

# Northwest

## Small Business Development Center

### Northwest Region SBDC Success Story

Danielle Norby Lien founded **A Better Connection, Inc.** (ABC) community center in November 2012. ABC met many of the unmet needs in the Park Rapids Area and demand was great. In June 2014, Danielle purchased a building and started hiring employees. Currently, ABC employs 11 professional staff members (including therapists, licensed alcohol and drug counselors, a psychologist, and a registered dietitian), as well as 2 reception/financial staff.



Danielle's vision has continued to grow and in February of 2016, she established the **Heartland Activity and Wellness Connection, Inc.** (The HAWC), a charitable organization. In October 2016, with assistance from SBDC business consultant, Dana Schnortz, she purchased a 14,000 square foot building.

"The SBDC financial projections were necessary in obtaining funding," Danielle said, "Dana's work was prompt and diligent. He often completed his work in the evenings and on weekends in order to keep the project moving forward. I am thankful for the services provided by the SBDC because the project would not be a reality without the SBDC's help and support."

Heeding the recommendations of her SBDC business consultant and her attorney, Danielle also founded a landlord business called **Open Door Enterprises, LLC** to purchase the building. The project is designed to decrease risk factors and enhance individual and family protective factors through continued clinical services, as well as providing community protective factors. With funding in place and planning complete, construction is projected to take place from late January 2017 to June 2017.



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# 2016 HIGHLIGHTS



**\$13M**

Capital Accessed  
for Business  
Investment

**686**

Jobs Created  
and Saved



**19**

New  
Businesses  
Created

**2,998**

Hours of  
Consulting  
Services



**296**

Entrepreneurs  
and Businesses  
Served

**\$5.5M**

Business  
Revenue  
Increased



# Northwest Small Business Development Center

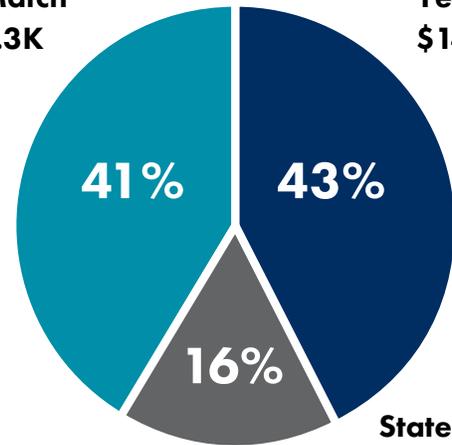
## Partners in Success

Our partners share in the vision for Minnesota's business success and recognize the positive relationship between nurturing small business 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 many 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 grow, start, and succeed.

## 2016 Northwest SBDC Funding

Local Match  
\$142.3K

Federal  
\$147.8K



State Match  
\$56K

## 2016 NWSBDC Funding Partners

### HOST INSTITUTION

# UMD

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

Driven to Discover™

### PLATINUM PARTNERS



**BEMIDJI**  
STATE UNIVERSITY



**Andrew Peralta**, the 2015 Northwest SBDC featured client, and the recipient of the 2015 "Minnesota SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award" has continued to build his Dairy Queen business.

Right after purchasing the DQ Store in Thief River Falls, he immediately set his sights on the Roseau DQ Store. Working with his NWSBDC consultant, Andrew now owns both of these Dairy Queen stores.

With combined annual sales of over \$2,500,000, and employing close to 100 part and full time employees, he has become a major asset to the economy of Northwestern Minnesota.



[www.mnsbdc.com](http://www.mnsbdc.com)

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and regional support partners. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the program sponsors. Programs are open to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance.