Accelerator Firms with the intent to connect with the State's Innovation Ecosystem and meet representatives from MassDevelopment, Mass Clean Energy Center, Mass Tech Collaborative, and Mass Life Science Center. Several potential high-growth companies were present. Advisors continue to work with clients to improve their digital presence by using social media channels according to overall media and marketing strategies. To educate the public on the services the Massachusetts SBDC provides, the staff continue to use the audio Public Service Announcement (PSA) created with a Pittsfield-based public access TV station. The PSA is used as a quick description of services in monthly newsletters and on the website.

Central Region office formed a collaboration with the Venture Forum and the Innovation Institute of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative to provide technical assistance for "Startup Worcester" ventures. This business development initiative should generate 10 - 12 SBIR clients per year for the Massachusetts SBDC.

A client has a product based on 20 years of federally funded clinical research guiding it towards our goal of successfully intervening early in personal relationships to give couples tools and techniques to help prevent deterioration and manage their stressors in a healthy way, together. Randomized clinical trials have demonstrated the efficacy for improving relationship health, reducing depressive symptoms, and diminishing the incidence of divorce.

A Massachusetts-based blind-owned startup looking to revolutionize the personal watercraft market. The mission is simple – to bring the first electric powered personal watercraft to market. The CEO and a recent WPI engineering graduate have developed electric watercraft technology with three unique patents.

Greater Boston Region continues to initiate and develop relationships with local higher educational institutions such as Harvard, MIT, and Northeastern to assist high-growth potential entrepreneurs access capital and/or to refer to Massachusetts SBDC SBIR specialty center to evaluate and assist with SBIR and STTR grant opportunities. Examples include a high-growth MIT-spinout seeking venture capital to further develop quantum networking technology to connect quantum computers. High-growth venture that relocated to Boston from Sydney Australia, seeking venture capital. The team has developed a process utilizing Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Mechanics to design, make, test, and analyze next generation pharmaceuticals. SBIR candidate developing AI technology for a revolutionary and comprehensive medication adherence program. SBIR candidate developing innovative technologies to create safer, more efficient, and connected world of roadway travel. SBIR candidate, Harvard alumni, developing an integrated financial platform, purpose built for healthcare practices to streamline manual financial workflows.

Northeast Region seamlessly transitioned workshops to a virtual format, utilizing Zoom as the platform of choice. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with a phenomenal attendance rate surpassing in-person workshop. Previously, clients would sacrifice a significant portion of their day to attend workshops on-site, but with webinars, this inconvenience is eliminated. Attendees appreciate the convenience of accessing presentations from the comfort of their own space, saving time and resources otherwise spent on commuting. This accessibility has enabled entrepreneurs and small business owners to actively participate in training sessions without disrupting daily operations.

Southeast Region continues to participate in the New Bedford SourceLink® collaborative. As part of an initiative to connect small businesses to crucial resources, the New Bedford Economic Development Council, the Port of New Bedford, UMass Dartmouth, Groundwork, EforAll, the Co-Creative Center, and NB Creative have partnered with SourceLink®, a nonprofit dedicated to helping communities identify, connect, empower, and measure their local entrepreneurial ecosystems. SourceLink® is a direct marketing software that utilizes data intelligence and an omni-channel approach to improve client response and conversion. Local New Bedford entrepreneurs can log in and find the business advice and assistance needed. The Massachusetts SBDC is a primary service provider in its system. We have received a couple of referrals from this resource. An advisor participates in their quarterly meetings. Staff members continue to educate themselves on additional technological services that can enhance their working environment and benefit our clients. i.e. Zoom, MS Teams, OneDrive, Canva, YouTube, Constant Contact, CenterIC, VisualIQ, etc. An advisor is finding that questions about online sales and e-commerce enabled websites are very common - almost daily.

Western Region actively participated in the semi-annual social media bootcamp organized by the Women Business Owners Alliance (WBOA). This event provided up-to-date insights on Artificial Intelligence (AI). As part of our commitment to client success, advisors introduced essential digital tools to enhance their online presence. Tools include website development, domain registration, business-class email setup, and Google My Business registration. Recognizing the significance of AI, staff also demonstrated the effective utilization for businesses. Staff continually integrate technology to streamline internal processes. Notably, we employ LivePlan, a financial modeling and business plan builder. Furthermore, most team members utilize Calendly, a scheduling tool that significantly simplifies meeting coordination with our advisors. An advisor is a key member of the ASBDC Cybersecurity Team, leading discussions on cybersecurity best practices with our clients. His expertise ensures our clients remain secure in the digital landscape.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program team continues to work in the areas of innovation and technology transfer with the universities and entrepreneurship programs around the state. SBIR advisor holds office hours at the Harvard Innovation Lab. Staff are always looking for new ways to collaborate and target start-ups and existing technology companies that may benefit from Massachusetts SBDC services. Efforts to move forward with long-term clients are starting to pay off. After losing many growing clients to automatic closures, advisors are beginning to re-establish and develop new long-term engagements, resulting in an uptick in equity investment assistance and should provide stronger long-term impact.

300 – INTERNATIONAL TRADE

During the reporting period, the Massachusetts Export Center continued to provide one-to-one support and training for clients throughout all aspects of global trade. Client activity has been heavy and is likely a reflection of export activity continuing to bounce back post-pandemic, with companies resuming export growth initiatives. In addition to providing advisory services, staff have been supporting clients on a variety of longer-term projects, including global market analyses, foreign distributor searches, export compliance risk assessments, and more.

The Export Center worked on a number of special projects, including:

- **Massachusetts STEP Grant Program** – The Export Center continued to provide extensive support for the Massachusetts STEP Grant Program. In late FY23, the Export Center updated the 2023-2024 STEP application and web site; designed and uploaded the updated application; actively promoted the STEP program through its newsletter and one-on-one client work; organized and held a STEP grant application webinar; and recruited applicants. In early FY24, Export Center team members reviewed, analyzed, scored, and ranked the applications. Below is some data on applications and awards for the 2023-2024 STEP year:
 - The Export Center recruited 49 companies to apply for the STEP grant by the September 30 deadline.
 - Of those companies, 22 (or 44.9%) were approved for grant stipend funding. Of these companies, 7 were approved with conditions or reductions.
 - 12 applicants were disqualified for various reasons (submitting ineligible expenses, not providing enough details for assessment, surpassing the 3-grant limit, etc.).
 - 15 applicants scored below the cutoff for available funding. These companies can be considered, in order of score ranking, if additional funding becomes available at a future time.
 - \$311,097 in funds were approved for grant stipend funding.

The Export Center continues to work closely with its partners at the MA Office of International Trade and Investment (MOITI) on ongoing administration of the grant and preparation for the state's application to SBA for the upcoming grant year.

- **Organization of the annual Export Expo**, which was held as an entirely virtual event for the fourth year in a row, featuring workshops, virtual exhibits, and special guest speakers. This year's Export Expo took place on Thursday and Friday, January 25 and 26, 2024, and attracted nearly 700 attendees and featured 15 workshops, panel discussions and special speaker addresses. Below are some highlights:
 - The keynote speaker was Matthew Axelrod, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement, who provided an update on the numerous export enforcement reforms that have been rolled out over the past two years, including anti-diversion efforts related to China and Russia, changes in handling of Voluntary Self Disclosures, increased emphasis on antiboycott compliance, escalated use of temporary denial orders, initiatives targeting advanced technologies, interagency and multilateral enforcement efforts, and more.
 - The opening speaker was Kevin Wolf, Partner at Akin Gump, and Former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, who discussed major export control developments and trends over the past year, with special emphasis on tightening controls on China and expanded controls on the advanced computing and semiconductor sectors. He also discussed U.S. regulatory policy and the evolution of national security objectives.
 - Special guest speaker, Eileen Albanese, Director of National Security & Technology Transfer Controls at the U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security, provided an update on the latest export regulatory developments and export control priorities at BIS, including continued escalation of controls targeting China's access to advanced computing, semiconductor and other technologies; export control policies in response to China's and Russia's access to critical technologies; and other export control policies.
 - The Export Expo featured a lineup of workshops and lively panel discussions on the challenges and developments in our global trade environment, including the continued impact of global threats, policy, and regulation on global trade operations. Critical issues such as the drivers behind export control policy, export enforcement reforms, advocacy on regulatory policy

development, voluntary disclosure assessments, illegal diversion threats, technology export control trends, impacts of policies involving China and Russia, and more were addressed, with a focus on helping companies to navigate the increasingly complex global trade environment.

The Export Expo included a virtual exhibit area featuring government, non-profit and private sector exhibitors serving the export community. The Export Center also recruited ten paying sponsors for the event. The Export Expo concluded with a virtual networking reception for attendees to connect with one another and with resources for assistance. The event was covered by Reuters and Export Compliance Daily.

- **Additional Training** – The Export Center organized and presented webinars on a variety of global trade issues, including the following training events: export enforcement in practice; a webinar on understanding the new outbound foreign investment controls; managing export enforcement visits; data privacy and security in global trade; generating internal support for export compliance and operations; classifying products for exporting and importing; and maximizing benefits for international trade show participation. In addition to these programs, the Export Center also finalized organization of many of the remaining programs planned for the early 2024 training schedule, including topics: a compliance clinic; employing reasonable due diligence for global trade compliance; China’s anti-espionage law; best practices for AES filing and compliance; and use of the cloud for export-controlled technical data (see Partners for Trade booklet in attachment). The Export Center also initiated plans to host the U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security for three days of in-person training in Massachusetts during the summer of 2024. During the reporting period, Export Center staff members engaged in logistical planning and budgeting for the event, which will feature a 2-day program on Complying with U.S. Export Controls and a 1-day program on Developing an Export Management and Compliance Program.
- **Organization of the International Seafood Buyer’s Tour in New Bedford**, which brought international seafood buyers from 13 countries, including China, Germany, Italy, South Korea, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam, to tour seafood processing facilities and other seafood industry resources in New Bedford. Staff arranged for buyers to visit BASE New England Seafood Auction, Island Creek Oysters’ new canning facility, a scallop vessel operated by Eastern Fisheries, and Kyler Seafood. The Export Center also collaborated with the One SouthCoast Chamber to host a luncheon for the visitors. The tour was held in collaboration with the Port of New Bedford and Food Export USA, who underwrote the visit of the buyers to participate in the Boston International Seafood Show while in Massachusetts. The New Bedford tour was held for the first time since 2019, due to the pandemic.
- **Internship Recruitment** – The Export Center continued internship recruitment efforts, including online postings through Handshake, participation at in-person events, and direct communication with professors and career services staff. The Export Center hosted one full-time intern from St. Michaels College for the Fall of 2023 and Winter/Spring of 2024, and two part-time interns from UMass Boston for the Winter/Spring of 2024. The Export Center has also made a commitment to host a full-time intern from Wheaton College for the Summer of 2024.

Outreach and Other Initiatives – The Export Center engaged in multiple outreach efforts and support activities for the Massachusetts SBDC. Public speaking activities included: speaking as a panelist for the annual international networking evening and business forum organized by the Global Business Alliance of

New England; speaking as a panelist for a roundtable on inclusive trade initiatives hosted by the Canadian Consulate General and featuring the Canadian trade minister; speaking as a panelist for a webinar organized by the National District Export Council on women in international trade; speaking as a panelist for the National Defense Industrial Association Small Business Innovation Summit; speaking at the North Central MA Chamber of Commerce Manufacturers' Roundtable; speaking at an SBA Advantage International Trade event organized by the Massachusetts District Office; speaking at the MA District Export Council meeting on exporting trends; and others. Meetings were held with the following organizations for outreach and collaboration: MA Office of International Trade & Investment (multiple); Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce; MassVentures; MA Biomedical Initiatives; U.S. Department of Commerce Commercial Service (multiple); U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security (multiple); Compliance Alliance advisory board; and many more. Staff members attended the following meetings for outreach, networking and professional development: Coalition of NE Companies for Trade Cargo Symposium; GBANE International Networking Evening; U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security Update Conference in Washington, DC; trade compliance networking reception hosted by Jacobson Burton Kelly and Miller Chevalier; BIS Update exhibitors reception; Massachusetts DEC meeting; multiple networking meetings with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce; AIM Global Business Forum; and more. Export Center staff also engaged in many activities to support the Massachusetts SBDC, including full participation in several Massachusetts SBDC staff meetings, strategic planning meetings and internal training programs. The Export Center also held two full-day internal strategic planning meetings to discuss implementation of new protocols at the center operational level to comply with several new Massachusetts SBDC requirements. Finally, the Export Center also compiled and submitted an extensive application for the E Star Award, issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration, for past winners of the E Award for Export Service that have demonstrated continued growth and excellence in promoting U.S. exports.

# of SBDC staff that have attained certification for export assistance	Paula Murphy, advanced certification (CGBP & CUSECO) Kathleen Newell, advanced certification (CGBP & CUSECO) Julia Dvorko, advanced certification (CGBP & CUSECO) Nancy Lowd, advanced certification (CGBP) Jason Hoagland, intermediate certification (SBA)
# of small businesses receiving export assistance from the SBDC	128 clients + 667 training attendees
# of small businesses that started to export (New to Export) after receiving SBDC assistance	4
# of small business exporters that entered new foreign markets (New to Market) as a result of SBDC assistance	12
Increase in export revenues attributed to SBDC assistance (estimate)	Over \$20 Million
Jobs created or retained as a result of exporting assistance	150
# of small businesses referred to Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, State, Eximbank, OPIC or USDA for trade assistance	37

No Massachusetts Export Center offices are co-located with USEAC and/or other state or local trade agencies or program offices.

Central Region has strategic planning projects with several international trade organizations that include: a WBE and MBE that produces, promotes and trades African specialty coffee; an international chemical distribution company; a fifth-generation manufacturer that delivers high quality machinery, tooling and accessories to a worldwide customer base with distributors located in Europe, South Africa, Asia, and Mexico; a growth enterprise that specializes in bringing international brands to the US market; and a manufacturing company that distributes products from India and China to the US.

400 – PROCUREMENT

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program reports the System for Award Management (SAM), a mandatory registration system when applying for government grants or contracts, continues to be a huge staff commitment with almost daily requests for assistance. In most cases there is no one else to provide this specialized assistance, so GSA staff are the “go to” resource to address an oftentimes desperate individual. Even after two years under the new SAM contractor, every day can be a new challenge in fixing what’s broken or determining why a small business can’t get a first-time registration or renew existing SAM registration. Staff cultivated amazing new clients that were unaware of SBDC services until they had issues with the SAM registration.

