

SUCCESS

2020

**ELEVATING
SMALL BUSINESSES
IN UTAH**

AMERICA'S
SBDC
UTAH

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As we entered a new decade in January 2020, we had no idea that this year would be the most devastating and disrupting year that we have ever lived through. COVID-19 has disrupted lives, pushed hospital systems to their capacities, and created a global economic slowdown. It has left many small businesses facing unprecedented economic disruption. Small business owners braced themselves for months of financial pain. Many are still operating at limited capacity or have shut down completely.

In March 2020, the U.S. President signed into law the Cares Act, which provided emergency relief resources to American workers and small businesses. The Utah SBDC received a portion of those funds and immediately went

served, which was 3,894. For every \$1 we spent operating the Utah SBDC, we brought back \$2.33 in state and federal tax revenues. Finally, our clients told us we helped create 1,120 jobs.

As always, we recognize and thank all of our host institutions throughout the state, including Utah State University, Davis 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 contributed to our success.

Once again, Utah finds itself in an enviable position relative to other states that have suffered from the pandemic. Because of sound fiscal policies, Utah is

Because of sound fiscal policies, Utah is having an excellent economic year. This will go a long way in helping small businesses recover and in keeping the Utah economy growing.

to work using them to expand our services and reach out to struggling small businesses in desperate need of help. Through SBA relief funding such as the COVID-19 EIDL loan, the Paycheck Protection Program, and others, we have been able to help many small businesses obtain the needed funding to stay in business and keep their employees working. The year 2020 was unprecedented for the Utah SBDC regarding the number of clients who came to us and the positive impact we were able to have in helping many of them weather the economic storm and continue operating.

Through the dedicated efforts of Utah SBDC regional directors, we provided \$117,181,337 in capital infusion (loans obtained by clients). We helped clients increase sales revenue in the amount of \$43,243,608, which included \$2,565,000 in export sales. We also helped 343 new businesses begin operations as part of our total clients

having an excellent economic year. This will go a long way in helping small businesses recover and in keeping the Utah economy growing. The Utah SBDC will continue to dedicate ourselves to helping small businesses recover and grow. We'll continue 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.



Michael C. Finnerty
Utah Small Business
Development Center
State Director



Utah SBDC Data, 2020

CAPITAL INFUSION



REVENUE



BUSINESS STARTS



343

CLIENTS SERVED



EXPORT SALES



\$2,565,000

STATE TAX REVENUE



JOBS CREATED



COUNSELING HOURS



BENEFIT TO COST RATIO



\$2.33
/\$1.00

BrainSculpt Offers Mood Support and Mental Resilience



BrainSculpt is co-founded by Nephi Jones, an engineer, and Stacy Jones, a marriage and family therapist who specializes in trauma. In Stacy's many years in the field of therapy, she found the thing that helps people most is learning to manage their stress response. To bridge the gaps of managing stress, the couple created a progressive device and software program designed to calm the brain, improve mood, and build mental resilience. The wearable device and app focus on managing stress on the go.

The Logan SBDC began working with BrainSculpt in March of 2019, reviewed their business plan, and discussed a marketing plan. Analysts helped them develop a business model, refine their pricing strategy, build an e-commerce website, develop marketing assets, and build a go-to-market plan.

Due to the onset of COVID-19, discussions centered on the timing of a business launch, the business model, production, working in the new technology environment, and the no-contact requirements of COVID-19.

The SBDC supported the startup as BrainSculpt tested their product and prepared for a business launch. In September of 2020, they requested research to help determine influencers for their product. They also identified changes to the market during the pandemic and potential new influencers and markets. This led to continued support for market planning and strategy adjustments, and BrainSculpt began taking preorders in October of 2020.

Their product gives a series of small, comfortable vibrations on each side of the body that quickly and naturally calms the brain. BrainSculpt specializes in enhancing positive experiences and memories to improve mood and neutralize negative experiences, which could be especially helpful during the pandemic environment, helping people move forward quickly.



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:

EXTENSION
UtahStateUniversity

FULL CIRCLE WELLNESS – A HEALING SPACE



Shanna Anderson and Jessica Poulsen both had dreams of owning a healing space in their hometown of Brigham City. After years of running separate businesses, their friendship brought them together to pursue a shared dream – to bring together a variety of local wellness professionals into one location to create a place of healing and wellness. Combining their knowledge, hard work, and dedication, they set out to make their dream a reality and opened the doors to the Full Circle Wellness Center in November 2019.

From the very beginning, the women sought the help and guidance of the Box Elder SBDC. Director Jared Turner assisted them in setting up the business, crafting a partnership agreement, finding a location, and answering marketing questions.

“Jared has helped us literally every step of the way,” said Poulsen.

