

# SUCCESS

ELEVATING SMALL  
BUSINESSES IN UTAH FOR

40  
YEARS

1979 - 2019

AMERICA'S  
**SBDC**  
UTAH

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Utah SBDC State Director

Michael C. Finnerty

## Utah SBDC Associate State Director

Jason Yerka

## Utah SBDC Network Analyst

Brady Wood

## Utah SBDC Market Research Analyst

Robert Head

## Graphic Designer

Michael Wernert

## Editor

Julene Reese

## Copy Editor

Donna Falkenborg

## Photography Contributor

VidArmy

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# FEATURED



## 4

### Lifestyle Homes Seeks to Enrich the Lives of Homeowners

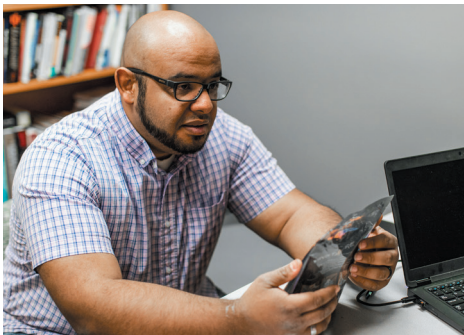
LifeStyle Homes - Logan SBDC



## 5

### Therapeutix Aids Both Mind and Body

Therapeutix Mind & Body Inc. -  
Ogden SBDC



## 6

### Traverse Tours & Travel Succeeds in Ever- Changing Market

Traverse Tours & Travel - Kaysville SBDC



## 8

### Eye Contact App Aids Children with Autism

Teaching It Right - Salt Lake SBDC



## 9

### Customer Service Never Goes Flat

Hometown Tire and Auto -  
Tooele SBDC





## 10

### Plan, Plan, Plan...Execute

Papa Johns - Vernal SBDC



## 16

### Puddle Jumpers Helps Support Youth in Utah

Puddle Jumpers - Richfield  
SBDC



## 11

### From Mobile Car Detailing To HR Technology Platform

Nectar - Orem SBDC



## 18

### From Tourists To Cafe Owners – Immigrant Success

Cafe Italiano - Moab SBDC



## 12

### Restaurant Owners Get A Second Chance

Ponderosa Grill - Price SBDC



## 20

### Export Computer Exchange

Export Computer Exchange -  
Cedar City SBDC



## 14

### Soapcreek Natural Skin Products Create Solutions

Soapcreek - Ephraim SBDC



## 22

### Water Park Will Make A Splash In St. George

Splash City Adventure Park -  
St. George SBDC

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**F**orty years ago, Utah was invited to participate in a national small business assistance pilot program with six other states. Today, Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) have become the largest and most successful small business assistance programs in the nation. During these many years, the Utah SBDC has established itself as a leader in helping small businesses and continues to provide a positive impact on Utah's economy through job creation, small business starts, small business loans, and state and federal tax revenues generated.

2019 has proven to be another successful year for us. We exceeded all of our annual goals. We welcomed new regional directors in Brigham City and Ogden. Also, we wel-

vis Technical College, Weber State University, Salt Lake Community College, Utah Valley University, Snow College, Southern Utah University, Tooele Technical College and Dixie Technical College. We also thank the numerous other public organizations that contribute to our success.

"When it comes to business, not all states are created equal, and for entrepreneurs just starting out, it matters more than you may realize," the study reports. "The best state to start a business ideally needs to have the economic, financial and social conditions that are conducive to entrepreneurial success." Utah possesses all of these conditions.

In 2020, the Utah SBDC will continue to dedicate our efforts to helping small businesses and aspiring entrepre-

***Utah is the number one state in the country for entrepreneurs in 2020, according to a new study from Seek Capital and reported by Forbes.***

comed a new host institution in St. George. Dixie Technical College is one of three fully accredited technical colleges hosting Utah SBDC service centers. President Kelle Stephens has been a tremendous advocate for small business and enthusiastically offered to host the St. George SBDC.

Through the dedicated efforts of Utah SBDC Regional Directors, we provided \$70,357,870 in capital infusion (loans obtained by clients). We helped clients increase sales revenue in the amount of \$75,769,757, which included \$1,220,000 in export sales. We also helped 279 new businesses begin operations as part of our total clients served, which was 2,640. For every \$1 we spent operating the Utah SBDC, we brought back \$1.95 in state and federal tax revenues. Finally, our clients told us we helped create 1,722 jobs.

We recognize and thank all of our host institutions throughout the state including Utah State University, Da-

neurs realize their greatest potential. Through counseling, training, research, and online innovations, the Utah SBDC will provide our services and resources to every person in this great state desiring to start, own, and successfully operate a small business.