Although the economy has remained stable, advisors are still seeing a substantial increase in new clients. Advisor's reputation with SBIR successes has substantially increased the workload. Staff see many word-of-mouth referrals, as well as referrals from SBA and other federal agencies. Small businesses want to explore government contracting after they've heard about set-aside programs and certification advantages. The number of new startups that are not procurement-ready continues to be a concern as it requires a lot of handholding and staff don't have the capacity to work with new start-ups or extremely inexperienced companies (outside of the SBIR marketplace where that is the norm). These early-stage businesses do, however, provide a steady stream of client referrals to Massachusetts SBDC advisors. Staff can also attribute this influx of new clients from the increased federal supplier goals and initiatives coming from the White House, more awareness about SBDC services, SAM registration issues, SBIR successes, and cybersecurity mandates all of which have created a steady stream of businesses needing procurement assistance, guidance, and business advisement.

Government procurement rules and regulations are always changing, creating an ongoing need by the small business community for guidance and assistance with deciphering these regulatory changes. In addition to assisting with procurement regulations, staff continue to see requests for assistance for the Department of Defense (DoD) mandate on Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) compliance and future mandatory certification. It is a complex and potentially costly requirement that staff continuously research to better prepare businesses for this unavoidable DoD mandate. Advisors also assisted clients with SBA's woman-owned and economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business (WOSB/EDWOSB) certifications, the 8(a)-business development program, and the Vet Cert program now under SBA. Sadly, staff had no HUBZone applications this past year. During an advisement session, staff recommend pursuing and then also assisting many businesses with the MA Commonwealth Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) certifications too. The MA SDO certifications are the recommended certifications for most businesses that are new and exploring the government marketplace. Staff frequently assisted companies to help them understand the myriad of certifications, identify which would be most advantageous, and where to start. The GSA advisor has developed two specialized training courses that review the various certifications and debunk the rumors on what they can and cannot do for a business owner. Certifications can be valuable assets when marketing to large prime government contractors, doing business with the government (e.g., set aside goals) and with corporate supplier diversity programs.

The reality of the government procurement marketplace is that it is constantly changing and for a small business that is challenging. GSA staff help address the continuous stream of new and existing clients with questions on procurement regulations, registrations, and certifications. GSA advisors are a known resource or "helpdesk" for federal agencies and non-profits, large businesses and municipalities when dealing with their own SAM registration and government procurement regulations, in general. Staff assist small businesses and new entrepreneurs in the R&D/technology area who must quickly learn unique terminology and work through registrations using a complex government database to submit an SBIR grant or contract proposal. Staff anticipate seeing increased requests as the SBDC reputation for helping businesses succeed with the government marketplace and government R&D funding continues to grow. This has also led to requests for assistance in other state and local grants including grants from MassVentures' START program, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, and Cal Fire.

The GSA team participated in many partner outreach events and sponsored or co-sponsored several specialized presentations, including targeted government readiness webinars; further details on these events are listed throughout this summary report. Staff have experienced more requests for on-site training and participation in events these past six months than in the last few years. However, business

owners have indicated they still prefer training and consultations to be done via video conference (e.g., zoom) due, in part, to the convenience for them.

Northeast Region hosted a highly successful webinar on government contracting in collaboration with SBA in January. The turnout was impressive, indicating significant interest in the topic. Given the popularity of the event, staff intend to schedule this webinar quarterly to ensure ongoing accessibility and support for the audience's needs.

Southeast Region continues to provide resources for clients to take advantage of the Operational Services Division (OSD) and Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) offices, to sell to the Commonwealth; and the SBA and PTAC, to sell to the federal government as well as for SBIR clients. An advisor is working on a \$11MM SBIR pitch deck for a client.

Western Region in response to the growing demand from clients for guidance on government contracting, staff frequently collaborated with APEX staff to provide comprehensive business advising. This joint advisory approach has proven to be effective in addressing our clients' multifaceted needs. Staff recently participated in an event organized by the advising. Massachusetts Veterans Chamber of Commerce and Valley Venture Mentors. During this event, staff disseminated information about APEX services. Additionally, a representative from the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office provided valuable insights into opportunities for minority status certification. This event served as a platform for staff to engage with clients and offer them tailored advice to meet specific business needs.

500 – MANUFACTURING

Berkshire Region business advisors worked with several food manufacturers to advance their plans for scaling and expanded distribution. This included manufacturers using both wholesale and retail business models. Staff are currently working with a couple of food manufacturers, helping them to prepare to sell their businesses.

Central Region staff have several strategic planning projects for local manufacturers. These companies collectively generate more than \$10M in annual revenue and employ more than 60 people. Each of these projects has allowed the CEOs to pivot strategies through the economic challenges and uncertainty to become and remain viable ventures.

Greater Boston Region is currently assisting start-up manufacturing firms to launch and scale, while assisting established manufacturers identify growth opportunities to remain competitive and retain jobs. These clients include:

- 100-year-old food manufacturer seeking to reinvent product line to remain relevant and retain jobs.
- The creator of a patented portable blender that was initially designed with the assistance of UMass engineers. Developing unique commercial and community-oriented sales channels. Worked with UMass Entrepreneurship Studies student to create a podcast showcasing client's entrepreneurial journey.

- The creator of patented medical device that instantly stops excessive blood loss in emergency and surgical settings. Advisors are working with founder on securing \$10M in funding to consolidate manufacturing and increase staffing.
- International high-end furniture designer and maker relocated to Boston in 2022. Clients opened a second location and are planning for expansion to other high-income areas. Staff are working with founder and staff on marketing and growth strategies.

Northeast Region served several clients within the manufacturing sector, a pivotal component of industry infrastructure responsible for converting raw materials into finished goods. Among these clients, the food and beverage manufacturing category emerged as the largest sector. This diverse sector encompasses a wide array of companies, ranging from producers of packaged snacks like beef jerky to those involved in distillery operations and coffee roasting.

Southeast Region advisor conducted in-depth research on multiple industries, including cookie franchises, coffee shops, and specialty manufacturing.

Western Region collaborated with several businesses within the manufacturing sector.

- Supported a small-scale fiber processing mill. The owner sought SBDC expertise in developing a business plan and financial projections as requested by a lender. Advisors reviewed the business plan and prepared a three-year financial projection, including cash flow forecast, profit and loss statements, and balance sheets.
- Advisors are helping a client employed by a company that owns two businesses - one in commercial and the other in retail laundry. The owner is retiring and selling both businesses to SBDC client. Referred by the bank's loan officer, staff aided the client in crafting business plan and preparing financial projections for the two companies being purchased. The financial statements encompass Cash Flow Projections, Profit and Loss Statements, and Balance Sheets for three years. The bank has given tentative approval for the loans.
- Advisor is collaborating with a client planning to establish a sesame seed manufacturing company in Holyoke. This venture will create 10 full-time jobs and make use of a vacant building in the TDI district.
- Advisors are also working with clients who are utilizing two different manufacturing companies in Massachusetts to produce consumer products. One product is a pet door, and the other is a basketball shooting training device. Both products have provisional patents, and the businesses will be established in Massachusetts.
- A team member is working with a client who manufactures ice cream. Advisor helped client develop from selling on a small cart to owning a commercial kitchen, a food truck, a home delivery service, and a catering company. This client was recently awarded the WBJ's 2024 Manufacturing Excellence Award.
- Advisor is assisting a client intending to purchase the company where he currently serves as a manager. This change in ownership will preserve 12 manufacturing jobs and retain \$3M in product sales in rural Franklin County.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program reports the DoD's Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) implementation for all contractors and subcontractors if handling CUI (controlled unclassified information), is still moving forward but is not finalized yet. CMMC, like ISO was in the early 1990's, could be a potential game stopper for some small businesses. In a time when DoD is losing a

substantial number of small business suppliers, this is concerning. CMMC remained most of the manufacturing advisement staff provided during this performance period. A justifiable concern in the small business community being impacted by the CMMC mandate is the lack of funding to help businesses implement this requirement (estimated at \$15k to \$100K+ depending on the level required, number of employees, and other unique factors). Business owners have shared that this mandate, although a necessary requirement to prevent cyber-attacks, may prevent them from remaining a DoD vendor. Manufacturing is the only industry where there has been a decrease in signups.

600 – SPECIAL EMPHASIS GROUPS

Berkshire Region conducted significant outreach to a variety of special interest groups. These included:

- Staff continue to work with the Engagement Center at Greylock Federal Credit Union – which directs efforts to outreach to disenfranchised entrepreneurs and small business owners. Staff are working with a Financial Wellness Coach who is bilingual. Staff have targeted a Spanish-speaking entrepreneur who is looking to grow a business. Staff will provide business advice while the coach will provide translation services. Additionally, the office accepted an invitation to attend an Engagement Center entrepreneurial class for Spanish speakers. The Engagement Center will provide translation services and an advisor will provide information and guidance on how to start and grow a business.
- The regional director is co-advising a Spanish-speaking client with the Latino Economic Development Corporation in Springfield.
- Staff continued to attend 1Berkshire sponsored Entrepreneurial Meet Ups to support entrepreneurs and to increase awareness of the assistance the Massachusetts SBDC provides to start up efforts, resulting in new client acquisition.
- Staff prepared and delivered a training session for inmates at the Berkshire House of Corrections and continuing a long-standing relationship with a rehabilitation counselor there, an interactive event entitled “A Starter, Start-Up” was delivered.

Central Region advisor has an ongoing role as a leader and mentor for the New England chapter of Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, a global educational nonprofit focused on bringing entrepreneurship to youth in low-income communities. Advisor is also a mentor and coach for graduates of the Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll) accelerator program. EforAll is accelerating economic and social impact in communities nationwide through inclusive entrepreneurship.

An advisor is an active mentor and coach for graduates of entrepreneurship programs trained at Clear Path for Veterans New England. The programs help reintegrate veterans into the community following displacement or underemployment brought on by disabilities such as PTSD. A staff member is an active leader on the Worcester Business Resource Alliance and was selected to its steering committee to refocus the collaborative mission of the group of service providers to bring more value and a wider array of benefits to local business owners. Among these include tapping into the vast array of resources from the local consortium of universities. Advisors led students from Clark University’s School of Management to form the Clark Consulting Group, which is a highly popular, student-led internship program whereby

students work hand-in-hand with real-world business owners to start, grow, and sustain small businesses throughout Central Massachusetts. Collectively, there have been more than 28 students enrolled in the program and 11 graduates have gotten full-time jobs after graduation. Secretary Yvonne Hao from the Massachusetts Office of Economic Development sees this program as a potential model for other universities in the state.

Greater Boston Region is establishing a relationship with the Possible Project to mentor and assist its Ventures Group, comprised of high school graduates who have completed the programs and are launching businesses out of the Possible Project. Staff participated as panelists in the final phase of the Boston THRIVE Cohort and are working with several clients as the result of this participation.

Northeast Region is committed to aiding Mass Rehab clients seeking support in drafting business plans to secure funding for business ventures. Over several months, these clients engaged with staff diligently crafting comprehensive business plans tailored to meet the funding criteria outlined by Mass Rehab.

Southeast Region advisor continues to serve on UMass Dartmouth's Charlton College of Business advisory board. Staff virtually attend quarterly Source Link meetings. Advisors work with the Cape Cod EforAll team as an advisor, reviewing business proposals, and as a program judge and serve as a mentor for EforAll Roxbury. Advisors are members of the Cape Cod Economic Development Group, judge business plans for the South Shore Chamber of Commerce's Young Professionals programs, and moderate the SouthCoast CEO Roundtable, which is sponsored by the One SouthCoast Chamber. An advisor helped a Mass Rehab Commission client with a plan for a goat farm. An advisor attended an exit planning and strategy seminar from an outside source.

Western Region established collaborative relationships with an array of special interest groups within the region. These partnerships encompass organizations such as the New England Business Association (NEBA), the Veterans Association, the Latino Economic Development Corp, the MA LGBTQ Power Grid Conference, and the Woman Business Owners Alliance. Staff regularly make referrals to Lawyers for Civil Rights, a Boston-based organization offering legal counsel to entrepreneurs from low to moderate income brackets and minority backgrounds. Hosting monthly open office hours via Zoom provides clients with the opportunity to discuss pressing issues with a legal professional. Western Region staff collaborated with the UMass Berthiaume Center for Entrepreneurship and participated in discussion panels at the events and led sessions at the bootcamps. These activities enable the Massachusetts SBDC to engage directly with young entrepreneurs. Furthermore, staff maintain ongoing support for clients in conjunction with the LGBTG+ Chamber of Commerce and the Massachusetts Women of Color Coalition. Continued collaboration with these organizations underscores the commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within the business community.

700 – MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

During the reporting period, minorities represented 38% of the advising client base and 67% of training attendees are underserved population (which includes minorities).

Berkshire Region staff continue to be in contact with the Berkshire Black Economic Council (BBEC), the newest suitemate at 33 Dunham Mall and offered to work with its clientele. Staff continued efforts to

outreach to minorities via a micro-targeting approach to specific neighborhoods. Advising services to minority-owned businesses were provided to a Columbian Bakery and a Technology Security Company. Staff have been in discussions with Greylock's Federal Credit Union engagement center, as they specifically target minority business interests. Discussions have resulted in plans to work with specific clients with language-based needs. This resulted in at least one planned client session on business advising, for which the engagement center will provide a translator.

Central Region is active with the Massachusetts Association for Community Development Centers, an association of mission-driven community development organizations dedicated to creating places of opportunity where ALL people can live with dignity while participating in and benefiting from our Commonwealth's economy. An advisor helps bring this mission to the constituents of Greater Worcester and Central Massachusetts through training and technical assistance. Advisors have assisted more than 85 minority-owned businesses and directed more than 60 minority entrepreneurs to the Massachusetts MBE or SBA 8A certification programs during this reporting period.

Greater Boston Region is committed to ensuring equitable access to SBDC services for all entrepreneurs to create a vibrant and diverse small business ecosystem throughout the Greater Boston Region. Staff participated as a resource partner for the Pitch Competition for English as New Bostonians and are working with the competition winner as the result of this participation. Staff have a strong relationship with the City of Boston's SPACE Grant Initiative coordinators to provide business assistance for applicants and winners of the SPACE Grant. Advisors worked with two clients who were awarded the SPACE Grant in the most recent cohort. The office works with chambers of commerce, including the Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

Northeast Region provided support to numerous minority businesses spanning various sectors including food service, childcare, cleaning services, beauty, automotive, and more.

Southeast Region advisor presented in-person workshops, with follow-up individual advising sessions, for members of the Greater Boston Plumbing Contractors Association who are all running their own plumbing businesses. An advisor attended a networking event with the Boston Planning & Development Agency which refers many clients for financing assistance.

Western Region works with several local groups that specialize in assisting minority-owned small businesses. Staff have assisted E-for-All of Holyoke as mentors and formed a relationship with the Latino Economic Development Corp (LEDC) which focuses on supporting Latino-owned businesses in the Greater Springfield area.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program continues to see a significant increase in minority-owned business signups due, in part, to increased marketing outreach from SBA as they market programs for building the small business supplier base with increased procurement goals for minority-owned businesses. Advisors collaborated with the Massachusetts SBA, Center for Women & Enterprise, North Central Chamber of Commerce, and others to ensure targeted market outreach to diverse small businesses. Outreach included collaborative presentations with SBA and the Center for Women & Enterprise. Staff saw an increase in interest for the SBA's 8(a) business development program and assisted several certified 8(a) businesses with government marketing strategies. Staff assisted clients in applying for the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office and the MA DOT DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) certification, especially if the client is new to the government marketplace and wants a certification for marketing purposes. During a

new client orientation session, the GSA advisor will, when feasible and with permission, register the client for the mandatory Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Supplier Diversity Office's certification class.

