

**E & H Piping, LLC owner,
Sergio Espinoza**

Client Spotlight

In the United States, immigrants are almost twice as likely to become entrepreneurs as those individuals born in the country. Sergio Espinoza is one of these immigrant entrepreneurs. At age 18, he fled his native country of Guatemala to escape a dictatorship government and the Guatemalan Civil War. He worked various construction jobs and saved money with hopes of owning his own business someday.

Early in 2012, Sergio Espinosa came to the Southwest SBDC in Marshall with hard earned cash seeking assistance with starting a business. He worked with SBDC consultant, Ruth Ann Karty. "Ruth Ann counseled me and provided me with information on what to do and what not to do with the business—from where to find training for the business, to payroll, and bookkeeping needs."

E & H Piping, LLC was formed.

E & H Piping, Inc. which is named for Espinoza's children, currently employs 12 full-time staff and eight part-time

employees. Most of those employees are earning between \$20 and \$30 per hour. The company is in the repair, maintenance and demolition business, often providing service for ethanol plants. The business is located in Yellow Medicine County, Minnesota and has a service area with a 250-mile radius.

Espinoza says customer service is his highest priority. He prefers to complete projects on time or ahead of time. Ninety percent of his business is from satisfied customers making referrals to his company.

Hard work and SBDC assistance has paid off for Espinoza. "Nothing has been free or easy for me," he said. "The only limits we have are those that we set ourselves. When I first started my business, it was very hard and challenging. People laughed at me and my business idea. They are no longer laughing—they are now working for me."



22
New businesses created



476
Jobs created and saved



\$12.2M
Capital accessed for business investment



288
Entrepreneurs and businesses served



\$9.5M
Business revenue increased



3,168
Total hours of consulting services

Southwest Region

Small Business Development Center

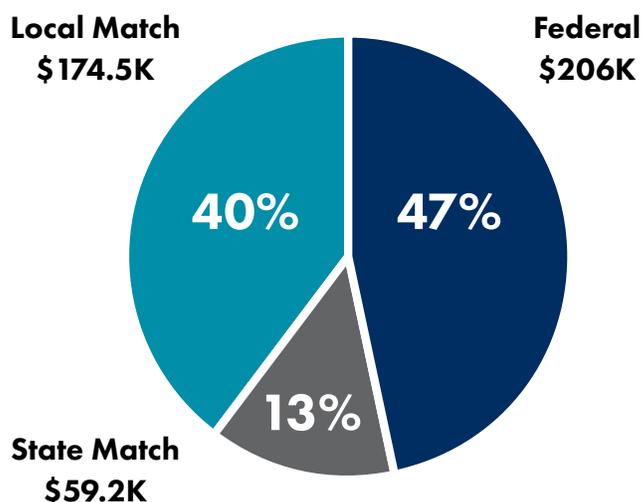
www.sbdassistance.com

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 many community leaders, 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.

2017 Funding



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