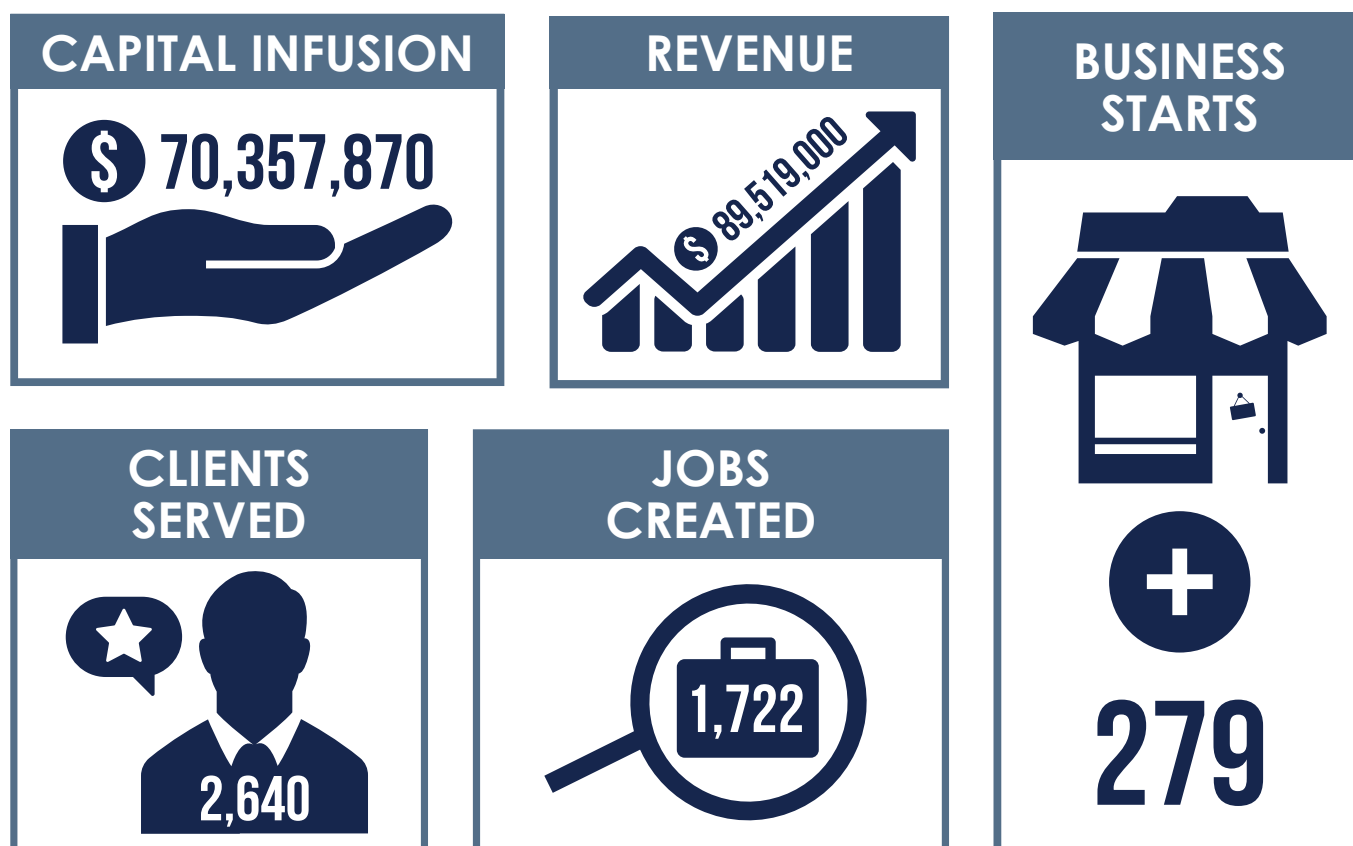
**Michael C. Finnerty**

Utah Small Business  
Development Center  
State Director

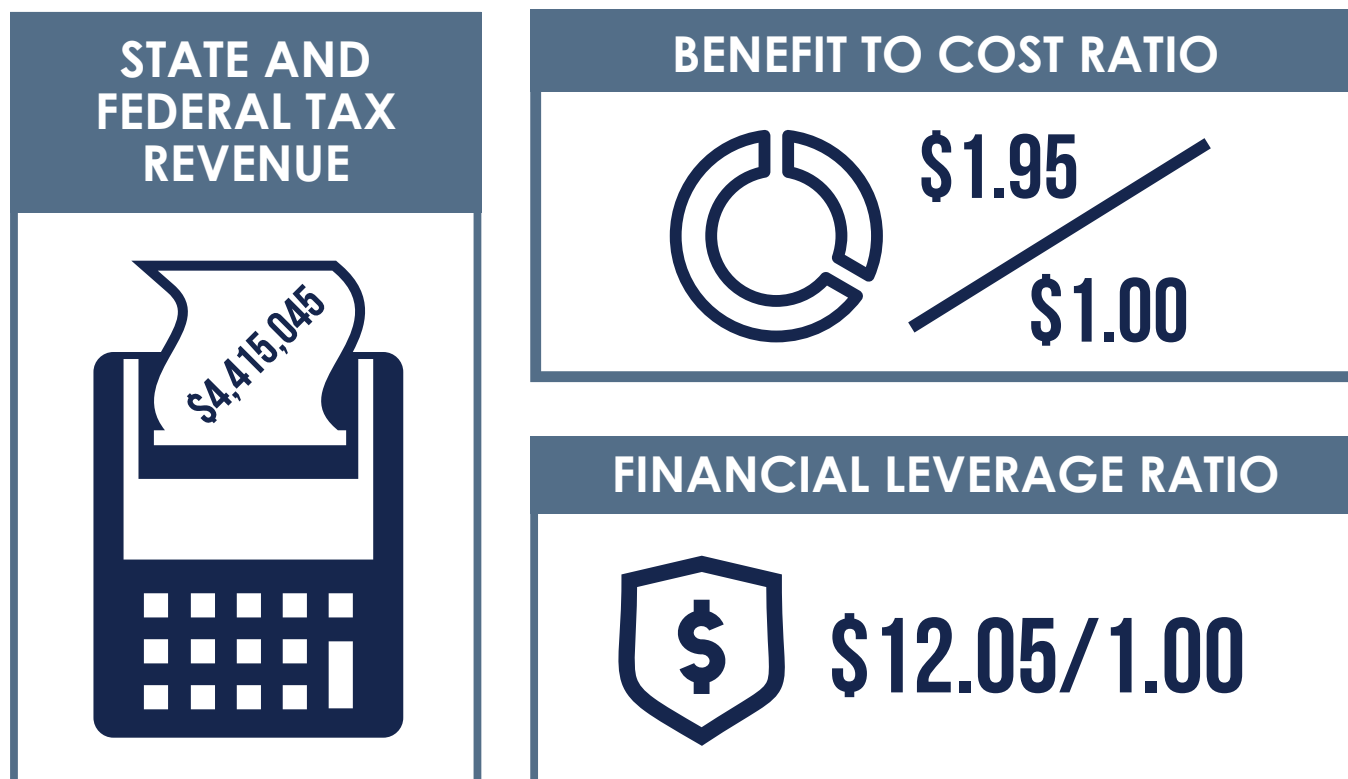




## Client Data, 2019



## Chrisman Study 2017/18



## LIFESTYLE HOMES SEEKS TO ENRICH THE LIVES OF HOMEOWNERS



After receiving an accounting degree from Weber State University, Trent Cragun began working construction in 2006 and soon owned his own framing company. But ever the occupational and industrial dreamer, during the Great Recession and the least likely time to have a successful homebuilding company, Cragun started Lifestyle Homes in 2010. His mission was to make quality homes accessible to working families. He quickly garnered attention and awards, including Family Magazine's Home Builder Winner, Buildertrend's Top Builder Award, Downtown Alliance's Business of the Year, and the Cache Valley Home Builders Association's Builder of the Year Award. His employee base also grew quickly.

It wasn't just building houses and the business aspects that appealed to Cragun; it was the idea of impact on his community, the mission to enrich the lives of those he encountered, and the need to consider the environmental impact that development and homebuilding has on Cache Valley. Cragun felt a responsibility to give back, not just make a living.

With the success and recognition that quickly came to Lifestyle Homes, Cragun turned his focus to multi-family housing, high density statistics, and the benefits of urban infill projects. Urban infill makes for constrained work sites, a big change in a small space, and it has an impact on more than just the taxes paid to the city. It involves traffic, parking, considerations of future needs and social changes, technological advances and, most importantly, the emotions, concerns, and livelihoods of the neighbors.

Cragun conceived the L59 apartment project in 2012, and it took 4 years of work before it was ready to go before the city. When it did, in 2016, the response was unexpectedly negative. Cragun said he had underestimated the value of the emotional bonds to a neighborhood; the poignant sentimentality that people attach to where they live.

For the next 2 years, lessons were learned about the power of messaging, communication, input, feedback, trust, and

compromise. In 2019, L59 was approved. Cragun said he believes this project will be worth the wait and appreciates the efforts, help, and support he received.

"In spite of the difficulties, I believe it's a project that will enhance the area and fill a variety of needs in beautiful downtown Logan," he said.

Not only does a project like this require the help of engineers, architects, city officials, marketing experts, and research firms, it also requires the help of the community and community organizations like the SBDC, said Cragun. When something so controversial and impactful is on the docket, consideration from every angle is needed, and the SBDC helped "rally the troops." They provided insight on Logan's housing statistics and created a video about Smart Growth in Logan that was distributed to decision makers. It helped give insight to this type of project and its necessity as part of a growing market.



**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:**

**EXTENSION**  
**UtahStateUniversity**



## THERAPEUTIX AIDS BOTH MIND AND BODY



THERAPEUTIX MIND & BODY INC.