800 – WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS

For the reporting period, 13% of the financing secured was for women-owned businesses; women represented 33% of the client base with 36% of the total advising hours.

Berkshire Region advised 41 women-owned businesses and continues to see a strong influx of women entrepreneurs. Staff attended an open house for a woman-owned business that the regional director has been working with for many months. In attendance were the current mayor and two former mayors of North Adams. The event was covered by local media and received significant recognition. The client's business was nominated by the office for an SBA award and was a previously mentioned success story.

Central Region advised 85 women-owned businesses during this period. Staff advised business owners on the Massachusetts WBE and SBA 8A certification programs. Several clients are WBEs.

Greater Boston Region advised 57 women-owned businesses. Staff attended an event sponsored by the Center for Women in Enterprise in honor of International Women's Month. We participated as an informal panelist and made many connections to further collaborate with CWE. Advisors have held several planning meetings with Zenagos, an all-woman-owned training and consulting firm to create trainings to prepare our clients for the lending process, as well as continued training for post-funding operations. Our plan is to initiate the first cohort by the end of the second quarter in 2024.

Northeast Region advised 231 clients who were women. Staff supported clients through various means such as assisting with business plan creation, startup guidance, and accessing capital. Staff consistently host a Woman-Owned Small Business webinar in collaboration with SBA, with a well-attended session held in November. Going forward, staff aim to conduct these webinars quarterly to ensure continued support and engagement.

Southeast Region advised 119 women-owned businesses. Staff continue to work with a significant number of startups, most of whom are women-owned businesses, by way of weekly and monthly remote sessions; helping them apply for COVID programs to sustain their businesses; and encouraging them to start new businesses or grow existing ones. An advisor was asked to speak at the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International's Women's Leadership Program Empowerment session.

Western Region advised 77 women-owned businesses. An advisor serves as president of the Woman Business Owners Alliance and plays an integral role in the planning of its educational events. The WBOA is the oldest running organization supporting women and business in MA (40+ years) and has 112 members.

Government Sales Advisory Program advised 50 women-owned businesses. Advisors have a close longstanding partnership with the Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE) and present two or more webinars with them annually to support women entrepreneurs. Staff also partner with Massachusetts SBA in supporting outreach to women business owners seeking assistance with understanding the government marketplace, registrations, and certifications. SBA's WOSB and EDWOSB mandatory online

certification application, for those businesses seeking federal set-aside contracts, is getting better from the initial roll-out in 2020, but clients still report the need for our assistance in getting through the process and, of course, there is an 8-month delay in processing once a business has a successful submission of their WOSB and EDWOSB application. Staff continued to educate and assist women business owners on the WBE (women business enterprise) MA SDO certification too. Advisors always enjoy exploring new partnerships and have been appreciative of the 20+ year collaborative partnership with CWE in helping us educate women business owners on government contracting opportunities.

Massachusetts Export Center advised 18 women-owned businesses.

900 – VETERANS, RESERVISTS, SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES AND ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MILITARY

Advising: Veterans = 54 (3% of advising clients)
 Service-Disabled Veterans = 34 (2% of advising clients)

Training Veterans = 105 (5% of training clients)
Attendees: Service-Disabled Veterans = 22 (1% of training clients)

Central Region advisor chairs the Board of Directors for Clear Path for Veterans of New England and is leading their initiative to reconnect veterans to their communities through entrepreneurship. Many of these veterans suffer from PTSD or other service-related disabilities. The advisor is also a financial planner for the long-term strategic initiatives and various programs of the organization that benefit the communities of North Central Massachusetts.

Northeast Region served veterans, active-duty members, National Guard, and spouses of military members clients. Staff assisted in putting together business plans, completing cash flow, and getting loans from banks. Some clients were currently in business, and some were in the process of starting a business.

Southeast Region staff continue to work closely with VETRN, one of SBA's veteran bootcamp programs. An advisor served as a VETRN Business Plan Judge on a Saturday morning after spending considerable time reviewing the business plans prior to the business plan competition. Another advisor conducted extensive work with a disabled veteran for new business plan.

Western Region is dedicated to empowering veterans in the business sector through a strategic partnership with the Massachusetts Veterans Chamber of Commerce. This esteemed organization was established under a Congressional initiative with the specific aim of providing support to business owners within this demographic.

A staff member plays an integral role in the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans, an annual business accelerator program sponsored by the University of Connecticut. This comprehensive program spans six months and is delivered online, culminating in a 10-day in-person event. This event's objective is to foster the growth of 20 veteran-owned businesses through education, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Staff contribute to this program by teaching a course titled 'C Level Thinking'. In addition,

they provide invaluable guidance as a pitch coach and mentor. They also have the honor of serving as the lead judge for the final competition. This involvement underscores our commitment to supporting the entrepreneurial aspirations of our veterans.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program continued to receive referrals from the Veteran Business Outreach Center (VBOC) to aid service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses. Other referrals come from the Veteran's Administration, DoD, SBA, and word-of-mouth referrals. Most veteran-owned businesses needed assistance with SAM registration and were interested in pursuing the SBA veteran certification. Advisors continued educating veterans on SBA certification process and the potential benefit of entering the government marketplace. Staff have had a decrease in requests for certification since the move to SBA.

1000 – RURAL ASSISTANCE

Berkshire Region continued to support rural development through its membership in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) committee and through a close working relationship with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Staff have been working with the Williamstown Chamber of Commerce on potential ways to work together to foster development with their rural based businesses.

Southeast Region businesses on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard continue to take advantage of the virtual Massachusetts SBDC free Legal Clinics. For Island business owners to attend in person it would usually involve an entire day and a large expense. They are very appreciative of the opportunity to participate. An advisor received the "Business Leadership Award" from the Mass Arts Center, in rural Mansfield, for work in assisting the Mass Arts Center create and implement a five-year business plan that led to purchase of a three-acre site. The advisor also helped with the financing for the purchase of their building, obtaining a renovation loan, and being awarded a Community Reinvestment Act Grant from a local lender. Advisor was also instrumental in assisting them in receiving four COVID-19 funds (including a PPP grant, an EIDL, Town of Mansfield Grant, and a Shuttered Venue Grant) for an overall total of \$2,761,982 in financial assistance for the revitalization of this critical community organization. The Mass Arts Center provides a cultural home for artists, audiences, and aspiring performers of all ages. They offer a rich schedule of theater productions, performing arts education, art exhibits, and live entertainment. The synergy of these offerings honors individual artistic interests through diverse creative opportunities.

An advisor who is a board member of the North Attleboro Business Accelerator, listened to presentations from the last three finalists for business development grants of \$25,000. A wide variety of companies applied, and awards were made to seven different companies. [Click here](#) for story.

Western Region is dedicated to maintaining a robust client base within the rural communities of Western Massachusetts. Staff actively support a regional high school in rural Deerfield, by participating in job fairs and providing students with insights into starting a business. In collaboration with the Franklin County Tourism group, we strive to highlight our clients on their website as key attractions for the region. For clients whose businesses have agricultural components, staff work closely with and make referrals to the farm loan officer at the Department of Agriculture in Amherst.

A staff member played a pivotal role in transitioning a Franklin County business from a single-owner corporation to a worker-owned cooperative. This cooperative, now owned by a team of six, maintains over \$3M in sales and has an additional ten employees on the path to ownership.

We have established a strong relationship with the Franklin County CDC (FCCDC), an organization that supports businesses in rural Franklin and Berkshire counties. We work with them to help food businesses that use their food incubator, known as the Western Mass Food Processing Center, in Greenfield.

In addition to our partnership with the FCCDC, we hold bi-monthly meetings with other business advisory services in the valley, including SCORE, Common Capital, and Valley CDC. We engage in cross-promotion of programs that bolster our small business ecosystem.

1100 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FAITH BASED & COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Within Massachusetts Gateway Cities, many face social and economic challenges and have been underutilized for development. Many are aligned with Opportunity Zones in the state.

During the reporting period, the Massachusetts SBDC serviced 585 clients in Gateway Cities, totaling 1,820 hours of advising, generating 24 business starts, assisted clients in securing \$4,816,670 in capital, creating 85 jobs, and retaining 167 jobs. Refer to the “FY24 Clients Advised in Gateway Cities” in attachments.

Berkshire Region continued to be an active member in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee (CEDS) and a member in the Practitioners Group - a group of the regional heads of business, economic, labor, housing, government, and education entities. Recent efforts have focused on business and community resiliency.

A group was formed led by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation whose members included bank presidents, economic development officials, organizational heads, other entities engaged in small business development and the Berkshire Office. The focus was on how to support Legacy Businesses – those businesses who have existed for a long time are considered important members of the business community but were in danger of closing.

Berkshire Region staff were invited to join a small strategic group, led by a local bank, looking to provide training and support to individuals interested in buying existing businesses. Although it was acknowledged that there were many businesses coming up to be sold in the market, potential buyers were not either aware of this opportunity or positioned to be able to make reasonable offers. Berkshire staff engaged in the strategic planning on this topic.

Central Region staff member is actively involved with Hope for Worcester - a non-profit organization whose mission is to revitalize communities and renew hope by collaborating with businesses, health and service organizations, churches, and individuals to meet physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational needs within the city of Worcester and Worcester County. Its purpose is to provide a network of resources, services, and community events offering hope, love, and assistance to families, single parents, underprivileged, unemployed, underemployed, homeless, and those suffering within our community. This organization sponsors Worcester’s annual Day of Hope where local businesses, churches, and government

agencies come together to tackle real-world issues in Worcester communities such as homelessness, hunger, and drug abuse. This is an amazing example of how communities can come together to solve problems.

Northeast Region held workshops on financials with Eastern Bank as a sponsor and a representative attended to answer questions on lines of credit, loans, and other banking matters for attendees.

Southeast Region staff continues to participate in the New Bedford Source Link collaborative and on the New Bedford Economic Development Council. An advisor continues to participate in the Regional Economic Development Resources Meetings at the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce to learn about additional solutions to client challenges. An advisor continues to meet potential new clients and support our resource partners by networking at the Network 143 monthly meetings. Staff are NBEDC members. Staff continue to plan and execute a Winter/Spring Workshop Series for the New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC) increasing client base. Advisors held webinars for the NBEDC with MGCC as the sponsor and staff continue to deliver SEED's "Basic Entrepreneurial Workshop: Understanding Business Financials" via Zoom in conjunction with local lenders. This allows advisors to better deliver informational education to more of the region and gain new clients and provide an important step towards producing a bankable business plan. Staff continue to serve as members of the SEED Corporation. An advisor attended the SBA "Access to Capital Brockton Small Business Summit" and many attendees have become new clients.

Western Region plays an active role in supporting the economic environment of Western Massachusetts through various initiatives. Involvement spans numerous community-based events and collaborations with local chambers of commerce. Staff provide advising to members and represent the Massachusetts SBDC at various events.

Staff established strong relationships with several community-based organizations, including the Latino Economic Development Corp, SCORE, Granite State Development Corp, E-for-All, Western Mass Means Business, Woman's Business Owners Alliance, and two regional CDCs. Furthermore, a staff member serves on the board of directors at MassHire. The office maintains a productive working relationship with MassHire, MGCC, the Mass Executive Office of Economic Development, and the Massachusetts Office of Business Development.

Staff are collaborating with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to assist clients in preparing for sales at the Massachusetts State Exposition Building during The Big E Fair. This annual event, held at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, lasts for 17 days, and attracts over 1.6 million people. Staff are committed to informing our food and farming clients about year-round learning opportunities offered by MDAR.

We have also initiated a partnership with Putnam Vocational High School, facilitated by an STCC Professor and Putnam Board member. This collaboration provides students with real-world experience and allows them to share their skills with our clients in areas such as sign making, menu creation, and retail design woodworking. The program involves rotations in metal, wood, and digital print shops, with our client serving as the pilot for this program.

Berkshire Region staff conducted research for newsletters, events and trainings, marketing, and promotional ideas to promote small businesses' online footprints. Examples included trends and lifestyle patterns, seasonal marketing approaches, best practices of working from home, how to protect small computer networks from cyber-attacks, and social media tips to grow a small business.

Northeast Region business advisors engage in thorough research to assist clients effectively. This research encompasses various areas such as Market Research, Competitor Analysis, Financial Analysis, Strategic Research, and more. Additionally, following the senior business advisor's completion of certification in social media marketing, the office began offering website and social media audits.

During website audits, the advisor meticulously assesses clients' websites, scrutinizing metrics like page loading speed, site security, SEO performance, and more. A customized report is then shared with the client, focusing on optimizing site traffic and enhancing user experience. The advisor also evaluates the site's aesthetic and functionality, ensuring efficient use of site real estate, appropriate placement of contact information, and suggesting improvements to layout and function.

Social media audits involve a thorough review of clients' social media channels, including platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. The advisor assesses the appropriateness of content, captions, and hashtag usage to enhance the client's social media presence, aiming to attract followers and convert them into customers. The entire audit process typically spans 1-3 hours, providing clients with invaluable insights to bolster their digital marketing strategies.

Southeast Region staff conduct market research for clients almost on a weekly basis. An advisor had a particularly unique search about mycology (the study of mushrooms) and when an advisor in the Central Region was contacted by a new client in the "How to Start a Business" webinar series, who is a mushroom farmer, the Southeast Region advisor was able to forward the mycology information to the Central Region for the client – collaboration at its finest! An advisor continues to get clients ready for another round of SBIR grant requests. An advisor conducted market research for clients on economic development and trends and for the printing industry and researched basketball programs and gyms for a client. Staff conducted research about the SBA's 7(j) Management and Technical Assistance program for a client. An advisor conducted research for a client on Mass Housing and the Mass Housing Partnerships and met with the CFO of the Mass Housing Partnership to discuss grants for down payments on subsidized housing projects.

Western Region personnel employ the resources of the UMass library for conducting client-oriented research. Office interns contribute by conducting market research tailored to clients' needs. Through a strategic partnership with WBOA and its Social Media Bootcamp, staff have gained valuable insights into digital marketing. Advisors are proficient in using Vertical IQ & IBIS, tools that provide industry-specific education to our advisors. These tools enable advisors to offer clients valuable insights into current industry trends and metrics. Staff have initiated the exploration of AI tools to enhance business plan research capabilities and to identify additional resources that our clients can utilize to improve their market research execution. The team regularly receives various economic reports that cover legislation, economic trends, conditions, and developments that impact small businesses and the local community. Western Region interns collaborate with the staff to conduct research on a range of topics related to the

economy and the marketing needs of our clients. This collaborative effort ensures that Massachusetts SBDC services remain relevant and beneficial to clients.

