

## **Small Business Center at Forsyth Tech**

### **“Increasing Business Success”**

#### Resources for Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Businesses

In my previous article, I discussed the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Community Business of the Month. Every month, the Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce, the Winston-Salem Chronicle, the Small Business Center at Forsyth Tech, Triad Minority Business Expo, Winston-Salem Chapter of the NAACP, and the Winston-Salem Urban League present the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Community Business of the Month. You can learn about these businesses by visiting our website or receiving our newsletter.

This month, I want to discuss support provided for minority-owned and women-owned businesses (MWBs). There are additional challenges facing MWBs, however, many things are being addressed. The Small Business Center is trying hard to be a valuable part of the solution. Here are a few things that we should celebrate:

- HUSTLE Winston Salem is actively working in the area of inclusive entrepreneurship. Its vision is a thriving city where ALL citizens have equitable opportunity to achieve economic prosperity through entrepreneurship.
- The ACCESS Center for Equity and Success accelerates the growth of existing MWBs by connecting them with contracting opportunities, certifications, investment and funding, and resources needed to succeed.
- Venture Café connects entrepreneurs to innovators largely through its Thursday Gathering. It hosts about 150 attendees each week and 40% are minorities and 46% are women.
- The Atkins Community Development Corporation manages The Enterprise Center in which more than 40 MWBs maintain offices.
- The City of Winston Salem manages an MWBE program that is designed to assist MWBs in providing goods and services to the city. Overall spending with MWBE firms in 2017-2018 increased \$5.6 million dollars from the 2016-2017 fiscal year; the highest spend in the past six fiscal years.
- The Small Business Center provides educational events, business counseling/mentoring, and much more. 55% of our clients are minorities and 62% are women.
- The Small Business Center facilitates a regular business roundtable at The Enterprise Center in Southeast Winston and a professionalism series at the Mazie Woodruff Center in East Winston.
- The Launch Challenge started in 2017 and is a business accelerator of the Small Business Center. We are pleased that 94% of the graduates during the past two years are women and/or minorities.
- According to publication WalletHub, Winston Salem is tied for first in the highest average growth in the number of small businesses.

Join us in celebrating these and other examples of support for MWBEs. You can learn about many opportunities to enhance your business by visiting our website or participating in our educational events. We want to help you to achieve your dream of starting a new business or realizing more success if you already own a business. Our team has the experience and expertise to help you to overcome most challenges that come your way. You may learn about our services and clients at [www.forsythtech.edu](http://www.forsythtech.edu). Feel free to stop by our office at 525@Vine in Wake Forest Innovation Quarter just east of the heart of downtown Winston- Salem. You may also contact us at [SBC@forsythtech.edu](mailto:SBC@forsythtech.edu) or by calling (336) 757-3810.

The objective of the Small Business Center at Forsyth Tech is to help small businesses succeed by providing high quality, readily accessible assistance to prospective and existing business owners in Forsyth and Stokes counties. Our motto is “Increasing Business Success,” which describes our commitment to clients. The N.C. Community College’s Small Business Center Network assists in starting an average of more than 700 businesses each year and the centers have an economic impact in 90 percent of all N.C. counties each year, helping to create and retain over 3,800 jobs annually.

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If you are an entrepreneurial thinker and would like more information about starting or expanding a business, contact the Forsyth Tech Small Business Center for information, including small business educational events and one-on-one mentoring.

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