**B**lake and Crystal Hoppie purchased Therapeutix Mind & Body Inc. in 2012 and opened a storefront in Ogden with the assistance of the Ogden SBDC. In August 2019, the SBDC helped the Hoppies obtain an expansion loan to open their second location in nearby Clinton, Utah.



Therapeutix Mind & Body is a full service spa that specializes in massage therapy, skin and body treatments, and relieving chronic pain. The company employs state-licensed massage therapists and master estheticians and integrates both western and eastern treatments designed to help eliminate stress and maximize balance and comfort in the body, mind, and soul.

Crystal has always been interested in the health and wellness industry and studied health in college. Her interest in the health industry piqued when her son was diagnosed with both leukemia and testicular lymphoma at age 3. She said it has been extremely rewarding to own a business that helps people make positive changes so they can live the healthiest lifestyle possible.

Reflecting on her experience as a business owner, Crystal said it takes vision and a lot of hard work. Her advice to other small business owners is to be proactive in finding the resources available.

"It can get overwhelming with all that has to be done when starting a business," she said. "The SBDC and Ogden City have been a huge help to me with the many resources they provide."

Crystal said the best part of business ownership is the fact that her "dream" still exists. She is grateful to show her children first hand that they can live their dreams and overcome any obstacles that stand in their way.

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:**



**WEBER STATE  
UNIVERSITY**





# TRAVERSE TOURS & TRAVEL SUCCEEDS IN EVER- CHANGING MARKET



**M**auricio Melendez, owner of Traverse Tours & Travel in Morgan, Utah, has built a fast-growing company in a competitive and volatile industry. Since its second year in business, Traverse Tours & Travel has at least doubled its sales every year. The company has now been in business for 6 years, and Melendez has a strong team of employees who run the company.

industry. His goal was to target niche markets and simplify their experience while creating unique benefits for them. Melendez knew he would be competing with much larger travel companies, and when he shared his ideas with others, many told him he couldn't start a travel company from a small rural community that served customers across the world. However, Melendez proved them wrong when he hired his first employ-

***"Building a good team has been very critical to our success. I know that I can only do so much, and it is our team that will take us to the next level. When the team is invested in the success of the company, it is no longer your company. It is their company and everyone puts forth their very best effort to grow the business."***

Melendez had worked in the travel industry for 15 years prior to launching his company in 2013. When he realized he was capped in his personal and professional growth, his entrepreneurial spirit pushed him to use his ideas on how to better serve the travel community, and he created a company that would innovate new business practices in a very mature

ee at 7 months and now, 6 years later, he has 11 employees, millions in sales, and rapid growth.

Melendez's desire for growth and education led him to the local SBDC office in 2015. The Kaysville SBDC director traveled to Morgan each week to work with the large and growing business community there. Melendez used their free





one-on-one consultation and educational programs, both within and outside the SBDC network. He quickly learned about Custom Fit, a statewide program that would partially subsidize the cost of training for him and his employees.