As with many businesses, the center was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With a forced closure in March of 2020, the future of their center was uncertain. Fortunately, the SBDC center was able to help the women obtain a Paycheck Protection Program loan that kept them afloat until their business situation improved. Later that year when Box Elder County launched a grant program to help small businesses, the SBDC helped them obtain even more funding for improvements and expansion.

“We are beyond grateful that we have the SBDC to turn to when we are in need of guidance, especially during these challenging times,” said Anderson.

The Full Circle Wellness Center has turned into Brigham City’s hub for wellness. Since reopening, they

have expanded the location and now include 17 wellness professionals who offer services and classes to the community, including foot zoning, massage, hypnotherapy, Reiki, and birthing services. Plans for 2021 include one of their practitioners opening a massage school.

The women attribute their success to a strong value system based on continual improvement, contributing more than they take, and constantly adapting to the needs of their community.



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:

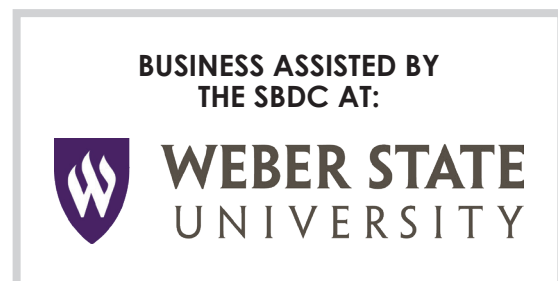
EXTENSION
UtahStateUniversity

A SMASHING GOOD TIME

Smash It is a small business success story that began operations in December 2019 in downtown Ogden. Even during the pandemic, a second location was opened in Salt Lake City, with a third location planned for Logan.

Smash It is owned by wife and husband team Madison and Braeden Furgeson. Having lived on the east coast, the young couple saw that there was a trend for people wanting to smash things in a “rage room,” and that it wasn’t being done as a stand-alone business in Utah. In late 2019, two or three other entrepreneurs suggested the same concept, but the Furgesons made it happen by jumping in full-time and being the first to market it. They bootstrapped the concept with no outside funding using credit cards and reducing their personal expenses. They worked to find lower-rent opportunities, the cheapest inventory/supplies (things to smash that people want to get rid of), and a vision that each location would run by empowering employees to oversee the operation so they could still enjoy family time.

Smash It is considered an SBDC success story because of the number of partners involved in helping the owners along the way. Ogden City referred them to the SBDC, where it was suggested they present to 1 Million Cups, and more connections were made. The SBDC also introduced them to local landlords with vacant space, potential funding sources such as the Utah Microenterprise Loan Fund, and crowdfunding that included consultation from another SBDC location. They were then introduced to venues such as axe throwing companies that also made introductions to the basics of social-based businesses. Smash It has made good use of the many connections and resources the SBDC has to offer.



SALT LAKE CITY

For Jamaica, the best part about being an entrepreneur is having the opportunity to work toward a meaningful goal and meet amazing people in the community. In February 2019, Hello!Bulk moved to its own retail space and has experienced considerable revenue growth. It has also received several awards, including Business of the Year 2019 from the Utah Society for Environmental Education, 2019 Zero Waste Award from the Utah Recycling Alliance, and a 2020 Green Business Award from Utah Business Magazine. They have also received local support from the SBDC, Sorensen Impact Fund, Salt Lake Economic Development Loan Fund, Microloan Fund, and the GIV Group.

In an effort to give back, Hello!Bulk donates 10% of its “Give Back Wednesday” profits to local non-profits, Curly Me SLC and the Rural Utah Educational Fund. They also partner with the GIV Group and provide a significant store discount for the group’s affordable housing tenants.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, the SBDC continued to be an important resource, advising Jamaica on the PPP, EIDL, and Salt Lake City loan programs. She applied for and received funding from each of them. This helped her navigate the critical early months of the pandemic.

“I wholeheartedly believe that small businesses bring so much to our communities, and organizations like the SBDC, that support and encourage entrepreneurs, are needed now more than ever,” she said.

Hello!Bulk is located at 355 North
500 West in Salt Lake City.

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY
THE SBDC AT:**



HELLO!BULK BYPASSES PACKAGING

For Jamaica Trinnaman, shopping in the bulk department of a grocery store, where you control how much you buy and bypass the purchase of packaging, was something that always made sense to her. What’s more, it planted a seed in her mind that grew. She had worked for years in the grocery industry and often considered all the things you should be able to buy by weight. Years later, when she started to hear about zero waste stores, she thought, “That’s my idea!” This lit a fire under her, and she began working toward opening her own business in Utah.