1300 – ONLINE ACTIVITY

Berkshire Region has increased its use of technology, especially video and participatory tools during advising sessions, as an educational technique, creating more engagement with clients and webinar participants. For example, the use of a second camera focused on an external whiteboard is used for active, real-time work when graphically illustrating the dynamics among key business functions. Client advising sessions were delivered mostly via Zoom with some phone conferencing and in-person meetings. Staff attended SBA-sponsored meetings and presentations via Microsoft Teams. The use of email continued to be a heavily used method for transferring files and documents. Spreadsheets, business plans and worksheets were developed with the clients via a live screen share on Zoom. Staff continues to expand the depth and breadth of videos used and promoted through the newsletter. The total views of all YouTube videos for this 6-month period were 79 and each view represents an opportunity to extend the Massachusetts SBDC brand and provides direct contact information to support the growth of the center's client base. The Berkshire Region made strides in strengthening its online presence through monthly emailed newsletters, email campaigns announcing upcoming training events, more systematic email press releases, and the understanding and use of QR codes. Staff also worked with clients to use these technologies and other digital tools to market online.

Central Region advising appointments are scheduled online using social media and current technologies to enhance and ease the client's experience. Platforms include: Calendly, LinkedIn, Facebook, Zoom, Google, Slack, Asana, and Microsoft Teams. Other marketing platforms with clients include Squarespace, Wix, SnapRetail and Constant Contact. The team managed 38 student-led client projects simultaneously using Canvas, Microsoft Teams, and Slack to ensure clients receive top-level advising and the students receive an unparalleled, real-world, learning experience, under the tutelage of business advisors. Training webinars are marketed via Facebook. Google, YouTube, LinkedIn, Constant Contact and Eventbrite.

Greater Boston Region adopted new technologies such as artificial intelligence to help clients create bankable business plans, conduct research, and revisit marketing and sales strategies. Advisors are helping clients incorporate AI into businesses to create efficiencies, freeing up staff to focus on more complex issues. The office is holding AI training to assist clients with this new and critical technology. Additionally, staff are assisting clients to utilize customized apps designed for small business owners to help streamline processes, deliver targeted resources, and track progress, ensuring clients receive personalized support tailored to needs. The office secured licenses from LivePlan to assist clients in business plan development and are leveraging open-source software, templates, and online resources that are freely available for creating content, conducting virtual workshops, or managing online platforms.

Northeast Region continues to conduct business via Microsoft Teams for the main phone service. This allows staff to talk with clients hands-free to take more accurate notes. Staff continue to advise our clients via phone and Zoom, with webinars run via Zoom.

Southeast Region advisor attended a webinar on “Artificial Intelligence Tools for Small Businesses’ to assist clients in the ever-changing climate. The advisor also attended an SBA cybersecurity webinar and presented on Massachusetts SBDC services to the FDIC at a conference in Braintree.

Western Region has fully integrated technology into its operations to enhance the quality and efficiency of services. Advisors utilize platforms such as Zoom and Teams to conduct high-quality, efficient, and convenient advising sessions, and have also begun to leverage technology to streamline our internal processes. Furthermore, advisors have delivered 11 webinars on various topics via Zoom.

To simplify the process of scheduling meetings with our advisors, we have implemented a scheduling tool, Calendly. This tool eliminates the need for constant email exchanges and provides our clients with direct access to book meetings, significantly improving the efficiency of the booking process.

We have introduced an online tool, LivePlan, to our clients seeking financing. This subscription-based tool enables clients to write a business plan and build pro forma financial statements. It also allows clients to invite advisors to review their work, eliminating the need to send multiple versions of their work via email. Everything is consolidated online in one place. Several local banks in the region have adopted LivePlan as their standard platform, fostering synergy between our work with clients and these banks.

The Western Region has also begun to enhance its online presence by updating our Google Business and Bing Business profiles. This ensures that the office appears in search results when clients are seeking small business assistance. Staff utilize tools like Constant Contact and YouTube to deliver meaningful monthly newsletters and provide access to previous webinars. With the assistance of interns, staff offer support to clients with social media and other online marketing techniques. The team also uses Facebook and LinkedIn blogs to broadcast mission and messages.

An advisor, leveraging a technical background, assists clients with various aspects of establishing their online presence. This includes obtaining a domain for their business, setting up a commercial email package, selecting a website platform, and building a site on the chosen platform. He educates clients about SEO, helps them register their businesses with Google, and teaches them how to monitor their online presence using Google Analytics and Google Search Console. The advisor also provides education on cybersecurity threats and techniques to mitigate these risks. Lastly, he introduces clients to AI-based tools, demonstrating the advantages and challenges of using this emerging technology.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program reports that online advising continues to be the platform of choice for most clients and for the GSA/SBIR advisors. Virtual client advising continues to be the preference by clients and advisors for efficiency. Virtual technology allows staff to provide consistent high-end advising to all clients we meet and has allowed the same level of advisement with no concern about a client’s physical location within Massachusetts, this is especially true for our SBIR clients that come from across the state. The GSA/SBIR team presented online advisement, targeted webinars and other training utilizing a Zoom account, and when needed used Microsoft Teams, Webex, and other media platforms. Staff remain flexible and incorporate best practices in this area.

Massachusetts Export Center regularly records its webinars and uploads them to its website. In addition, the Export Center established the Massachusetts Export Resource Center which is a one-stop online resource for accessing a wide range of instructional and practical information on exporting to help businesses grow and take advantage of international opportunities.

1400 – OTHER ACTIVITY

Berkshire Region continued to send notices and press releases to the media to attract coverage of workshops and Massachusetts SBDC events. The local newspaper has posted short news briefs on just about every workshop as well as occasionally larger news articles.

Berkshire staff worked with the state director and the State Office by participating in a series of online meetings and one in-person meeting to further develop a strategic plan. Staff also completed several surveys and worksheets as part of this effort.

Staff consistently included training events offered by other Massachusetts SBDC regions in the Berkshire monthly newsletter. This had the benefit of bringing attention not only to the Berkshire-based offerings, but also to the diversity and expertise that exists across the Commonwealth.

Northeast Region staff in October attended the Increasing Lending Opportunities for Latinx Small Businesses for Hispanic Heritage Month; the regional director began Supplier Diversity Training and attended Top Talent: How Can Small Employers Excel at Recruiting and Training. In November, the regional director participated in the Main Streets Beverly and Salem for Small Business Saturday, attended the preparation for the upcoming MA SBA Salute to Veterans Event and attended the SBA Salute to Veterans event in Burlington. In December, advisors attended an event for LABO with the SBA in Worcester and the regional director attended an SBA Event at Mt. Ida. In January, an advisor attended the US Portugal and US EU Relations: A Conversation with Ambassadors Francisco Duarte Lopes and Robert A. Sherman in Lowell. In February, the regional director began assisting with the SSU Business Pitch Competition and was a judge for the first round and then was assigned to coach two contestants. The final Pitch Competition round is scheduled for April. In March, an advisor participated in the MCCI Networking Zoom meeting.

The regional director has been presenting for the Massachusetts SBDC with the Supplier Diversity Office Spring Business Webinar Series. The format is having presenters speak about their organization for about 10 minutes each and then using the remaining time for a question-and-answer period in breakout rooms. An advisor continues to hold outreach hours in Lawrence and Lowell.

Southeast Region advisor continues teaching part-time in the International Maritime Business department at Massachusetts Maritime Academy (MMA). An advisor continues to teach part-time in the Management and Organization department at Boston College. An advisor attended the administrative Embrace Change seminar. An advisor was reelected as the UMass PSU delegate for the Massachusetts SBDC. An advisor attended the MIT training on Balancing Change and the regional directors' orientation.

Western Region has been diligently serving the expansive and diverse community within its jurisdiction. The primary objective has been to forge strategic alliances with local entities to deliver unparalleled assistance to small businesses. Collaborative efforts encompass partnerships with local high schools, higher education institutions including the University of Massachusetts, municipal authorities, regional chambers of commerce, tourism organizations, financial institutions, Community Development Corporations (CDCs), business incubators, and numerous supportive businesses. The goal of these endeavors is to position the Massachusetts SBDC as the leading authority in the region that provides education and empowerment to clients, enabling them to establish and grow profitable businesses.

Intern Program: During the reporting period, the office hosted three interns from the Isenberg School of Management and one intern from Mount Holyoke College. The interns bring a wealth of relevant experience and skills that are invaluable in today's business landscape. The interns are creative, resourceful, and possess intellectual acuity. They are also adept at leveraging the latest social media platforms, technological tools, and business theories and practices.

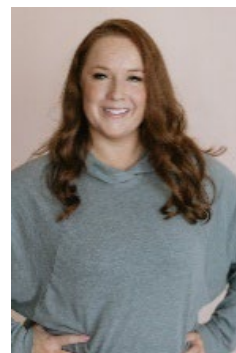
The interns have made significant contributions across various domains, including marketing, social media, and financial analysis. Staff have received numerous commendations from clients expressing appreciation for the work done by our interns. In fact, many clients continue to seek the assistance of interns who have previously served them. Interns add a unique dynamic to our office environment. They enrich our client meetings with their fresh perspectives and insights. They also enhance our office's efficiency by undertaking tasks that would otherwise be performed by professional staff. The current interns have made notable improvements to financial templates and PowerPoint presentations, thereby offering clients a service that is on par with the highest quality advisory assistance available in the region.

The Western Region intern program is universally recognized by all stakeholders as a robust and valuable component of our services. Furthermore, the intern program has served to strengthen ties with the Isenberg School of Management by providing students with a practical setting where they can apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom.

1500 – SUCCESS STORIES

Berkshire Region
Radiance Yoga (Pittsfield, MA)
www.radiance-yoga.com

Shannon Ashcroft is the owner of a well-established yoga studio in Pittsfield, Radiance Yoga, under the umbrella of Ashcroft Wellness. Radiance Yoga is a heated vinyasa studio in the heart of the Berkshires featuring welcoming community members, passionate instructors, and classes for all. Started in 2013, Radiance Yoga is a revolutionary studio that strips away the intimidating aspects of traditional yoga and instead practices modern yoga with a welcoming and energetic family. Shannon first became a client of the Berkshire Regional Center in 2019. During that time, Berkshire staff assisted her with securing Pandemic funding.



Pandemic Relief Received: \$10,000 EIDL Advance (SBA); \$63,000 EIDL (SBA); \$7,300 Payroll Protection Program (Greylock Federal Credit Union).

On April 4 of this year, Shannon closed on a new property to house her Yoga Studio. Berkshire staff worked with her on her business plan and financials and prepared her to be bank-ready—assistance and details to follow. Shannon's message: *"We are on our way to finish the closing for 744 Williams Street right now! Thank you so much for all your help. The bank was very impressed with my business plan and projections, and everything has gone smoothly."*

Northeast Region

Callie's Creations (Peabody, MA)

@callie.m33 on Instagram

Callie Mignault, founder of Callie's Creations, makes lazy Susans and charcuterie boards. The business started in 2020 as a way for Callie to fill the void during pandemic. Each design is handmade – first it is drawn by hand, next it is cut on vinyl, and finally it is applied to wood and sealed using liquid glass – a process that can take up to two weeks.



In addition to running a successful business, Callie is a straight-A high school student who plays softball, participates in dance, and volunteers in her community. She balances all of this at just 16 years old.

“As awful as COVID was for most people, for me it brought the start of a successful business. Personally, I’m grateful for it,” said Founder Callie Mignault.

Mignault was nominated by Rosa Di Virgilio Taormina, a Senior Business Advisor with the Massachusetts SBDC and Children’s Business Fair volunteer. Taormina first met Callie when she was a vendor at the Hamilton-Wenham Fair in 2022.

In 2022 and 2023, Mignault was one of three winners in her age category at the Fair, an event targeted to young entrepreneurs, ages 8-18. “There was something very special about her – her energy, passion, and entrepreneurial spirit. Her booth (one of 50) had the heaviest flow of traffic at each event.” said Taormina. After learning more about Callie and her entrepreneurial ambitions, Taormina suggested she work with the Massachusetts SBDC to talk about ways to grow her business.

Southeast Region

Hallways International (Hull, MA)

www.hallwaysinternational.com

In 2010, Bill Hall began working with advisor, Cliff Robbins. Bill had just left his corporate job as a website developer and wanted to start a business. Bill and Cliff began envisioning the business by putting thoughts on paper in the form of marketing and business plans and Brian developed his own robust website.



As a true entrepreneur, Brian also had an idea for a new product: a picture display board. He worked on a patent for “myPicboard,” with input from consultants associated with the Massachusetts SBDC, started manufacturing boards in his woodworking shop, and then began selling them online. Sales were not as robust after an initial burst, so Brian decided to revisit his website development business “Website Quarterback.”

He returned to see his advisor at the end of 2023. They worked on a new marketing plan. He formed an LLC, Hallways International, and has been marketing his ‘myPicboard’ as well as promoting his website development business. Brian has two part-time associates: one who is working on website security and

the other helps him with copywriting. Sales have been steadily growing and Brian is confident about his future as an entrepreneur.

“Dr. Robbins has been an invaluable advisor and has given me the confidence to continue to build my business. I want to meet with him regularly to grow my business and hire more people. Cliff constantly reminds me about the importance of networking. Feel free to reach out to me directly or at HallwaysInternational.com for more updates on this site and other Billboard Booster Spotlight Web Publishing opportunities.”

Western Region

CCR Freight Logistics LLC (Springfield, MA)

www.ccrfreightlogistics.com

Asiala Dickson Rivera, a lifelong resident of Springfield, MA, started CCR Freight Logistics - the first female, black-owned trucking business at the beginning of the pandemic. Since its inception, the company has provided education and career opportunities in the trucking logistics industry.



In March of 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act was introduced to help struggling businesses. Ms. Rivera also faced financial difficulties and needed capital to keep her business afloat. However, the application process turned out to be quite challenging and complicated. One of the biggest hurdles she faced was obtaining the necessary funding and navigating the complexities of the ARPA allocation grant application process. The lengthy and complex process required much patience.

The assistance provided by the advisor at the Massachusetts SBDC Western Regional Office was invaluable and covered a broad spectrum of areas, ranging from technical expertise to strategic guidance. The advisor's dedication and expertise played a crucial role in helping navigate the complexities of the grant application process, resulting in a significant boost to the business operations.

After providing years of assistance, the SBDC Western Regional Office played a crucial role in helping to secure a \$40,000 ARPA grant in Springfield in December 2023.

Asiala said, “The support of the MSBDC Western Region has been invaluable. I am grateful to senior business advisor Allen Kronick for all that he has done to help me grow both personally and professionally. His mentorship has provided guidance, support, and valuable insights that have helped to expand my network. Without Allen, I never would have been able to get through the process of obtaining ARPA funding. I look forward to continuing to work together and make more progress in the future.”