"The SBDC opened up opportunities for networking and growth for us," he said. "This has been very helpful as we do business around the world."

Melendez values individual creativity, and when employees feel they have an idea that will make a difference, he wants to put effort behind it. He values flexibility, and his desire was to create a pleasant and fun environment where employees want to come to work every day. Personal development for his team members is important, and between 9 a.m. and noon one day a week, the office is closed so employees can take paid time to work on things that have



nothing to do with work. They can read a book, play, exercise, work on their own business, or whatever they want to do. He attributes many of the innovative ideas that have grown the business to

this commitment to personal growth.

Melendez believes that customer service must be legendary, and he is continually working on new ways to create a unique travel experience for his customers. The motto for Traverse Tours & Travel is, "When people see the world, it changes their world." Melendez and his team are working hard to make that happen for every customer every day.

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY  
THE SBDC AT:**



**DAVISTECH**  
DAVIS TECHNICAL COLLEGE



# SALT LAKE CITY

## EYE CONTACT APP ASSISTS CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

**A**s a former special education teacher, Andrea Johnson was frustrated with the lack of social skills programs to help children on the autism spectrum, along with limited time and sometimes impractical solutions.

Johnson decided to take a risk and stop teaching to develop better solutions. Researching and testing her methodologies, she was humbled and excited about the results she saw. In 2014, she started her company, Teaching It Right, and hired a programmer. Her product, “We Are Friends: Eye Contact” is an interactive iPad app to help parents and children on the autism spectrum.

Johnson first learned about Small Business Development Centers when she came across a blog that talked about the organization. She went to the Salt Lake SBDC and immediately set up an appointment with a mentor.

“The [Salt Lake] SBDC was pivotal in the company’s growth and success,” she said. “They helped me form the business plan, introduced me to funding opportunities, including federal and state grants, and let me know about various workshops and opportunities to develop and practice my pitch deck.”

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY  
THE SBDC AT:**

**Salt Lake  
Community  
College**



**TEACHING IT RIGHT**

Hiring a programmer to do contract work became a money pit for Johnson. With technology ever changing and paying a programmer by the hour, things quickly got expensive. Additionally, the first two programmers she hired ended up taking employment elsewhere. She solved this problem by finding someone who wanted to join her startup and earn equity in the company. She then applied for and received a Phase I and a Phase II Small Business Innovation Research grant from the National Science Foundation. These federal grants allowed her to pay her programmer and develop the “We Are Friends: Eye Contact” app.

The app teaches children on the autistic spectrum, who are developmentally 3 to 12 years old, how to improve eye contact. A video on the company’s website, [teachingitright.com](http://teachingitright.com), shows children with a low percentage of eye contact who improved to over 90 percent by using the app. Johnson said the average eye contact percentage after using the app is an incredible 70 percent.

For Johnson, the best part of owning a company is seeing her dreams come to life and working with an amazing team to make great ideas even better.

“All the years of hard work and being a one-man show have paid off,” she said. “It is exciting and fun to now have a team where we can bounce ideas off each other. I would like to thank everyone at the SBDC. I am grateful for the opportunities they gave me that have helped my dreams become reality. To say the SBDC was critical in the development and growth of the company is an understatement. I don’t think I would have ever taken the company off the ground without their help.”



## CUSTOMER SERVICE NEVER GOES FLAT

**H**ometown Tire & Auto began when the retiring owner approached Carl Justesen with the idea of Justesen purchasing his small business. Excited for the opportunity of a new adventure, and as many prospective business owners do, Justesen threw caution to the wind and the deal was done. That's when reality hit.

"We had no idea what we had purchased," he said. "It was not a good situation at all, in fact, it was a mess!"

After struggling for over a year under numerous back debts, bad agreements with competitors, and massive overhead, a friend told Justesen about the SBDC. Justesen knew it was time to get help, so he visited the Tooele Center.

After working with the Tooele SBDC for a few weeks, Justesen said he received direction and help with business management skills.

"The SBDC helped me make sense out of what felt like a guessing game," he said. "My business became more manageable and profitable. They helped me become more efficient and fill in the missing gaps of the skills and information I needed."

Over a 7-month period, The SBDC helped Justesen develop a workable business plan, a financial restructuring plan, and a marketing strategy. A loan was secured, and the books were brought into profitability. He has now expanded his workforce from four to nine employees and is considering a possible second location.

HomeTown Tire & Auto's philosophy is that profits are not made per individual sale, but in aggregate over a large population of well-served customers through quality, trust, and true service. Justesen said the hope is for an excellent experience every time customers interact with the business.

"We really have a passion for making a difference in people's safety while saving them money over the long run," he said. "With safety inspections no longer required in Utah, I especially love it when someone comes in and we are able to save them from a near disaster on their brakes, tires, or steering that they didn't see coming. That part is awesome!"

A total dedication to excellent service has now expanded from individual customers to maintenance contracts for corporate and local government fleets. The key to success in this expanded market is the same as with his individual customers, according to Justesen.



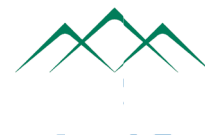
In January of 2019, Hometown Tire & Auto was honored with the Tooele County Chamber of Commerce Customer Service of the Year Award.

"This is the most significant award I have ever received," he said. "It shows that we are who we set out to become."



**HOMETOWN TIRE AND AUTO**  
WE'LL KEEP ROCKIN', SO YOU KEEP ROLLIN'!

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY  
THE SBDC AT:**



**TOOELE TECHNICAL  
COLLEGE**

# VERNAL



## PLAN, PLAN, PLAN...EXECUTE

Vince Billings was introduced to the Vernal SBDC through the StartSMART business startup course. Once the course was completed, he knew there would be a lot of planning in order to achieve his objective.