In the spring of 2018, Jamaica opened a small model of Hello!Bulk Markets in the back of Square Kitchen Incubator in Salt Lake City’s Granary District. Here, customers were encouraged to bring their own containers and purchase everything by weight – from groceries to body care to household cleaners. While she initially funded the store with the help of the Economic Development Loan Fund, Jamaica also ran a successful Kickstarter campaign that validated there were people in the community ready to support the zero-waste concept.

After 6 months into operating her business, Jamaica began looking for a local mentor and was referred to the Salt Lake SBDC. There she was paired with Peter Callister, and the two began meeting monthly.

“One thing that no one ever tells you is that starting a business can be an all-encompassing and isolating experience,” she said. “Meeting with a mentor gave me someone to bounce ideas off, vent to, and help with a frame of reference for my experience.”

A Hug-in-a-Cup to Help Embrace the Day

Sips is a specialty beverage restaurant in Bountiful that provides signature crafted caffeinated beverages including coffee, energy drinks, sodas, and teas, as well as smoothies, breakfast sandwiches, and treats. The Sips model is to provide a unique customer experience by delivering custom-designed drinks with drive-through convenience and speed. The company motto is “A hug-in-a-cup to help you embrace the day.”

Matt Perry, Sips owner, said he has wanted to open his own business since he was young. When he moved to Davis County in 2002, he realized there was an opportunity for a specialty beverage drive-through since there appeared to be none in the area.

“When I originally began, we were a small kiosk-style drive-through in a Kmart parking lot,” he said. “In 2016, due to redevelopment of that location, we moved around the corner on Highway 89 in Bountiful. We built a new building and worked to rebrand our business with an expanded menu with recipes inspired by the local community. Besides the challenge of relocation, a new Starbucks was built in the redeveloped retail space, creating an uphill charge to recover and reestablish ourselves.”

Matt has faced many challenges over the years and learned valuable lessons from each one. When faced with roadblocks, he has worked to turn each one into an opportunity to learn, improve, and grow.

“One of the most important things I’ve learned is how to pivot to stay relevant and to always persist and move forward,”



he said “The best part about being an entrepreneur and having your own business is the ability to create and have some control over your own destiny.”

Matt regularly offers support to other small businesses so they can benefit from his journey and the lessons he’s learned.

also call many of our customers ‘friends.’ We are the charming, small-town experience you won’t get in a big city.”

Matt believes he has a responsibility to make a difference.

“We pride ourselves on creating a diverse, comfortable workplace for our employees,” he said.

“Business ownership is definitely not for the faint of heart, but for me it is a source of pride and accomplishment that I could not obtain working for someone else. But it takes persistence, persistence, persistence!”

“Your own business is one of the most challenging things you will ever do; however, it can be the most rewarding,” he said. “Business ownership is definitely not for the faint of heart, but for me it is a source of pride and accomplishment that I could not obtain working for someone else. But it takes persistence, persistence, persistence!”

Matt has built Sips and positioned it for growth by his focus on creating unique experiences for his customers, taking care of them, and making them feel like family. His philosophy is that if he can create a fun experience for his team, they will, in turn, have fun with customers.

His website states, “Being a local business, we have the benefits of building personal bonds with our customers. Not only do we know their preferred drink, we

This year, he received the Golden Key Ace Citizen Award for providing job skills training for those with special needs.

In the beginning months of COVID-19, Matt made quick changes to help minimize contact between employees and customers, and he implemented strict sanitation protocols.

“Our ability to create a safe work environment along with a safe customer experience helped us continue to stay open and serve our patrons, while watching our competitors close due to COVID-19-related issues. This brought a new influx of customers to Sips, which we capitalized on by creating repeat customers.”

With help from the SBDC, Matt was able to receive Paycheck Protection Program loans to retain all his employees. The SBDC also brought in subject matter experts with CARES Act funds, and Matt met with online marketing, social media marketing, and leadership specialists.

From the beginning, Matt knew he wasn’t alone, and he used the services available from the SBA resource partners.

“I opened my first store with the help of the SCORE Business Center in 2002,” he said. “In 2016, I met Winthrop Jeanfreau, director of the Utah Valley SBDC, and he helped me develop a plan for growth. Since I was located in Davis County, they directed me to Andrew Willis and the Kaysville SBDC in 2017. They

have been instrumental in helping me grow my business and providing me with resources.

“Multimillion-dollar corporations often have unlimited resources and enormous groups of people to help them develop and create their business and strategies. To have something like the SBDC help small businesses that usually lack those type of dollars and resources really helps level the playing field in a world that favors large corporations.”

After 18 years of success and building a strong foundation in his Bountiful store, Matt recently opened his second store in Clearfield. In 2021 and 2022, he has plans to build two more stores in the Davis and Weber County areas.