Massachusetts Export Center

Diamond Antenna and Microwave (Littleton, MA)

www.diamondantenna.com



Established in 1956, Diamond Antenna and Microwave has grown to become a leading global competitor in design, manufacturing and testing of high-reliability precision radio

frequency (RF) rotary joints and integrated rotating subsystems for ground, shipboard, submarine, aircraft, and commercial platforms, as well as space applications. The company employs 65 people at its headquarters in Littleton, MA and has been exporting for the past 20 years.

The Massachusetts Export Center has been working with Diamond Antenna since 2013. Over the years, the Export Center has helped Diamond Antenna with a variety of different export-related issues, focusing on export regulatory compliance and export operational concerns. The Export Center's assistance included export compliance manual reviews, export classification, export licensing determination, origin determination under Free Trade Agreements and a comprehensive export compliance risk assessment. Through the Export Center, Diamond Antenna has also taken advantage of the STEP Grant program, which led to a significant increase in exports for the company. Diamond Antenna has been a member of the Export Center's Compliance Alliance initiative for the past 7 years and has also taken extensive advantage of the training programs offered by the Export Center, with the employees of the company attending over 25 online and in-person events.

Exporting has been an important and long-term part of Diamond Antenna's business. Exports currently account for approximately 27% of the company's overall revenue. The company's goal is to increase export revenue to 35% of total revenue within the next three years. Diamond Antenna exports to about 20 export markets, including Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Norway, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

Diamond Antenna and Microwave was named winner of the SBA 2024 Massachusetts and New England Regional Small Business Exporter of the Year awards. The Massachusetts Export Center was honored to nominate Diamond Antenna and Microwave for these awards.

1600 – ADVOCACY

Berkshire Region through monthly newsletters and event announcements, the Berkshire Office promoted workshops, marketing opportunities, registration links, critical SBA and other program updates, and important news development from Massachusetts SBDC centers and other organizations across the Commonwealth. Staff regularly receive and respond to inquiries from local organizations, banks, and regional partners. The office uses each contact to promote the Massachusetts SBDC and Isenberg brands, as well as use each connection to foster community goodwill. At the tail end of this six month., the regional director was offered an opportunity to be a judge had an entrepreneurial competition at Williams College. The event will occur at the beginning of the next semiannual. Staff were approached by the local newspaper to be featured in its weekly Business Journal. The regional director was interviewed, and a newspaper photographer came to the office to take photos. The result was a very large article with a three-page spread of quotes, information, and photographs. [Click here](#) for the Berkshire Eagle article.

Central Region advisor held client outreach, training events and meetings at both the Marlborough and the Greater Worcester chambers of commerce and is an active leader at the Worcester Business Resource Alliance and the Massachusetts CDC Association.

Greater Boston Region presented at the second round of the City of Boston's SPACE Grant Program on behalf of the Massachusetts SBDC to share our services with SPACE Grant Applicants. In March, staff hosted the SBA Resource Partner Collaborative Meeting with other Boston-area resource partners.

Southeast Region has many clients asking for help with legal issues, with referrals to the Harvard Transactional Clinic and the office's free Legal Clinics. The monthly Legal Clinics help six clients each month with various issues from the loss of use of an office building due to fire, cameras in the workplace, taxes, leases, disclaimers, and general business questions. The sessions are held via Zoom, so Attorney Cassara can assist people from Nantucket to Newton (and in between) during each session. With the new Zoom format, there have not been any no shows. The office often gains six new clients or returning clients who update their business information. So far, all attendees have taken advantage of the suggestion to meet with an advisor prior to the clinic to streamline questions to get the most out of the half-hour sessions. The monthly sessions usually "sell out" within an hour or so after posting the schedule. Previously the clinics did not run in July and August due to the amount of tourist traffic in the area and the challenge of getting to and from various locations. Since the pandemic and the success of holding Zoom sessions, sessions are held year-round. An advisor participated in a Business Support Panel at Babson and was given a private invitation to sit in on some of the entrepreneur classes. An advisor was invited to discuss the Massachusetts SBDC's programs and services during a SEED Corporation webinar "Legal Considerations for Small Business Owners." An advisor offered training in doing presentations to three MA Maritime Academy students at the request of the dean and attended a SCORE webinar: The 7 Best Marketing Strategies.

Western Region utilizes a robust communication strategy to disseminate pertinent business news, promote Massachusetts SBDC and partner workshops, and highlight marketing opportunities within the region. Our newsletters serve as a primary channel for this communication. Staff are often invited as guest speakers at local events, providing them an opportunity to share their business expertise with local entrepreneurs and further elevate the visibility of the Massachusetts SBDC brand. Staff strategically leverage nationally recognized months to spotlight specific segments of our client base. This includes featuring women-owned businesses during Women's History Month, black-owned businesses during Black History Month, LGBTQ+ business owners during LGBTQ+ Pride Month, and veteran-owned businesses during Veterans' holidays.

In addition to newsletters, staff employ social media as a platform to celebrate our clients' milestones, such as grand openings and significant events, and to share their success stories.

Over the past six months, staff have reconnected with most local chambers of commerce, fostering a collaborative effort to support established businesses within each community. Discussions are underway to jointly offer programs and opportunities aimed at fostering a strong, supportive network among small businesses. Our goal is to cultivate a vibrant and interconnected business community with the Massachusetts SBDC as a leader in this effort.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program advisors participated in events that provided business and government contracting materials to help grow the Massachusetts small business base by staffing resource tables at outreach events like the Travelers Institute's Cyber Awareness event. Staff actively support SBA and other resource partner events, whenever feasible. Advisors always submit at least one client for SBA Small Business Week awards.

1700 – RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Berkshire Region staff fielded inquiries to work together on initiatives and projects. For the most part, these were not a fit; however, a few were warranted and staff followed-up. Staff attended 1Berkshire events, which included business expos, Practitioner Group meetings, and Entrepreneurial Meetups to learn of future strategic directions and interests. Staff worked with many regional organizations and partners including: 1Berkshire, Williamstown Chamber of Commerce, Berkshire Office suitemates, and the Engagement Center at the Greylock Federal Credit Union. Additionally, staff strengthened relationships with area banks and the city of Pittsfield which resulted in numerous qualified referrals for services.

Greater Boston Region has been researching innovative approaches to non-traditional business training to meet the evolving needs of entrepreneurs. Staff are exploring a mentor and training program with Boston-area professionals where advisors will offer one-on-one and small group sessions with subject-matter experts to complement and supplement our advising, in areas such as: legal, insurance, accounting, taxes, human resources, sales and marketing.

Northeast Region lists webinars and training courses on the local chamber of commerce websites. This has generated more attendees at workshops and helped to expand the SBDC brand. Staff continue to post training on the SBA website as well.

Southeast Region has many clients completing bank loans applications and requiring extensive help with business plans and cash projections. Advisors often refer clients to SEED's monthly "Basic Entrepreneurial Workshop Understanding Business Financials" delivered by Massachusetts SBDC advisors. These webinars also result in gaining new clients after each session. An advisor is moderating the SouthCoast CEO roundtable featuring guest speakers and had a meeting to determine future plans. The advisor worked with numerous clients who are asking for projections and financials for businesses they are purchasing. Other clients are retiring from corporate careers and purchasing all types of small businesses.

Western Region offered invitations to officials in banking, insurance, chambers of commerce, and community leaders. The meetings have been integral in continuing/cultivating relationships. The convenient, online meeting platform has successfully gathered information on current trends, staffing changes, and overall challenges in the industry. The office has often matched local resources/referral businesses to our clients covering all aspects of business. On occasion, we engage these partners to co-host webinars or events, enabling staff to educate clients with their expertise.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program staff were increasingly asked to participate in in-person meetings and events the past six months. The team participated in sponsored, co-sponsored and other SBA and partner events when it was feasible and imperative to be present. Advisors continued outreach to former partners to re-engage, since much ground was lost during the pandemic years and has yet to be fully recovered.

1800 – COLLABORATION AND LEVERAGING

Berkshire Region initiated collaborative relationships with a variety of community and business entities. Some of these included: Staff continue to attend 1Berkshire Entrepreneurial Meetups as a way of

introducing Massachusetts SBDC services to area entrepreneurs and small businesses; Staff met several times with the Williamstown Chamber of Commerce to develop opportunities to work together.

Central Region continues to develop a collaborative relationship between its advisors, students from Clark University and local entrepreneurs throughout Central Massachusetts in conjunction with all the technical assistance providers through the Worcester Business Resource Alliance (WBRA): SBDC, SCORE, CWE, City of Worcester, EforAll, E Forever, WorcLab, The Venture Forum, WPI, Worcester Business Development Corporation and The Idea Lab.

Northeast Region collaborates with Mass Rehab in assisting clients in starting businesses. Staff continue to hold office hours at UMass Lowell and the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce in Lawrence on two Wednesdays each month.

Southeast Region advisor sits on the Cape Cod Culinary Incubator (CCCI) Board of Directors. The advisor also serves on the UMass Dartmouth's Charlton College of Business (CCB) Advisory Board, Massachusetts Maritime Academy (MMA) and the Cape Cod Community College's (CCCC) Business Administration Advisory Board and participates in the SBA Partners' Meetings. An advisor serves as a Trustee of the South Shore 2030 Economic Development Corporation. An advisor attended the One SouthCoast Chamber's event featuring Senator Michael Rodrigues, Chairman of Ways and Means Committee.

An advisor participated in a luncheon meeting with SEED Corporation and strengthened already strong ties. The advisor had a conference call with the senior vice president of Bay Colony Development to discuss new client development. The advisor attended the SBA Matchmaker event in Taunton, an excellent and well-attended event (400 registrants) despite the bad weather. The advisor made many new contacts and connected with at least ten new clients. An advisor moderated SBA's "Managing Your EIDL" webinar reminding borrowers of repayment options and schedules. An advisor participated in a Financial Entrepreneurial Workshop led by SEED Corporation and sponsored by Bluestone Bank. One participant said that the event, "Exceeded my expectations! The presentation was so informative, the food was amazing, and the day was a wonderful investment of my time as a business owner! Well worth it!"

Western Region is committed to enhancing the reach of services in Western Massachusetts through strategic collaborations with other technical service providers in the region. Partners in the Western Mass Means Business (WMMB) initiative include Franklin County CDC, Valley CDC, CWE, SCORE, Common Capital, and Massachusetts SBDC. There are monthly meetings to strategize on ways to bolster support for entrepreneurs through co-advising, education, and referrals. A recent success includes a four-week course on Small Business Accounting, which featured the WAVE app. The office has also forged partnerships with numerous organizations to promote and support small businesses. Collaborators include (but not limited to): Living Local 413, MassHire, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, MGCC, MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Office of Business Development, various town Economic Development Departments, and numerous regional banks. These partnerships enable us to co-support small businesses and refer each other's services, thereby creating a robust support network. Over the past six months, staff have revitalized relationships with most local chambers and fostered a collaborative effort to support established businesses within each community. Staff are currently in discussions to jointly offer programs and opportunities aimed at fostering a strong, supportive network among small businesses. The overarching goal is to cultivate a vibrant and interconnected business community, with the Massachusetts SBDC leading the charge.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program staff continued to be active participants in webinars and other outreach with our funding agencies, SBA and MA Commonwealth, as well as other key partners. We were actively involved in planning and strategy meetings with resource partners to design and organize future outreach events and workshops, as well. Both advisors, Dan, and Sandra, participate in the SBA's monthly partners meeting.

The GSA advisor continued to participate in monthly online NAPEX board & leadership meetings (NAPEX is the National APEX Accelerator Alliance – formerly known as APTAC or the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers). All NAPEX meetings were virtual except for the November training conference in DC, January Board meeting in DC and the March Board & Annual Membership Meeting and training conference in Idaho. Advisor honored with the Becky Peterson Human Impact Award from NAPEX at the March Conference this year.

The following captures a few highlights of events, meetings, panels, and workshops staff were involved with and not listed in other sections. Presentations were made either in-person or via an online platform for the following events: presented along with SBA a two-part series on How to Prepare a Capability Statement & Elevator Pitch; NextStage Merrimack Valley (formerly Interise) evening virtual presentation on government contracting and Massachusetts SBDC services; staffed resource table with SBA in Worcester for the Traveler's Institute Cyber Awareness Day; presented with SBA a "Get Ready for Government Procurement" webinar; CMMC Overview; NextStage Worcester, presented government contract overview and Q&A session; attended invite only American Cancer Society Brightedge Summit to share novel financing and commercial approaches and foster collaboration in research and investing to advance the fight against cancer; Clark SBDC How to Start a Business, guest speaker on government procurement opportunities; SBA hosted onsite evening event at the Boston Public Library (Government Procurement Readiness & Massachusetts SBDC services was presented virtually); Get Ready for Government Contracting with SBA; Participated in virtual National Seed Fund week event; and Government Contracting 101 presented for the North Central Chamber.

1900 – UNPLANNED TRAVEL

None

2000 – KEY PERSONNEL CHANGES

Berkshire Region underwent significant transitions with personnel. After much work and years of preparation, advocacy, and grit - the client services coordinator position transitioned to a program coordinator position. This new position is structured with a completely new job description which includes the tasks and responsibilities of the previous position with those of a business advisor. Although the change officially occurred in January, the regional director and the client services coordinator worked to prepare for that possibility, which included many meetings and some job shadowing. Once the position was officially recognized, the director and the coordinator worked hard during orientation sessions and increased meetings with clients - resulting in the development of the coordinator being able to take the lead in some sessions. Countless hours and specific focused work facilitated the transition to this point.

Going forward, more directed training, orientation, and experience are necessary for the coordinator to be able to successfully lead client sessions which include the diversity of client needs/demands. In addition to the client advising sessions, the position also has been incorporating and adapting to changes in operations.

In addition to the above changes, a significant set of changes occurred with the part-time senior business advisor position. After a long and lengthy search for a candidate for the position, a person was chosen and began work at the tail end of the last semi-annual. What then ensued was a focused and concentrated onboarding process which occurred over the next couple of months. Issues emerged with the new hire and a decision made to release the staff member. Client advising services are rendered by the regional director, with some assistance from the program coordinator.

Central Region had three personnel changes during the reporting period. In December 2023, business advisor Tom Herald was selected as the new regional director. In February 2024, Cheryl Miller left employment and Anthony Fiore was hired as a senior business advisor.

2100 – PROBLEMS

Southeast Region indicates that restaurants are continuing to struggle with rising food costs and difficulty finding help. All types of businesses are also having difficulty finding qualified employees.

Western Region reports that the current economic situation has required clients to deal with staffing needs, lack of financial support for first-time startups, rising costs of goods, and increasing infrastructure costs. All these factors cut into the shrinking margins of local businesses.