Billings, a 14-year veteran of the Utah Army National Guard, was deployed to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom during 2012-2013. After returning home, he had a desire to go into the pizza industry because he loved it and was familiar with it.

The StartSMART class he took and some market research provided by the SBDC only whet his appetite, so he enrolled in the BizSMART class, a 10-week entrepreneurship training. This class furthered his training and helped organize his plan so he could apply to get a franchise and a bank loan.

Billings' initial plan was to open a Little Caesar's franchise in Roosevelt because of their vet-friendly franchise plans. But

he was told that Roosevelt was too small. Instead of giving up, he pivoted to Papa John's, worked through the franchising process, and opened the Vernal store in 2016.

Billings said his secret to success is staying motivated by looking at the long-term vision.

"Do the research to make sure your idea is feasible and can provide a living for you," he said. "Realize that it will be a big investment of time and effort, so make sure it is something you will enjoy and find satisfying."

Billings said the SBDC helped him immensely in getting his idea off the ground.

"Through the class and data provided by the SBDC, I was able to get the confidence to move forward with my plan and get the financing," he said. "After I presented the plan, which I followed exactly as I had learned from the course, the bank said it was the most well-prepared plan they had seen in years, and they approved my financing quickly!"

BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:

**EXTENSION**  
**UtahStateUniversity**

**SBDC note:** Vince Billings is serving the community once again by donating to local causes and teaming up with groups for fundraisers. The SBDC is proud to serve people like Vince, who has given so much to our country and community. He makes the SBDC sound pretty good, but he's the real hero. And he makes a really good pizza, too!



## FROM MOBILE CAR DETAILING TO HR TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM



**N**ectar HR is the story of three college friends who started a mobile car detailing business, then turned it into a growing HR technology platform.

In 2017 Trevor Larson, Jackson Horne, and Andrew Hollis started a mobile car detailing business for employees of large companies as an employee perk. They soon noticed that while many companies offered a variety of perks, often employees didn't know about them or know how to access them because of a lack of internal promotion. The three entrepreneurs saw this as a great business opportunity.

The threesome conducted over 150 demonstrations about employee perks to validate their idea, and they eventually launched their platform. From there they've continued to innovate and identify other critical elements. Winning an entrepreneurship competition at Utah Valley University further validated their evolving platform. This connected them to the Small Business Development Center and Business Resource Center incubator program, and the resources helped them grow their

business, collaborate, and gain mentorship and guidance.

Three years later, Nectar HR has created a robust platform that provides tools for employee engagement and recognition, in addition to employee perks.

"We learned that two in three employees don't feel adequately recognized at work, and with how much time and energy people invest in their jobs, it's amazing how few of them feel valued," Larson said. "Most companies have the right intentions but lack the tools or resources to build an effective recognition program."

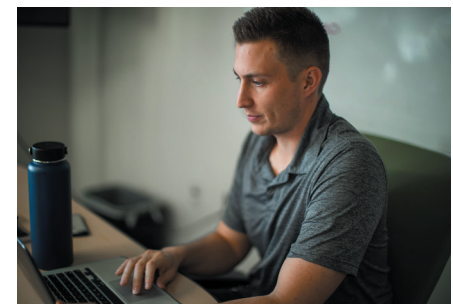
Nectar HR now enables businesses of all sizes to improve their culture, reduce manual HR processes, and increase employee engagement at no cost. The all-in-one software enables positive social interactions through meaningful public recognition, captures employee insights, and offers desirable perks to increase employee engagement and retention.

When asked about their secret to success, Hollis explained that a positive mindset and resilience sprinkled with a little bit of luck is key.

"We worked hard to validate our products and build what the market wants," he said. "If you start with a problem and evolve overtime, you'll find yourself in the right place."

When asked if they have advice for future entrepreneurs, Horne said it's important to validate and ask the hard questions. Will people really pull out their wallets and pay for what you have?

"You've also got to take some risks, but success comes through hard work and patience," he said.



**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY  
THE SBDC AT:**



## PRICE



## RESTAURANT OWNERS GET A SECOND CHANCE

Owners Jim and Sarah Gordon opened the Ponderosa Grill in Huntington, Utah, in October of 2017. Jim cooks and oversees the daily operations, Sarah manages the books and other financial aspects, and their son, TJ, cooks and assists with daily operations. They employ three full-time and 12 part-time employees.

Jim previously operated another restaurant, but through an unfortunate event, the owner of the building sold it, forcing Jim to shut down. At that time, he was not able to locate another building that was suitable for a restaurant, and it took him nearly 10 years to recover.

Jim knew he was not going to make the same mistake again, and this time, he purchased the building when he opened the Ponderosa Grill.

The Ponderosa Grill has become well known for its chicken fried steak and pastrami burger. They also make fresh desserts and baked goods in house.

Jim loves to cook, and being able to work with his family while cooking fulfills his passion and dream. He regularly sits down and visits with his customers, and he believes the interactions with them show that he cares about them as well as the food he serves them. He loves honest feedback, and he finds customers will open up, for good or bad, as he mingles with them.

Jim has worked with the Price SBDC on and off over the years, and they have helped structure various financial plans and packages for him. He has had many financial discussions with the center director, who often served as a sounding board helping him think through the many aspects of his business.

Combined with his experience in the restaurant industry and the resources of the SBDC, Jim has seen wonderful growth and success for several years now. He is now working with the SBDC on expansion plans.



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:

**EXTENSION**  
**UtahStateUniversity**



## PUDDLE JUMPERS HELPS SUPPORT YOUTH IN UTAH

**P**uddle Jumpers Learning Center is not a traditional day care center. It is a play-based, Waldorf-inspired early education and child care center provided in a nurturing, home-like atmosphere.

