



SPD Gazette

Week of October 23rd, 2006
Issue 7

Special Projects

The topic of the week is Special Projects – the sixth of the six core concepts of our Strategic Plan. The strategy is to:

Develop and maintain a work environment that supports the SBDC program's ability to launch a rapid, flexible response to unusual occurrences and capitalize on opportunities.

The Objectives:

- **Develop management plans, tools and strategies** that position the SBDC for a fast, reliable response to unusual or non-recurring occurrences such as localized natural disasters, including mobility of resources and use of internal and external communication protocols.
- **Develop processes by which staff is encouraged** to identify and capitalize on opportunities such as research or training grants relevant to SBDC core services and service delivery.
- **Develop processes to identify projects, resources, research, tools and technologies** that may have application beyond the regional center and to replicate the effort at other SBDCs to improve operating efficiencies in service delivery.
- **Coordinate with the SBDC Central Office** on development of training programs and curricula to provide the opportunity for delivery across the network.

Do You Have a Question About Strategic Planning?

At the director's retreat this week, the Committee fielded several questions from directors regarding the strategic planning process. If you have any questions, send them via email to spd@mercy.edu, and a member of the Committee will answer it in the next issue of the Gazette.

What's New This Week

» Marketing

One of the **Baruch SBDC Business Advisors** represented the Center at a conference: Turkish and U.S. Economic Relations Today: Investment & Partnership Opportunities. The Advisor provides the Center's outreach to the Turkish community. He has previously addressed the Turkish Chamber of Commerce and was a key figure in arranging a presentation at Baruch College by the Turkish Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Trade. The title of the Minister's talk, on September 11th, was "The Role of Trade in Facilitating Understanding Across Nations."

The **Mid-Hudson SBDC Director** attended a lenders' roundtable sponsored by the SBA and the City of Middletown. The event took place at the City of Middletown legislative chambers and was attended by about 35 lenders and public officials including Mayor Marlinda Duncanson. SBDC was instrumental in securing press coverage for the event.

» Professional Development & Staff Retention

The **Baruch SBDC** encourages its Business Advisors to take the Certified Financial Analyst exam, and using non-SBDC funds, the Center has paid all or part of the cost. To date, two current advisors have taken the exam. The Center also has paid for professional membership dues for Advisors for appropriate organizations. To supplement their salaries and encourage retention, the Center has arranged for an Advisor to teach an entrepreneurship course as an adjunct professor in Baruch's Zicklin School of Business. In general, the Center seeks and takes advantage of situations in which the Advisor and the Center benefit.

» Program Development: Products and Services

To improve the delivery of services, the **Baruch SBDC** is creating a new series of informative handouts for our clients. The Center has always provided handouts but is now adding new ones and updating those currently in use. For example, the Center is preparing model business plans by "scrubbing" prize winning plans (removing specific names and other information) from the Baruch Entrepreneurship Competition. Marketing, strategic planning, financial and other handouts also are in process.

The **Brockport/Rochester SBDC** routinely reaches out to the Women Owned Business Community through participation in the Quarterly SBA Women's Roundtables, which continue to attract broad interest. The aim is to provide real life/anecdotal insight from a variety of sources and levels of experience. The SBDC also is working with the Women's Business Center in Buffalo to develop WBE activities for the Rochester and surrounding area.

The **Baruch SBDC's** outreach to the Hebrew Free Loan Society (HFLS), an organization dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship among Russian Jews, has resulted in HFLS referring to the Center individuals that need funding and technical assistance. As a result of this partnership, the Center offered a 6-part series of business development workshops conducted in the Russian language. The workshops were recently featured in a lengthy article in the *New York Times*. A number of loans have been made to clients as a result of this relationship.

» Sponsors, Host Institutions, Partners and Alliances

The **Bronx SBDC** collaborates with numerous organizations to promote minority small business development and to respond to the needs of the minority business community. The Bronx SBDC's allies include: the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC), South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp. (SOBRO), the Bronx Initiative Corporation (BIC) and the Business Resource & Investment Service Center (BRISC), and many others.

The **Baruch SBDC** works with other departments at the college to market its services. For example, the Center worked with the Computer Center for Visually Impaired to produce two seminars devoted to helping the disabled (not only the visually impaired) to explore the world of entrepreneurship. Representatives of VESID, the NYS Commission for the Blind, the Social Security PASS program and the Center for the Independence of the Disabled in New York participated in one of the seminars and explained how their organizations can assist the disabled entrepreneur. The result has been that the SBDC is now being recognized as a resource for the disabled and is seeing an increase in the number of referrals from the organizations that participated in this initiative.

Technology

One of the **Stony Brook SBDC Business Advisors** participated in one of the Long Island Software & Technology Network's (LISTNET) periodic "BEST" events (Business Excellence Strategies & Trends) on October 10th. The theme of the evening program was "Energy at Its Best," which was presented by Keyspan, SUNY Stony Brook, and Congressman Steve Israel [2nd Congressional District]. Keyspan Chairman Bob Catell discussed the overall energy picture on Long Island and the impending acquisition of Keyspan by National Grid. SUNY Stony Brook Dean Yakov Shamash described efforts over the past year to coordinate energy research on Long Island. He noted that New York State has committed \$35 million to establish an Energy Research Center on the SUNY Stony Brook Research Campus. Congressman Israel spoke about promoting Long Island as an ideal location to focus research on alternative energy.

The **Baruch SBDC Director and Baruch's Academic Director** met with an attorney/MBA focusing on the bio-tech industry, a strategic consultant, and a venture capitalist to discuss the potential development of several in-house technology initiatives including training sessions/workshops on technology commercialization and fundraising, especially from venture capital groups. All parties agreed that the Center needs more information about similar activities at other colleges. Currently a Field Fellow has been assigned to conduct a benchmarking study of initiatives other colleges and universities before the next meeting.

The **North Country SBDC's** relationship with CITEC affords the SBDC the opportunity to extend service delivery in Northern New York. CITEC, Inc. is a manufacturing and technology solutions service provider, a NYSTAR-designated regional technology development center, and a Department of Commerce manufacturing extension partnership center based at Clarkson University. The SBDC frequently collaborates with CITEC on workshops and counseling activities.

At the **October director's retreat** coordinated by the Central Office, two Webinars were included in the agenda. The first Webinar was presented by Superior Financial Group, a new Community Express lender. The second Webinar was presented by the creators of ProfitCents, an interactive electronic forecasting tool used by business counselors to create projections and prepare loan packages to meet the needs of entrepreneurs and small business owners.

About the Gazette

The SPD Gazette is a brief newsletter distributed via email and posted on the Internal Web Site. It will feature a column to be titled, *What's New This Week*, in which the network will share best practices in strategic objectives. A series of articles in the Gazette will explain the program's statewide approach to strategic objectives in six key areas:

- **Marketing**
- **Professional Development and Certification**
- **Program Development: Products and Services**
- **Special Projects**
- **Strategic Partners and Alliances**
- **Technology, Information and Communication**

For more information or answers to your questions, call Tom Morley at **914-375-2107** or email him at SPD@Mercy.edu

Send your report forms to SPD@mercy.edu