Government Sales Advisory (GSA) / SBIR Program reports the volume of clients needing government contracting technical assistance is increasing. In many cases the new clients are less prepared for the market and therefore require more time and hands-on assistance to become procurement ready. Clients seeking guidance on proposal preparation and content, reviews, submission mechanics and equity investment assistance continue to grow.

2200 – BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON

Budget Comparison Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Budget Comparison October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024				
<u>Federal</u>	<u>Budget</u> ^{1/}	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>%</u> ^{2/}
Personnel	1634506.00	1230800.77	403705.23	8%
Fringe Benefits	609561.00	550518.83	59042.17	1%
Travel	103500.00	22938.48	80561.52	2%
Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Supplies	39142.00	16245.06	22896.94	0%
Contractual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Consultants	137486.00	7340.00	130146.00	2%
Others	88744.00	46226.17	42517.83	1%
Total Federal Direct Cost	2612939.00	1874069.31	738869.69	14%
Total Federal Indirect Cost	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Total Approved Federal Funds	<u>2612939.00</u>	<u>1874069.31</u>	<u>738869.69</u>	
<u>Non-Federal</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>	
Personnel	828865.00	841681.19	(12816.19)	0%
Fringe Benefits	357459.00	354850.61	2608.39	0%
Travel	19380.00	17860.33	1519.67	0%
Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Supplies	16345.00	13201.49	3143.51	0%
Contractual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Consultants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Others	103805.00	79351.59	24453.41	0%
Total Direct Cost	1325854.00	1306945.21	18908.79	0%
Waived Indirect Costs	<u>1293658.39</u>	<u>946156.31</u>	<u>347502.08</u>	7%
Total Approved Non-Federal	2619512.39	2253101.52	366410.87	
Total Approved Budget	<u>5232451.39</u>	<u>4127170.83</u>	<u>1105280.56</u>	

^{1/} The current SBA Approved Budget. See page 3 of final modification.

^{2/} Percentage of the total Approved Budget

2300 – ECONOMIC IMPACT

FY2024	GOAL	ACTUAL
Total Training Clients	2,376	1,448
Total Training Hours	N/A	8,113
Unique Clients Served	2,350	2,041
New Business Starts	188	76
Capital Infusion	\$71,500,000	\$69,162,213

EXHIBITS

See following pages.

###

Massachusetts SBDC Network
FY24 Clients Advised with Capital Formation Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	NON-SBA LOANS				SBA SECURED LOANS				EQUITY FINANCING				TOTAL FINANCING					TOTAL BUSINESS STARTS
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 365,000	1	1						\$ 121,800				\$ 486,800	3	2	17	0	2
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	\$ 2,716,500	6	5		\$ 4,110,000	3	3		\$ 1,161,000				\$ 7,987,500	10	9	38	45	6
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 148,000	2	2						\$ 1,940,500				\$ 2,088,500	9	8	25	16	3
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	\$ 8,000	1	1		\$ 3,898,661	11	11		\$ 1,582,655				\$ 5,489,316	52	51	69	42	38
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 672,000	5	4		\$ 8,505,963	13	11		\$ 14,678,830				\$ 23,856,793	38	31	105	173	12
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,077,500	3	3		\$ 716,000	4	4		\$ 581,000				\$ 2,374,500	10	10	44	11	6
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,987,000	18	16		\$ 17,230,624	31	29		\$ 20,065,785				\$ 42,283,409	122	111	298	287	67
MASS EXPORT CENTER									\$ 446,050				\$ 446,050	7	4	2	233	
GOVERNMENT SALES									\$ 26,432,754				\$ 26,432,754	21	13	43	32	4
NETWORK TOTAL	\$4,987,000	18	16		\$17,230,624	31	29		\$46,944,589				\$69,162,213	150	121	343	552	71

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	WOMEN CLIENTS						MINORITY CLIENTS						VETERANS						CLIENTS WITH DISABILITY					
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1													\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	\$ 1,898,500	4	4	24	10	3	\$ 3,859,000	5	5	12	19	3		1	1	1		1		1	1	1		1
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 134,500	2	2	1	3	1	\$ 867,500	4	3	2	3	1												
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	\$ 619,305	31	31	25	67	19	\$ 3,749,016	30	29	36	79	18	\$ 159,670	4	4	4	5	3	\$ 20,040	4	4	2	7	2
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 4,260,349	16	16	31	109	5	\$ 1,524,263	13	10	19	40	4							\$ 626,000	3	2	3	3	1
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,341,500	6	6	16	7	4	\$ 1,002,000	7	7	17	10	5	\$ 705,000	1	1	27		1						
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 8,300,954	61	60	102	196	33	\$ 11,001,779	59	54	86	151	31	\$ 864,670	6	6	32	5	5	\$ 692,840	10	8	11	10	5
MASS EXPORT CENTER		7	6		260		\$ 260,000	8	7		235			3	3	2	43			1	1		55	
GOVERNMENT SALES	\$ 819,866	4	3	9		3	\$ 2,163,000	2	2	6	2								\$ 298,000	1	1	5		1
NETWORK TOTAL	\$9,120,820	72	67	111	456	36	\$13,424,779	69	63	92	388	31	\$864,670	9	9	34	48	5	\$990,840	12	9	16	65	6

Massachusetts SBDC Network
FY24 Clients Advised with Capital Formation Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	NON-SBA LOANS				SBA SECURED LOANS				EQUITY FINANCING				TOTAL FINANCING					TOTAL BUSINESS STARTS
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS		\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 365,000	1	1						\$ 121,800				\$ 486,800	3	2	17	0	2
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	\$ 2,716,500	6	5		\$ 4,110,000	3	3		\$ 1,161,000				\$ 7,987,500	10	9	38	45	6
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 148,000	2	2						\$ 1,940,500				\$ 2,088,500	9	8	25	16	3
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	\$ 8,000	1	1		\$ 3,898,661	11	11		\$ 1,582,655				\$ 5,489,316	52	51	69	42	38
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 672,000	5	4		\$ 8,505,963	13	11		\$ 14,678,830				\$ 23,856,793	38	31	105	173	12
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,077,500	3	3		\$ 716,000	4	4		\$ 581,000				\$ 2,374,500	10	10	44	11	6
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,987,000	18	16		\$ 17,230,624	31	29		\$ 20,065,785				\$ 42,283,409	122	111	298	287	67
MASS EXPORT CENTER									\$ 446,050				\$ 446,050	7	4	2	233	
GOVERNMENT SALES									\$ 26,432,754				\$ 26,432,754	21	13	43	32	4
NETWORK TOTAL	\$4,987,000	18	16		\$17,230,624	31	29		\$46,944,589				\$69,162,213	150	121	343	552	71

PERFORMANCE YEAR 2024	WOMEN CLIENTS						MINORITY CLIENTS						VETERANS						CLIENTS WITH DISABILITY					
CENTER	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS	\$\$\$\$	# DEALS	# CLI-ENTS	JOBS CRE	JOBS RET	BIZ STARTS
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1													\$ 46,800	2	1	5		1
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	\$ 1,898,500	4	4	24	10	3	\$ 3,859,000	5	5	12	19	3		1	1	1		1		1	1	1		1
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 134,500	2	2	1	3	1	\$ 867,500	4	3	2	3	1												
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	\$ 619,305	31	31	25	67	19	\$ 3,749,016	30	29	36	79	18	\$ 159,670	4	4	4	5	3	\$ 20,040	4	4	2	7	2
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 4,260,349	16	16	31	109	5	\$ 1,524,263	13	10	19	40	4							\$ 626,000	3	2	3	3	1
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	\$ 1,341,500	6	6	16	7	4	\$ 1,002,000	7	7	17	10	5	\$ 705,000	1	1	27		1						
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	\$ 8,300,954	61	60	102	196	33	\$ 11,001,779	59	54	86	151	31	\$ 864,670	6	6	32	5	5	\$ 692,840	10	8	11	10	5
MASS EXPORT CENTER		7	6		260		\$ 260,000	8	7		235			3	3	2	43			1	1		55	
GOVERNMENT SALES	\$ 819,866	4	3	9		3	\$ 2,163,000	2	2	6	2								\$ 298,000	1	1	5		1
NETWORK TOTAL	\$9,120,820	72	67	111	456	36	\$13,424,779	69	63	92	388	31	\$864,670	9	9	34	48	5	\$990,840	12	9	16	65	6

Board
FY24 CLIENTS ADVISED ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY

Owner **Antoinette Uwamwiza**

Run Apr 08, 2024 10:55:02 AM
As **Antoinette Uwamwiza**

Sessions
Date Between Oct 1, 2023 and Mar 31, 2024

Sessions
Session Type Is (=) Initial Follow On

FINANCING

Sessions
Verified Is True

Center	Total	Sales Increase Amount \$ Sum	Export Sales \$ Max	Export Related Impact Count	State Prime Amount Sum
60 Western Mass	\$2,374,500	60,000		0	0
80 North Shore	\$5,489,316	7,739,210		0	10,000,000
90 Central Mass	\$7,987,500	10,000	10,000	1	0
110 SE Mass	\$23,856,793	0		0	0
140 Mt. Ida Boston	\$2,088,500	3,966,500		0	0
150 Berkshire Reg	\$486,800	0		0	0
170 International	\$446,050	17,263,311	12,000,000	17	0
180 Govt Sales Adv	\$26,432,754	0		0	0
Total	\$69,162,213	29,039,021	12,000,000	18	10,000,000

LONG-TERM CLIENTS

Sessions
Σ Contact and Prep Hours Sum At Least (≥) 5.00

Center	Client	Contact and Prep Hours Sum
60 Western Mass	43	523.71
80 North Shore	49	462.58
90 Central Mass	21	673.75
110 SE Mass	80	947.45
140 Mt. Ida Boston	19	170.73
150 Berkshire Reg	18	129.25
170 International	51	1,240.25
180 Govt Sales Adv	57	464.47
Total	338	4,612.19

BUSINESS STARTS

Sessions
Verified Is True

Center	Total
60 Western Mass	8
80 North Shore	39
90 Central Mass	8
110 SE Mass	12
140 Mt. Ida Boston	3
150 Berkshire Reg	2
170 International	0
180 Govt Sales Adv	4
Total	76

EMPLOYMENT

Center	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained
60 Western Mass	63	20
80 North Shore	75	97
90 Central Mass	23	26
110 SE Mass	105	173
140 Mt. Ida Boston	25	16
150 Berkshire Reg	17	0
170 International	6	2,028
180 Govt Sales Adv	45	52
Total	359	2,412

CASES

Center	Total
60 Western Mass	212
80 North Shore	543
90 Central Mass	232
110 SE Mass	354
140 Mt. Ida Boston	210
150 Berkshire Reg	139
170 International	128
180 Govt Sales Adv	223
Total	2,041

HOURS

User's Center	C & P Hours
60 Western Mass	864.93
80 North Shore	1,189.69
90 Central Mass	919.55
110 SE Mass	1,508.75
140 Mt. Ida Boston	404.10
150 Berkshire Reg	327.90
170 International	1,435.15
180 Govt Sales Adv	712.06
Total	7,362.13

FY24 Clients Advised in Gateway Cities Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

City	Client	Started Business	Contact and Prep Hours	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Capital Formation
ATTLEBORO	9	1	48	1		\$520
BARNSTABLE	1		2			
BROCKTON	16		66			
CHELSEA	10		19	8		\$387,200
CHICOPEE	10		43			
EVERETT	4		15			
FALL RIVER	25		103		6	\$37,500
FITCHBURG	4		5	3	8	\$1,145,000
HAVERHILL	20		36			
HOLYOKE	13	1	89	3	18	\$197,000
LAWRENCE	23	3	34	3	6	\$55,750
LEOMINSTER	14		116			
LOWELL	22	1	82	1	44	\$24,500
LYNN	33	1	70	6	20	\$520
MALDEN	13	1	61	2	1	\$11,250
METHUEN	13	1	49	3	8	\$138,520
NEW BEDFORD	25		56			
PEABODY	25	1	71	2		\$20
PITTSFIELD	61	2	136	17		\$486,800
QUINCY	13	1	65	5	45	\$1,086,000
REVERE	11	1	29	1		\$520
SALEM	49	3	97	3		\$570
SPRINGFIELD	62	4	196	14	10	\$805,000
TAUNTON	7		16			
WESTFIELD	4		14			
WORCESTER	98	3	303	13	1	\$440,000
Grand Total	585	24	1,820	85	167	\$4,816,670

FY24 % of Underserved, Women, Veteran and Service-Disabled Veteran Clients Advised Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

Center	Underserved Clients	Women Clients	Veteran Clients	Service-Disabled Veteran Clients	All Clients Advised	% Underserved Clients	% Women Clients	% Veteran Clients	% Service-Disabled Veteran Clients
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	115	41	5		139	83%	29%	4%	0%
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	183	85	8	6	232	79%	37%	3%	3%
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	157	57	1	1	210	75%	27%	0%	0%
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	445	231	10	9	543	82%	43%	2%	2%
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	269	119	11	6	354	76%	34%	3%	2%
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	179	77	3	5	212	84%	36%	1%	2%
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	1,348	610	38	27	1,690	80%	36%	2%	2%
MASS EXPORT CENTER	87	18	9	1	128	68%	14%	7%	1%
GOVERNMENT SALES	134	50	7	6	223	60%	22%	3%	3%
NETWORK TOTAL	1,569	678	54	34	2,041	77%	33%	3%	2%

**FY24 % of Underserved, Women, Veteran and Service-Disabled Veteran Training Attendees Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024**

Center	Underserved Attendees	Women Attendees	Veteran Attendees	Service-Disabled Veteran Attendees	All Training Attendees	% Underserved Attendees	% Women	% Veterans	% Service-Disabled Veterans
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL OFFICE	4	0	1	0	9	44%	0%	11%	0%
CENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE Clark University	216	145	22	5	292	74%	50%	8%	2%
GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE	36	26	1	1	46	78%	57%	2%	2%
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE Salem State University	414	367	22	6	539	77%	68%	4%	1%
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE	121	97	8	0	160	76%	61%	5%	0%
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE	276	233	21	8	402	69%	58%	5%	2%
REGIONAL OFFICES SUBTOTAL	1,067	868	75	20	1,448	74%	60%	5%	1%
MASS EXPORT CENTER	437	366	29	2	667	66%	55%	4%	0%
GOVERNMENT SALES	0	3	1	0	133	0%	2%	1%	0%
NETWORK TOTAL	1,504	1,237	105	22	2,248	67%	55%	5%	1%

Board FY24 Training Report

By Center

Owner **Antoinette Uwamwiza**



Run Apr 08, 2024 10:23:11 AM

As **Antoinette Uwamwiza**

Events

Start Date

Current

Federal FY

Oct 1, 2023 - Sep 30, 2024

Events

Program

Is (=)

Not Set

SBDC

SBJA

STEP

Collaborations

Non-Deliverable

CARES Act

Events

Event Type

Is (=)

Training

Events

Status (Verified/Canceled)