"The purpose of our learning center is much more encompassing than a traditional child care facility," said owner Amber Carter. "We are creating a space where children will be nourished and taught in a way that enlivens their capacities and potential. We are seeking not only to teach them, but to honor the development of their souls and enable them to become caring, contributing, creative people who can impart meaning and direction in their own lives and the lives of others. This is no small task, and it is done through the work of people with great courage and love."

In the state of Utah, youth are struggling and need support that starts early on. In 2017, suicide was the number one cause of death in Utah's youth ages 10-24. Studies show that there is a direct correlation between levels of education and the high rate of suicide in rural areas.

"As a community, we need to be proactive in a variety of ways to overcome this statistic," Carter said. "The U.S. Census Bureau estimates show that 61 percent of Utah mothers with children under age 6 work, and 73 percent of Utah mothers whose children are between the ages of 6-17 also work. I believe in supporting the amazing parents of our community by providing a high-quality, nurturing, home-like environment for our precious children. We strive to do this through intentional, enriching play and learning experiences that can help strengthen the resilience of our children and youth."

Carter said the three objectives of her company are: 1. To provide children the trust, freedom, and support to play, imagine, and create while encouraging educational experiences that promote social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development in a safe, nurturing, healthy environment. 2. To give parents complete peace of mind, and to be a shining example of what a quality child care center should be. 3. To inspire enthusiasm in the staff by providing daily support, open communication, and opportunities for training, leadership, and growth.

"The SBDC has been a valuable resource and advocate in my journey," Carter said. "They have given



**Puddle Jumpers  
Learning Center**

*A world of wonder, imagination & discovery!*

me advice and support as I shared my business plan and proposed budget. They connected me with financial resources and facilitated meetings with Zion's Bank, which allowed me to close the gap I needed to complete the funding for this project. They continue to be a support in my journey – which has only just begun."

The advice Carter would give someone who wants to start a business is to put God first, and everything else will fall into its proper place.

"Believe in your dreams and in yourself, and take action," she said. "Keep going, put one foot in front of the other and never, never give up!"

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:**



**SNOW COLLEGE**

## SOAPCREEK NATURAL SKIN PRODUCTS CREATE SOLUTIONS



In 2007, Roxanne Johnson set out on a quest to help her family. Several members were struggling with health issues, and she needed a soap that wouldn't irritate their skin. Finding a natural, high-quality body and skin product was difficult, so she decided to make her own. Eventually, others who tried her products started asking where they could purchase more, and that is what prompted the start of Soapcreek Natural Skin Products.

Roxanne and her husband Fred had dreams of helping more people through the use of their products, and in 2017, they turned their kitchen production into a fully functioning company.

"Our biggest challenge, at least this year, was finding available space in our rural area so we could scale our manufacturing," she said. "We have taken our business more into contract manufacturing for big box store brands, and we wanted to stay in rural Utah. We see a lot of potential here and there is definitely a need for business development."

This year they relocated their operation to a new facility in Ephraim, Utah. They hired 22 full-time and 16 part-time employees, a large benefit to a rural community. As they continue to grow, they plan to grow the workforce as well.

Since operating in Ephraim, they received the Snow College Business of the Year Award for 2019. They have also been invited to speak with students there to share their experiences and encourage them to start and pursue their dreams of owning a business.







Roxy said she and her husband received tremendous support from the SBDC this year.

"They spent hours and hours helping us find a location for our business," she said. "They met with us every week to make sure our needs were met and to help us keep our facility in this rural area. They also gave us information on programs to provide us with financial backing and training."

As to advice for start-up businesses, Roxy said she and Fred have a daily "whiteboard meeting" and go over everything – customers, finances, production, logistics, inventory, and deadlines.

"We make to-do lists for ourselves to complete each day and week," she said. "We then meet with our team members and also help them set goals for each week. I guess you could call it a daily accounting for progress so you are never in a position where you are just treading water. Starting a business is a lot of work and long hours, but we feel like any business can be successful if you are willing to work hard and be consistent. We call it the 'daily trudge.' If you keep trudging, even if it's not always easy, you WILL reach your goals."

Roxy and Fred feel it is very rewarding to provide a workplace where their employees love to come to work.

"Their happiness with their job means a lot to us," she said. "I try to check in with every employee daily so they feel appreciated. It is also very rewarding to create solutions through product development for clients. When they talk about our formulations and say, 'You hit the nail on the head,' that is the ultimate reward!!"



**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:**





# FROM TOURISTS TO CAFE OWNERS – IMMIGRANT SUCCESS

About 3 years ago, Huseyin Deniz and his wife, Muserref, visited the Moab area as part of a Western U.S. trip. The couple wanted to visit friends who lived in the Moab area who had told them how beautiful it is. In their travels, the Denizes were looking for some type of business they could run that would allow them to be self-sufficient in their country-to-be. Huseyin contacted some friends in business who advised him to look at SBA funding for financing help when their business ideas gelled.

The couple returned to Turkey and prepared to move to the U.S. When they came back to Moab, they visited the SBDC office and were impressed with their experience helping new businesses start up in the Moab area. Huseyin later attended the Moab Small Business Association Roadshow and met with representatives of the Governor's Office of Economic Development where he received information on requirements for beginning a business in Utah.

Huseyin brought his hospitality degree and 12 years of training and experience



at 5-star restaurants and hotels to the table. He came as a tourist and started his business immediately after he applied for an investor/trader visa, which takes more than a year for the approval process.

The Denizes and their son, Sarp, found an apartment in the Moab area. They worked extremely hard to learn and become fluent in English.

