

Client Spotlight

Passion, patience, and perseverance are the foundations of Michelle Meier's business philosophy.

She opened **Arbor Studio**, the first Green Circle Salon (GCS) in Central Minnesota in August 2017. When she was young, Michelle remembers styling her Barbie's hair and knowing that owning a salon was her destiny. Michelle had more than ten years of experience in the industry when she decided to purchase an existing salon.

She was patient and followed the advice of her mentors and SBDC regional director, Barry Kirchoff, to wait for a location and opportunity to come along that suited her vision. Then she dove in "hair-first," working closely with Barry and SBDC consultant, Briana Wright, to complete a business plan and financial projections. Briana also assisted Michelle with developing a recruitment and on-boarding plan to attract early career stylists who share the same views on sustainability.

Running a GCS means that Michelle and her staff minimize waste in all possible areas of the salon experience. Cut hair is swept up, packed, and shipped to GCS to be re-purposed, less water is used, foils and other by-products are recycled separately. What began as a dream of using healthier products and responsible waste practices as an independent stylist has grown into a modern, cutting-edge salon featuring an all-natural line of hair care products, three employees, booth rentals, and a growing book of business.

Michelle's business goals for 2018 focus on educating current and future clients about her unique approach to salon waste and the health and beauty benefits of switching to chemical-free products for coloring and hair care. Michelle plans to continue to work with the Central Region SBDC to strategize the best way to grow a profitable and responsible business. Michelle's success shows that personal passion can ignite a business, and patience and perseverance pay off in pursuing your dreams.



Arbor Studio owner, Michelle Meier (L) and SBDC consultant, Briana Wright (R)



28
 New businesses created



666
 Jobs created and saved



\$15.3M
 Capital accessed for business investment



281
 Entrepreneurs and businesses served



\$2.5M
 Business revenue increased



3,813
 Total hours of consulting services

Central Region

Small Business Development Center

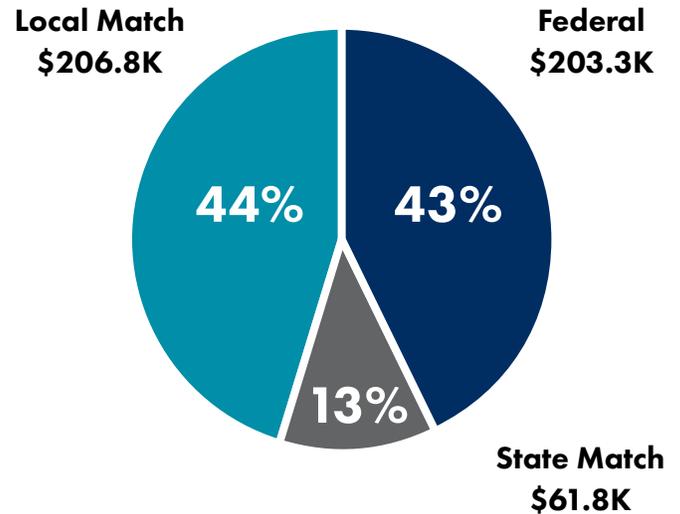
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Partners in Success

Our partners share in the vision for Minnesota's business success and recognize the positive relationship between nurturing small businesses and the well-being of their communities, regions, and the state. Funding for the program comes from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and our most important local partners—the institutions of higher learning that host our regional centers.

Other local funding partners include community lenders, economic development organizations, corporate donors, and private individuals. We're so grateful for their incredible continuing commitment to this program. Together, we are helping businesses start, grow, and succeed.

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St. Cloud State University
355 5th Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301
Phone: 320.308.4842
klross@stcloudstate.edu

www.stcloudstate.edu/sbdc

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