Is (=)

Verified

Events

Center

Any

Center	Program	Sub Program	Events	Attendees	Hours of Training Sum	Training Seat Hours Sum
60 Western Mass			11	402	16	577
	SBDC		11	402	16	577
		Not Set	11	402	16	577
80 North Shore			19	539	27	595
	SBDC		19	539	27	595
		Not Set	19	539	27	595
90 Central Mass			14	292	25	541
	SBDC		14	292	25	541
		Not Set	14	292	25	541
110 SE Mass			7	160	12	237
	SBDC		7	160	12	237
		Not Set	6	129	11	206
		COVID-19	1	31	1	31
140 Mt. Ida Boston			7	46	9	54
	SBDC		7	46	9	54
		Not Set	7	46	9	54
150 Berkshire Reg			1	9	1	9
	SBDC		1	9	1	9
		Not Set	1	9	1	9
170 International			8	667	22	5,961
	SBDC		8	667	22	5,961
		Not Set	8	667	22	5,961
180 Govt Sales Adv			5	133	6	140
	SBDC		5	133	6	140
		Not Set	5	133	6	140
Total			72	2,248	117	8,113

Board FY24 Training Report

By Center

Owner **Antoinette Uwamwiza**



Run Apr 08, 2024 10:23:11 AM

As **Antoinette Uwamwiza**

Events

Start Date

Current

Federal FY

Oct 1, 2023 - Sep 30, 2024

Events

Program

Is (=)

Not Set

SBDC

SBJA

STEP

Collaborations

Non-Deliverable

CARES Act

Events

Event Type

Is (=)

Training

Events

Status (Verified/Canceled)

Is (=)

Verified

Events

Center

Any

Center	Program	Sub Program	Events	Attendees	Hours of Training Sum	Training Seat Hours Sum
60 Western Mass			11	402	16	577
	SBDC		11	402	16	577
		Not Set	11	402	16	577
80 North Shore			19	539	27	595
	SBDC		19	539	27	595
		Not Set	19	539	27	595
90 Central Mass			14	292	25	541
	SBDC		14	292	25	541
		Not Set	14	292	25	541
110 SE Mass			7	160	12	237
	SBDC		7	160	12	237
		Not Set	6	129	11	206
		COVID-19	1	31	1	31
140 Mt. Ida Boston			7	46	9	54
	SBDC		7	46	9	54
		Not Set	7	46	9	54
150 Berkshire Reg			1	9	1	9
	SBDC		1	9	1	9
		Not Set	1	9	1	9
170 International			8	667	22	5,961
	SBDC		8	667	22	5,961
		Not Set	8	667	22	5,961
180 Govt Sales Adv			5	133	6	140
	SBDC		5	133	6	140
		Not Set	5	133	6	140
Total			72	2,248	117	8,113

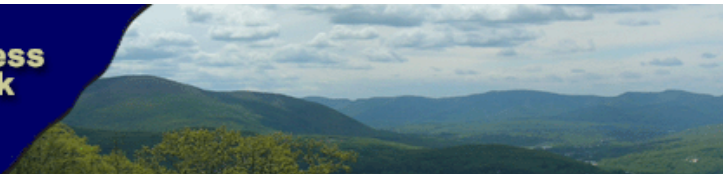
FY24 Trainings Report
October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

Center	Program	Sub Program	Site	Start Date	Training Topic	Title	Event	Total Attendees	Hours of Training	Training Hours
Berkshire Reg	SBDC	Not Set	On-line	3/21/2024	Start-up Assistance	A Starter, Start-Up	1	9	1	9
Total							1	9	1	9
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	The Museum of Russian Icons	11/8/2023	Start-up Assistance	How To Open A Business in Massachusetts	1	24	2	48
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Clark University - Lurie Room	11/16/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Open a Business in Massachusetts	1	34	2	68
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	The White Room - 138 Green Street	11/17/2023	Other	Shop Small Business Networking Event	1	47	2	94
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Clark University - Lurie Room	12/4/2023	Tax Planning	Shepherd & Goldstein Tax Seminar	1	19	2	38
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Clark University - Lurie Room	12/13/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Open a Business in Massachusetts	1	17	2	34
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Clark University - Grace Room	1/10/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Successful Business	1	21	2	42
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Grace Conference Room	1/16/2024	Financing/Capital	Access to Capital and Resources for Your Business	1	27	2	54
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Jefferson Academic Center, Room 218	1/31/2024	Managing Business	Get A Grip! The Leadership Legacy of Black Historical Leaders	1	16	2	32
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Geography Bldg., Room 104	2/22/2024	Other		1	10	1.5	15
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/7/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	23	1.5	34.5
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Worcester Regional Chamber	3/12/2024	Human Resources/Managing Employees	How to Recruit & Retain Top Talent	1	13	1.5	19.5
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/14/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 102: The Numbers	1	8	1.5	12
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/20/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	28	1.5	42
Central Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/28/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 103: Steps to Launch	1	5	1.5	7.5
Total							14	292	25	541
Govt Sales Adv	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/11/2023	Government Contracting	Capabilities Statements- Best of Both Worlds Part 1	1	31	1	31
Govt Sales Adv	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/20/2023	Government Contracting	GET READY-For Government Procurement	1	59	1	59
Govt Sales Adv	SBDC	Not Set	Bos Public Library (I was virtual)	12/4/2023	Government Contracting	Gov't Contracting 101 GET READY-For Government Procurement	1	10	1.5	15
Govt Sales Adv	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/17/2024	Government Contracting	Government Procurement	1	26	1	26
Govt Sales Adv	SBDC	Not Set	North Central Chamber of Commerce	2/29/2024	Government Contracting	Government Contracting 101 - The Basics	1	7	1.25	8.75
Total							5	133	6	140
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/MEC	10/12/2023	International Trade	Export Enforcement in Practice: Takeaways for Your Compliance Program	1	26	1.5	39
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/MEC	10/25/2023	International Trade	Understanding the New Outbound Foreign Investment Controls	1	13	1	13
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/ MEC	11/3/2023	International Trade	Managing Export Enforcement Visits: Before, During and After the Knock on the Door	1	35	1.5	52.5

Center	Program	Sub Program	Site	Start Date	Training Topic	Title	Event	Total Attendees	Hours of Training	Training Hours
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/MEC	11/8/2023	International Trade	Data Privacy and Cybersecurity in Global Trade: A Look at Cross-Border Privacy Rules and Initiative	1	19	2	38
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/East	11/16/2023	International Trade	Generating Internal Support for Export Operations and Compliance	1	28	1.5	42
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/CMass	12/7/2023	International Trade	Classifying Your Products for Exporting and Importing	1	36	1.5	54
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/MEC	1/25/2024	International Trade	Export Expo	1	473	12	5676
International	SBDC	Not Set	IT/CMASS	3/20/2024	International Trade	Maximizing the Benefits of International Trade Show Participation	1	37	1.25	46.25
Total							8	667	22	5,961
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/2/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Facts	1	4	2	8
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/9/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 102: The Numbers	1	2	1	2
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/15/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 103: The Process	1	2	1	2
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	12/7/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Facts	1	10	1	10
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	12/13/2023	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 102: The Numbers	1	2	1	2
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/15/2024	Start-up Assistance	Success for Small Business	1	19	1	19
Mt. Ida Boston	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/28/2024	Technology/Computers	Demystify AI: Discover How AI Can Transform Your Business and Drive Growth	1	7	1.5	10.5
Total							7	46	9	54
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/11/2023	Start-up Assistance	Starting a Business 101	1	54	1	54
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/18/2023	Start-up Assistance	Starting a Business 102	1	8	2	16
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/25/2023	Start-up Assistance	Starting a Business 103	1	8	2	16
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/15/2023	Financing/Capital	Financials 101	1	30	1	30
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/16/2023	Women-Owned Business	Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program	1	15	1	15
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/29/2023	Marketing/Sales	Social Media Marketing for Beginners	1	43	1	43
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/17/2024	Tax Planning	Understanding Small Business Taxes	1	52	1	52
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/24/2024	Start-up Assistance	Turn Your Side Hustle Into a Business	1	32	1	32
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/25/2024	Government Contracting	Government Contracting Search Engine	1	56	1	56
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/31/2024	Marketing/Sales	Optimization (SEO) for Beginners	1	70	1	70
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/7/2024	Financing/Capital	Ways to Improve Your Credit Score	1	23	1	23
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/14/2024	Financing/Capital	Understanding Financials	1	35	1	35
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/21/2024	Financing/Capital	Understanding the Business Loan Process	1	27	1	27
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/28/2024	Managing Business	Managing Your Business: Strategies for Success	1	27	1	27
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Salem State University	3/11/2024	eCommerce	E-Commerce: Is it Right for Your Business	1	2	2	4

Center	Program	Sub Program	Site	Start Date	Training Topic	Title	Event	Total Attendees	Hours of Training	Training Hours
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Salem State University	3/12/2024	Marketing/Sales	How to Post on Social Media	1	10	2	20
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Salem State University	3/13/2024	Financing/Capital	Financial Analysis	1	7	2	14
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Salem State University	3/14/2024	Business Plan	Creating a Successful Business Plan	1	7	4	28
North Shore	SBDC	Not Set	Online	3/27/2024	Marketing/Sales	Five Tiny Fixes to Improve Your Small Business Marketing	1	33	1	33
Total							19	539	27	595
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	11/9/2023	Financing/Capital	Understanding Business Financials	1	9	2	18
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Bluestone Bank 756 Orchard Street	11/30/2023	Financing/Capital	Understanding Business Financials	1	10	2	20
SE Mass	SBDC	COVID-19	online	12/7/2023	COVID-19 Finance/Capital	SBA's Managing Your EIDL Loan	1	31	1	31
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	on-line	1/25/2024	Business Plan	Develop a Successful Business Plan	1	36	1.5	54
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	online	2/15/2024	Technology/Computers	Canva with Kelsey Creating & Designing Newsletters in Constant Contact	1	43	1.5	64.5
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	online	2/29/2024	Marketing/Sales	Understanding Business Financials	1	25	1.5	37.5
SE Mass	SBDC	Not Set	online	3/28/2024	Financing/Capital	Understanding Business Financials	1	6	2	12
Total							7	160	12	237
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/2/2023	Start-up Assistance	Basics of Starting a Business	1	27	3	81
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/19/2023	Start-up Assistance	Basics of Starting a Business	1	29	3	87
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	10/31/2023	Government Contracting	Demystifying Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC)	1	63	2	126
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/4/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	44	1	44
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/11/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 102: The Numbers	1	23	1	23
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/17/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	23	1	23
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	1/18/2024	Start-up Assistance	Business 103: The Checklist	1	17	1	17
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/1/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	55	1	55
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/8/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 102: The Numbers	1	35	1	35
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/14/2024	Start-up Assistance	How to Start a Business 101: The Basics	1	43	1	43
Western Mass	SBDC	Not Set	Online	2/22/2024	Start-up Assistance	Business 103: The Checklist	1	43	1	43
Total							11	402	16	577
Grand Total							72	2,248	117	8,113

**Massachusetts Small Business
Development Center Network**
Berkshire Regional Office



Berkshire Regional Center
Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network

Tuning Your Operations & Business Model

In partnership with the **Williamstown Chamber of Commerce**

Thursday, April 25, 2024 – 9:00 am to 10:00 am - Online



Join us for a **FREE** online, illustrative workshop to help small business owners tune their **Operation & Business Model**.

Learn:

- What are the nine elements in a successful business model.
- What are the assets and resources you can use to build your business.
- How can the principle of leveraging be used to grow profitability.
- What are SOPs and how can you use them to run your business.

All this in a singular one-hour webinar? You betcha.

Presented by: Keith Girouard, *Berkshire Regional Director*

Host: *The Berkshire Regional Center of the MSBDC Network*

To Register: <https://bit.ly/MSBDC-Operate>

Or Scan:





2024 Gatsby Gala Honorees

Leadership Award - Thomas Quin

Mass Arts Center Champion Award - Rosemarie Sirois

**Notable Difference Award - Vincent Ratsavong & Derrick
Lacasse**

Business Leadership Award - Jill Beresford



Jill Beresford, Senior Business Advisor
Massachusetts SBDC (left)



33rd Annual Executive Seminar Series on International Trade

Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network Massachusetts Export Center

presents



Fall 2023

Partners for Trade

Seminar and Registration Guide

In Collaboration With

U.S. Small Business Administration | MA Office of Business Development
Isenberg School of Management | University of Massachusetts Amherst
MassDevelopment | Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment
U.S. Department of Commerce



Maura Healey
Massachusetts Governor

The Massachusetts Export Center is committed to helping the state's businesses succeed in today's global marketplace.

The world is your market. Take the next step. Join us as a partner for trade.



Robert H. Nelson
SBA District Director



Register online at www.mass.gov/export



Pre-registration is required for all events. **Payment** via credit card is due at the time of registration.

Cancellation/Refund Policy: If you cancel your registration at least 48 hours prior to the event, you will be entitled to a refund minus a \$10 processing fee. No refund will be given on notifications received after that time or in any no-show situation. All cancellation and refund requests must be submitted via email to pft@msbdc.umass.edu. The Export Center reserves the right to cancel or reschedule a seminar due to insufficient enrollment or other circumstances. In the case of cancellation, registration fees will be refunded.

No Shows: Due to the costs we incur as a result of people who register for seminars and do not attend, the Massachusetts Export Center will bill unpaid registrants for the full cost of the event unless cancelled 48 hours in advance of the event. Credit cards will not be refunded in any no-show situation.



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The MSBDC is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Massachusetts Office of Business Development under cooperative agreement SBAOEDSB230001-01-00 through the University of Massachusetts Amherst. SBDCs are a program supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration and extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. SBA cannot endorse any products, opinions or services of any external parties or activities. By contacting our office and requesting at least two weeks in advance, every attempt will be made to reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities and those who need translation services. Contact the Massachusetts Export Center at 617-973-6610. ©Copyright 2023



PARTNERS FOR TRADE CALENDAR

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- 29 Export Compliance Risk Assessment for Beginners..... 3

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NOVEMBER

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- 8 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity in Global Trade: A Look
at Cross-Border Privacy Rules and Initiatives 7
- 16 Generating Internal Support for Export Operations
and Compliance..... 8

DECEMBER

- 7 Classifying Your Products for Exporting and Importing 8

JANUARY 2024

- 25-26 Export Expo 9

*Although accurate at press time, webinars may be added,
rescheduled or cancelled.*

*For the most up-to-date information,
please visit our website at www.mass.gov/export.*

Program Descriptions

STEP Program Application Webinar

Join us to learn about the Massachusetts State Trade Expansion Program (“STEP”), which is available to eligible Massachusetts small businesses for the purpose of increasing export sales of their goods and services.