Huseyin spent time visiting dinner and breakfast restaurants in town. He noticed that no one was offering Italian coffees that many European visitors enjoy after a meal. He felt this was the niche he could capitalize on. After investigating commercial properties in Moab, which he found to be quite expensive, he bought a food truck and opened Cafe Italiano. The restaurant offers Paninis,

**SBDC note:** This is an inspiring example of hard-working immigrants who found a way to create business and life in the United States. The help the Denizes received from friends, Moab business owners, and the USU-Moab SBDC office are excellent examples of a community welcoming immigrants.



coffees and espresso, smoothies, and other treats. He is currently renting space in the Canyonlands Trading Post parking lot on Main Street in Moab.

Huseyin met with the Moab SBDC office a number of times before and after buying the food truck. She had helped other food trucks open in the Moab area in the past 2 to 3 years, as food trucks are part of a nationwide phenomenon that allows restaurateurs to create businesses with a lower initial capital investment.

Cafe Italiano became a success with their creative menu, offerings of Italian coffees, and much hard work. They Denizs soon bought the Tropical Shaved Ice food truck that was parked next to their café, and they now operate both businesses.

In early October of this year, Huseyin's trader/investor status was approved by the Immigration Department. The Deniz family is now seeking for their sponsorship for green card status.

Huseyin wrote to the SBDC office, "I want to thank you for participating in our anniversary. You have always been helpful to us. You inspired us to build up our business and our life."

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE  
SBDC AT:**

**UtahStateUniversity.  
MOAB**





# EXPORT COMPUTER EXCHANGE



**M**ishelle Cacho and Jen Holub purchased Export Computer Exchange (ECE) IN 2004, and the company has thrived under their leadership and management. The company continues to do business as ECE, but Cacho and Holub appropriately renamed it Empowered Women's Prosperity Group, Corp. The company currently does business in 67 countries, and between 2017 and 2018, sales increased by 63 percent. Sales for 2019 are projected to increase by 30 percent.

ECE brokers used electronic equipment from asset disposition companies around North America. An increasing number of companies are working with asset disposition companies to ensure that data is wiped and to get at least some return on their obsolete electronic equipment investment, and more and more countries are importing used electronics.

ECE's key competitive advantages are their exporting capabilities and treating each relationship as a unique asset, since no two relationships are the same.

ECE is an international name in the used information technology industry and has been consistently in the lead for delivering technology around the world. ECE resells at the best possible prices, and the company takes pride in making sure all parties involved can be profitable for years to come. ECE does

not purchase equipment until there is a buyer, reducing capital risk and price fluctuations, and all shipments are prepaid by the clients.

Dedicated to her customers, Cacho makes sure that the outcome of every deal is beneficial to all. Integrity is important to her, not just in business, but in all aspects of life, and her goal is to be honest, fair, and professional. With over 15 years of experience in financial operations, she started with a degree in medical billing and has built a strong foundation of knowledge through on-the-job training and many accounting courses.

Holub is a facilitator, a connector, and a resource mobilizer. She sees the big picture when she fits together all the pieces and people involved in her projects. Her goal is to create abundance and win-wins for all. She has a bachelor's degree in business management, a master's degree in human resource management and over 17 years of experience.

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:**

**SUU** SOUTHERN  
UTAH  
UNIVERSITY



## WATER PARK WILL MAKE A SPLASH IN ST. GEORGE

In 2014, efforts were made to build a waterpark near the Dixie Center in St. George, but the project failed. Since that time, a group of dreamers and realists worked together to make it happen, and “Splash City Adventure Water Park” will be open by the summer of 2020. The groundbreaking has taken place, and the park will be located on 10 acres on Middleton Drive next to the St. George-Washington border.

Jim and Allison Mayoros are the owners and park developers. The park will have nine intertwined water slides forming a tower. It will also have a 900-foot lazy river, a wave pool, and splash pads for younger children. Four of the slides have gained national attention on the Travel Channel show.

“We just want to create a local place that is family friendly and fun,” Jim said. “We’ve got millions of people who come here in the summertime, and we wanted to provide more options of things for them to do.”

Jim and the water park development team have worked with a member of the SBDC team at Dixie Technical College since 2015.

“It has been challenging to sell the vision and reality of this project to bring it to where it is today,” he said. “We could not have done it without the SBDC’s vision, feasibility studies, and financial direction.”

It is projected that the waterpark will cost \$15,000,000, will bring more than 350,000 visitors to the park each year, and will employ over 100 mostly part-time employees yearly. Projected revenues will be over \$7,000,000 the first season.

“It has been a long road, and now it will be a reality, thanks in large part to the SBDC,” Jim said.

In addition, a new family entertainment center is planned to be built next to the water park, and it will cover over 26,000 square feet indoors.



BUSINESS ASSISTED  
BY THE SBDC AT:



