

CENTRAL REGION

Small Business
Development Center

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

22

New Businesses
Created



3,403

Total Hours of
Consulting
Services



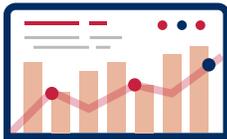
\$8.1 M



Capital Accessed for
Business Investment

263

Entrepreneurs/
Businesses
Served



\$5.4M

Business Revenue
Increased

615

Jobs Created
and Saved



\$7.68

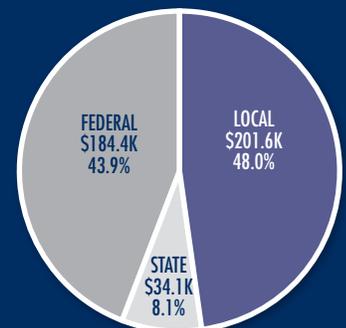


Return on
Investment for
Every \$1 Invested
in the Program

Celebrating Our Students

In 2015, the Central Region provided experiential learning opportunities to 56 undergraduate and graduate students and employed seven interns.

Central SBDC Funding Sources



In 2014, the Minnesota legislature granted the SBDC additional state funds. These funds will sunset in July 2016.



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Central Region SBDC Success Story

Gaslight Creative LLC – St. Cloud-based marketing manager Kelly Zaske and graphic designer Jodie Pundsack, co-workers and friends, left their jobs to start their own creative marketing agency. They quit on a Friday, painted their third floor walk-up and 175 square foot office over the weekend, and opened their door on Monday. That was June 1, 2009.

Fast-forward six-and-a-half years, and that company - Gaslight Creative - is well established. With ten full-time employees and more than 50 American Advertising Awards to their name, the agency now occupies a 5,400 square foot historical building in the heart of downtown St. Cloud. Gaslight has been recognized for industry achievements, community philanthropy and as a certified Women Owned Small Business.

Despite their success, Kelly and Jodie remember that launching their new business without any planning and smack dab in the middle of the Great Recession was difficult. Financing their own efforts, they began slowly, working with local clients and adding employees when possible. They performed pro bono work, became involved in the community, and grew their business organically - one project at a time.



To be successful, Kelly and Jodie knew that they needed to educate themselves on how to run their business, and the first five years was indeed that - an education. During that time, Gaslight enjoyed success but also faced many challenges. As they celebrated their 5th Anniversary, these partners were ready to take their business to the next level and began consulting with Bruce Thielman at the SBDC Central Region.

With Bruce's encouragement, Kelly and Jodie were able to grow their business in several ways in 2015, including nearly doubling sales, leasing and renovating an additional 2,700 square feet of office space, adding four full-time positions, increasing wages and paying down debt. Plans for 2016 include adding to their portfolio of clients and world domination.

Central SBDC Funding Partners

HOST INSTITUTION



ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

GOLD PARTNER



INITIATIVE
FOUNDATION

SILVER PARTNERS

St. Cloud State University Foundation
St. Cloud State University Provost Grant

Reflects 2014-2016 funding support.

Helping Businesses Start, Grow and Succeed

CENTRAL REGION MINNESOTA SBDC

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