The Massachusetts STEP program is administered by the Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Export Center, through a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

This webinar will discuss the parameters of the Massachusetts STEP program and walk participants through the STEP application process. The webinar will provide guidance on program eligibility and completion of the application, and will also discuss specific elements that are critical for successful applicants. The webinar will also provide tips on assessing export readiness and planning international marketing activities in support of the STEP application. Those applicants who have demonstrated a strong commitment to exporting with a well-planned export strategy will have the best likelihood of success! Grants awards are made on a competitive basis.

Speakers include:

- Melissa Clary, Business Development Manager — Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment
- Paula Murphy, Director — Massachusetts Export Center
- James Paul, Director of Boston Office, U.S. Commercial Service, International Trade Administration — U.S. Department of Commerce
- Jeevan Ramapriya, Executive Director — Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment
- Oreste Varela, Springfield Branch Manager — U.S. Small Business Administration

For more information, visit www.mass.gov/export/step.

Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EDT

Location: Online

Cost: No charge

Export Compliance Risk Assessment for Beginners

In our rapidly-changing geopolitical, economic and national security environment, global trade regulations have become increasingly complex, leaving companies engaged in international trade more vulnerable to compliance risk. From ever-changing sanctions, expanding product and technology controls, increasing restrictions on end users and end uses, potential illegal diversion, and more, compliance risks are more prevalent than ever. How do companies identify and mitigate these risks? And how do beginners address applicable risks without becoming overwhelmed?

Join us to learn how to assess and address your unique global trade compliance risks. This program will discuss identifying, understanding and measuring areas of risk for exporting businesses, and using that assessment to develop and implement reasonable controls to address those risks as part of your Export Management and Compliance Program. You will also learn about resources for support.

Speakers include:

- Paula Murphy, Director — Massachusetts Export Center
- Kathleen Kinahan-Newell, Trade Compliance Manager — Massachusetts Export Center

Date: Friday, September 29, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EDT

Location: Online

Cost: No charge



Export Enforcement in Practice: Takeaways for Your Compliance Program

Over the past 18 months, an unprecedented number of export enforcement reforms have been unveiled, including increases in penalties, changes in handling of Voluntary Self Disclosures (VSDs), increased emphasis on antiboycott compliance, escalated use of temporary denial orders, initiatives targeting advanced technologies, and much more. These reforms have often been rolled out and executed across multiple agencies, including through the issuance of joint alerts and interagency task forces. Importantly, enough time has passed where we are now beginning to see enforcement cases catch up to these initiatives.

Join us to learn about these key export enforcement initiatives, with lessons learned from recent cases. We will also look at trends in enforcement activity, including processing of VSDs, use of specific enforcement tools, and more, to help you make practical reinforcements to your export compliance program in response to today's enforcement environment.

Speakers include:

- Melissa Mannino, Partner & Co-Lead, International Trade & National Security Team — BakerHostetler
Former Chief of Enforcement & Litigation, Office of Chief Counsel for Industry & Security
- Orga Cadet, Associate — BakerHostetler

Date: Thursday, October 12, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EDT

Location: Online

Cost: \$25 / no charge for Compliance Alliance members

Understanding the New Outbound Foreign Investment Controls

The recent Executive Order and subsequent Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) restricting certain outbound U.S. investments involving sensitive technologies in China, Hong Kong and Macau signal a new frontier in controls limiting Chinese access to U.S. technology. Meanwhile, similar proposed restrictions have been receiving strong bipartisan support in Congress under the National Defense Authorization Act for 2024. How will U.S. companies and investors in sectors such as semiconductors, microelectronics, advanced computing and artificial intelligence navigate these amorphous requirements, which could include equity investments, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and even certain debt financing transactions? And how do companies plan ahead for their activities in China when the rules are implemented?

Join us to learn more about these new controls, including the parties subject to the controls, the scope of technologies addressed in the ANPR, and covered transactions, whether prohibited or notifiable. You will also hear about anticipated feedback from the ANPR comment period, as well as the outlook for implementation.

Our speaker will be Laura Black, Senior Counsel with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP and former Director of Policy and International Relations, Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. (CFIUS).

Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. EDT

Location: Online

Cost: No charge

Managing Export Enforcement Visits: Before, During and After the Knock on the Door

Export enforcement is on the rise. Driven by new initiatives and deepening collaboration among federal agencies, enforcement agents are increasingly active in the field. They routinely engage with businesses and individuals alike in outreach visits, email communications, and in-person interviews. Yet, exporters may never know whether an enforcement investigation lurks in the background and, if so, who it targets. Does your company know what to do when enforcement authorities come knocking?

Exporters who are prepared for these visits will save time, reduce exposure, and foster good will with the government. Conveying a cooperative attitude and an awareness of compliance responsibilities will help achieve those goals, but exporters should also protect against potential risk.

Join us to learn more about contacts with export enforcement professionals, the continuum from simple outreach to investigation, and trends and tips for managing different scenarios. This webinar will help you assess your risks, develop protocols, and prepare for future engagements with export enforcement authorities.

Our speaker will be Christopher Grigg, Partner with Nixon Peabody LLP and former Chief, National Security Division with the U.S. Attorney's Office, Los Angeles.

Date: Friday, November 3, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EDT

Location: Online

Cost: \$25 / no charge for Compliance Alliance members



Data Privacy and Cybersecurity in Global Trade: A Look at Cross-Border Privacy Rules and Initiatives

Companies engaged in cross-border trade encounter multiple challenges related to data privacy and security – not only do they face heightened levels of data security risk, but they also must juggle multiple regulatory requirements for use, transfer and sharing of personal data. Regulatory fragmentation creates uncertainty and raises compliance costs for businesses, slowing innovation and increasing regulatory burdens without meaningfully improving privacy protections.



Join us to hear about the global data security threat environment for companies engaged in trade as well as some recent initiatives to help facilitate cross-border data flows across different data privacy regimes. You will learn about the importance of safeguarding export-controlled data, supply chain security, and the disclosure of cybersecurity incidents – especially if your company has government contracts and is required to maintain controlled unclassified information on your network. Recent enforcement actions will be discussed, as well as new policies and initiatives of the Department of Justice that demonstrate its increasing focus on corporate crime involving national security and cyber-related offenses. You will also learn about U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Export Enforcement's investigative priorities, national security threats, export evasion and illegal procurement trends.

You will also hear from officials at the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Digital Services Industries about the EU-U.S. Data Privacy Framework and the Global Cross Border Privacy Rules System, which will provide a solution of real interoperability between data privacy regimes while helping companies to navigate the complex global environment for cross-border data flows and privacy.

Speakers include:

- Stephanie Siegmann, Partner & Chair, International Trade & Global Security Group — Hinckley Allen
Former National Security Chief, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts
- Kathleen Aldrich, International Trade Specialist, Global Data Policy Team — U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration
- Jillian Cota, International Trade Specialist, Data Privacy Framework Team — U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Digital Services Industries
- Benjamin Hickok, Special Agent — U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, Office of Export Enforcement
- Matthew McCarthy, Special Agent — U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, Office of Export Enforcement

Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Time: Registration 9:30 a.m.; Program 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST

Location: Hinckley Allen, 28 State Street, Boston

Cost: No charge

Generating Internal Support for Export Operations and Compliance

An effective trade compliance program can only be achieved with the genuine support of a company's top management and the partnership of employees throughout the organization. However, most trade compliance professionals have faced situations at some point in their career where obtaining the support and collaboration necessary to develop a culture of compliance can seem all but impossible.

Join us to hear from trade compliance professionals as they discuss how they cultivated top management support and gained the backing necessary to implement collaborative compliance procedures. Speakers will discuss best practices for encouraging inter-company support, strategies for communicating the value of trade compliance, providing effective communication and educational tools, and importantly, how to be viewed as a partner instead of as an impediment.

Speakers include:

- Irina Bade, Senior Export Compliance Manager — GE HealthCare
- Tracy Horridge, Trade Compliance Officer/Empowered Official — Smiths Interconnect
- Julia Komarovskaya, Export Compliance Program Manager — The Mathworks, Inc.

Date: Thursday, November 16, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EST

Location: Online

Cost: \$25 / no charge for Compliance Alliance members

Classifying Your Products for Exporting and Importing

The importance of tariff classification in international trade transactions cannot be understated. Exporters and importers are responsible for proper classification of their items, while misclassification may result in Customs delays, or worse, costly penalties and possible Customs seizure. The Harmonized Tariff System is the basis for export and import classification. Established by the World Customs Organization, the Harmonized Tariff System is used by Customs authorities in 183 countries to apply duties on imported goods.

This webinar will provide an overview of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS), including the HTS structure, General Rules of Interpretation, obtaining rulings from the US Customs and Border Protection, classification procedures and best practices.

Our speaker will be Paula Connelly, Senior Member with Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg.

Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EST

Location: Online

Cost: \$25 / no charge for Compliance Alliance members

Export Expo

Join us for the Export Expo – the state’s largest and most important export event of the year that brings together resources, training and information for the local exporting community!



The Massachusetts Export Center’s Export Expo provides a forum for exporters to connect with the wide range of export resources available in Massachusetts while learning about issues that impact their day-to-day operations.

This year’s Export Expo will again be a virtual event that will include an exhibit area featuring government, non-profit and private sector service providers serving the export community. The Export Expo will also feature a lineup of workshops, panel discussions and special addresses on a wide variety of export-related topics.

The Export Expo will feature influential guest speakers and opportunities to connect with experts to answer your specific export questions. We hope that you will join us for the same timely and important international trade content in a convenient virtual format! Our virtual platform will provide opportunities for networking and allow participants to view all of the conference’s content, so you won’t miss a thing!

Speakers and content to be announced soon.

Date: Thursday and Friday, January 25 & 26, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST

Location: Virtual

Cost: No charge

2024 Export Expo Early Sponsors



Partners and Cosponsors

The **Massachusetts Export Center** (www.mass.gov/export), part of the Massachusetts



Small Business Development Center Network, recognizes the need to make export services easily accessible to companies of all sizes, and it serves as the state's one-stop resource for export assistance. The Massachusetts Export Center offers a wide range of targeted, customized services to Massachusetts businesses at any stage in the export process. Whether you are a small business just thinking about exporting or an experienced exporter, the Massachusetts Export Center stands ready to help with services suited to your needs. Massachusetts companies can learn more about the Massachusetts Export Center by visiting our website.

The **Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network** (www.msdbc.org),



through the **Massachusetts Export Center**, offers small to medium sized Massachusetts companies business advice on assessing export opportunities, market research analysis and educational programs through the *Partners for Trade* executive seminar series. Assistance includes counseling on the elements of an international business plan, assisting in the development of an international marketing strategy, providing market research reports and trade leads, publishing various export guides and organizing a variety of export training programs. International trade advising services are available statewide.



MASSDEVELOPMENT



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Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment



The **Massachusetts Office of Business Development** works with the business community to help create, retain and attract jobs throughout the Commonwealth by offering programs that stimulate economic growth and development. The office is committed to working directly with the business community to make Massachusetts an even better place to do business.

MassDevelopment provides financial tools and real estate expertise to stimulate economic growth across the state of Massachusetts by providing real estate development and financial services through its four core lines of business: Real Estate Development, Investment Banking, Economic Development Lending and Community Development. The agency's lines of business are designed to support a project at any stage — from concept to development.

The **Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment** carries out the following international economic activities: attracting foreign companies to invest in Massachusetts; handling foreign protocol; and focused export promotion through international trade show participation.

The **U.S. Export Assistance Center** offers a full range of federal export programs and services under one roof, including counseling, market research, trade contact facilitation, international trade promotion events, and trade finance through the Export Working Capital Loan Guarantee Program. The U.S. Export Assistance Center combines the export marketing resources of the **U.S. Department of Commerce** and the export finance resources of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The **U.S. Small Business Administration** is dedicated to providing quality, customer-oriented, full-service programs and accurate, timely information to the entrepreneurial community. SBA offers a number of export information assistance programs such as counseling, marketing research, publications and workshops. SBA also offers financial assistance through the regular business loan and the Export Working Capital Program.

The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center (MSBDC) Network provides free, high quality, one-to-one management and technical business advice and educational programs at a reasonable cost to potential and existing small business entrepreneurs throughout the Commonwealth.



The MSBDC has three integrated product lines: business advisory services, international trade assistance and government contracting/SBIR.

Successful entrepreneurs continually seek ways to improve the management and operation of their business, often seeking outside advice to help with particular challenges. Studies consistently show that Massachusetts citizens receive a strong return on their investment by utilizing the services of the MSBDC Network. MSBDC clients outperform other businesses in the state in average sales and job growth.

The MSBDC is a partnership of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, and a consortium of higher educational institutions led by the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and including Clark University and Salem State University.

State Office413-545-6301

Business Advising Centers

- Berkshire Regional Office413-499-0933
- Central Regional Office508-793-7615
- Greater Boston Regional Office617-243-1386
- Government Sales Advisory Program508-870-3193
- Massachusetts Export Center 617-973-6610
- Northeast Regional Office978-542-6343
- Procurement Technical Assistance Center413-545-6303
- SBIR Program774-203-9972
- Southeast Regional Office508-673-9783
- Western Regional Office413-577-1768

Visit our website at www.msbdc.org

Compliance Alliance



The Compliance Alliance is a special initiative of the Massachusetts Export Center designed to help the state's businesses enhance their export compliance and global trade competitiveness.

The Compliance Alliance provides a forum for exporting firms to network, share best practices and stay current on export regulatory compliance issues.

Membership benefits include:

Conferences & Training

Stay current on the latest trade compliance issues and receive updates on navigating complex global trade regulations. Benefit from free or discounted access to in-depth conferences and training programs featuring export practitioners, service providers and government regulatory authorities.

Benchmarking & Networking

Connect with trade compliance peers for networking, advice and sharing of best practices. Receive special access to connect with government regulatory authorities and decision-makers.

Online Resources

Access members-only online resources, including a member directory and a robust library of webinar archives on a wide variety of advanced trade compliance topics.

www.mass.gov/export/compliance



The mission of the Massachusetts Export Center is to help companies throughout the Commonwealth achieve success in global markets, thereby contributing to economic growth in the state. Our goal is to meet the complex needs of exporters by developing and providing targeted, high-impact services delivered through a statewide network of international trade professionals.

The Massachusetts Export Center offers a range of targeted, customized services to Massachusetts businesses at any stage in the export process.

- Export Counseling and Technical Assistance
- International Market Research and Assessment
- International Business Development Assistance
- Export Regulatory Compliance Assistance
- Compliance Alliance
- Export Training Programs
- Export Publications

www.mass.gov/export

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Recognizing the need to make export services easily accessible to companies of all sizes, the Massachusetts Export Center serves as the state's complete resource for export assistance.

The Massachusetts Export Center offers a wide range of targeted, customized services to Massachusetts businesses at any stage in the export process. Whether you are a small business just thinking about exporting or an experienced exporter, the Massachusetts Export Center stands ready to help with services suited to your needs.

For further information, visit our website at **www.mass.gov/export**.



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