# DIRECTORY

## LEAD SBDC

### EXTENSION UtahStateUniversity

195 W 1100 S, Room 203  
Brigham City, UT 84302  
Phone: (435) 919-1296



Robert Head  
Market Research  
Analyst

Brady Wood  
Network  
Analyst

Michael Finnerty  
State  
Director

Jason Yerka  
Associate State  
Director

Gaylyn Bradshaw  
Administrative  
Assistant

## BRIGHAM CITY SBDC

### EXTENSION UtahStateUniversity

195 W 1100 S, Room 170D  
Brigham City, UT 84302  
Phone: (435) 919-1296



Jared Turner  
Regional Director

## CEDAR CITY SBDC

### SUU SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

510 W 800 S  
Cedar City, UT 84720  
Phone: (435) 865-7707



Craig Isom  
Regional Director



Joni Anderson  
Associate Director

## EPHRAIM SBDC

### S SNOW COLLEGE

151 S Main Street  
Ephraim, UT 84627  
Phone: (435) 283-7376



Tim Chamberlain  
Regional Director

## KAYSVILLE SBDC

### NORTHFRONT BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER A CENTER AT DATC

450 Simmons Way #100  
Kaysville, UT 84037  
Phone: (801) 593-2115



Andrew Willis  
Regional Director

## LOGAN SBDC

### EXTENSION UtahStateUniversity

1770 Research Pkwy, #140  
North Logan, UT 84341  
Phone: (435) 797-2277



Mike Young  
Regional Director

## MOAB SBDC

### UtahStateUniversity® MOAB

125 W 200 S  
Bldg. B, #123  
Moab, UT 84532  
Phone: (801) 824-2080



Beth McCue  
Business Analyst



OGDEN SBDC



2605 Monroe Blvd.  
Ogden, UT 84401  
Phone: (801) 626-7232



Shawn Beus  
Regional Director

OREM SBDC



815 W 1250 S, MS 239  
BRC Building - Room 106  
Orem, UT 84058  
Phone: (801) 863-8230



Camille Pendleton  
Regional Director

PRICE SBDC



451 E 400 N  
Price, UT 84501  
Phone: (435) 613-5460



Austin Preston  
Regional Director

RICHFIELD SBDC



800 W 200 S  
Washburn Bldg. #170B  
Richfield, UT 84701  
Phone: (435) 893-2206



Craig Blake  
Business Analyst

SALT LAKE CITY SBDC



9690 S 300 W, MCPC-202  
Sandy, UT 84070  
Phone: (801) 957-5441



Jim Herrin  
Regional Director



Bryce Hansen  
Associate Director

ST. GEORGE SBDC



610 S. Tech Ridge Dr. Bldg. A  
St. George, UT 84770  
Phone: (435) 674-5557



Jeff Mather  
Regional Director



Len Erickson  
Associate Director

TOOELE VALLEY SBDC



88 S Tooele Blvd., Room 207  
Tooele, UT 84074  
Phone: (435) 248-1892



Jess Clifford  
Regional Director

VERNAL SBDC

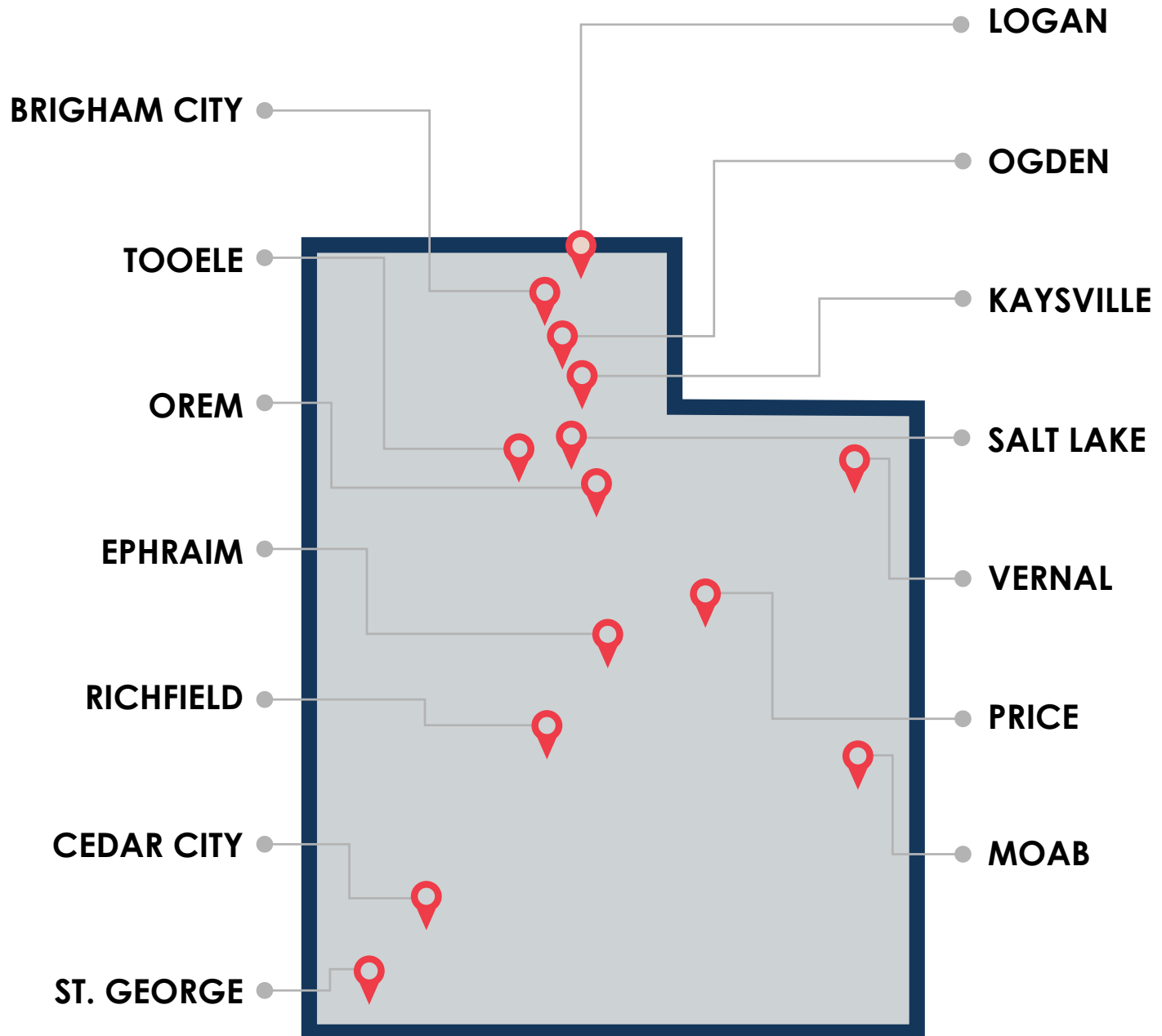


320 N Aggie Blvd.  
Vernal, UT 84078  
Phone: (435) 722-1779



Mark Holmes  
Regional Director

# UTAH SBDC LOCATIONS



[utahsbdc.org](http://utahsbdc.org)



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