Visit the Sips website at
sipsdrivethru.com



**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY
THE SBDC AT:**



DAVISTECH
DAVIS TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TOOELE



SIMPLY BLISS BBQ AND BAKERY PROVIDES UNIQUE ORIGINALS



Leslie and Doug Webb, of Stansbury Park in Tooele County, have always had a passion for good food. Their philosophy is that good food equals a good life.

Simply Bliss BBQ and Bakery began humbly in the summer of 2015 as a bakery. Leslie recalls making the long drive to the small commercial kitchen she rented in Bountiful to bake her goods for the next farmers market.

"Back then, you couldn't bake commercially in a residential kitchen by state regulation, so I'd have to make the drive to do it," she said.

At each market, Simply Bliss Bakery would sell out, and the popularity of Leslie's baked goods began to spread. By 2017, pit master Doug added daily fresh smoked BBQ to the offerings, and Simply Bliss evolved into a full catering service as well as a mobile trailer that served lunch.

In June of 2018, Leslie and Doug met with the SBDC. With their help, Simply Bliss was awarded the food vending contract at Tooele Technical College, placing them in a fully equipped commercial kitchen with a steady flow of hungry staff and students. It was here that Doug began to develop and expand their menu.

"Doug is the creative one on the team," said Leslie. "He is always coming up with something new and awesome."

Customers rave about the unique Simply Bliss originals such as the Skirt Burger, smoked pork and mash, or the Fat-Boy Taco, recently declared on K-Bull 93 as "possibly the best taco in Utah."

Their American boot-strap story of ups and downs, hard work and tenaci-

ty in making their passion their life is an interesting one, but their journey has not been without hardships. Location was often a challenge, and Simply Bliss has weathered other storms such as much larger competition, juggling family life, and working two to three side jobs when things got tight during the COVID 19 pandemic. But in working closely with Jess Clifford at the SBDC in Tooele Valley over the past 3 years to work through growth challenges and secure funding, each challenge has only served to make their business stronger.

"It's not easy building a food business that's not 'on Main Street,'" Leslie said. "We've always had to build our traffic from scratch and make sure we had something for people that was worth the drive...again and again. We couldn't have come this far without our friends at Tooele Tech and the SBDC! We are grateful for their support and are so happy to be where we are. We wouldn't have it any other way."

**BUSINESS ASSISTED BY
THE SBDC AT:**



UINTAH PACKING CO. STAYS STRONG DURING COVID-19



Chef Danny Justice was in the restaurant business for many years. He loved the work, but restaurant hours made it difficult to have family time.

"Many times I would get off work, pick up my little girls from the sitter and put them straight to bed," he said.

Then an opportunity arose to buy a meat packing and retail meat sales company from an acquaintance who was ready to retire. Danny and his partner, Wayne Justice, jumped on it.

"Now, with a home attached to the business, my daughters have a yard to play in, and when the bus drops my kindergartner off, I can have lunch with her every day," Danny said.

But there were storm clouds on the horizon. After a short internship to learn the business in 2019, Danny and Wayne purchased the Uintah Packing Company in January of 2020. News of COVID-19 was spreading, and people began to panic as stores started to run out of basic food items. Danny saw this early on as his suppliers began to raise prices.

"When I saw bare shelves and my costs going up, I immediately ordered massive inventory increases so I wouldn't

run out and so I wouldn't have to gouge the public with big price increases," he said. "I offered skinless chicken breasts by the case. I thought I would sell maybe 30, but I sold that, plus 100 more."

When asked what he sells most, he says hamburger and chicken, which is a tell-tale sign about the economic condition of the public he serves. He said his greatest achievement is that through proper planning, the business never ran out of what people needed. This strategy caused business to increase to the point that he hired three more people while other businesses were closing.

The Vernal SBDC has been involved with the Justices on many projects since 2013.

"We love working with tenacious, long-term clients with a vision to not only prosper but to assist the community," said Mark Holmes, director of the Vernal SBDC.

I asked Danny to tell me his secret to success, and he said to be honest and help people, which seems to be the family's mantra. - Mark Holmes

"We have all spent countless hours working on business plans, financial projections and answering questions from loan officers, and I am thrilled to see this project come together. The depressed economy in Utah's oilfield makes it tough to run a successful business like the Justices have done with Uintah Packing Co., but they have managed it well."



**BUSINESS
ASSISTED BY
THE SBDC AT:**

EXTENSION
UtahStateUniversity

FREE FINANCIAL PLANS IN JUST FIVE MINUTES

After building a successful business with the support of SBDC resources between 2014 to 2017, Spencer Barclay knew he would go back to them when he was ready to start another company. In February 2019, that time came.

Barclay observed that many millennials struggle with their personal finances. He knew this was a problem he wanted to solve, but he wasn't exactly sure how to do it.

Turning to the SBDC for assistance, he started to brainstorm business plans. He knew they could help him tap into the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem in the valley and help him apply many of the business concepts he had learned.

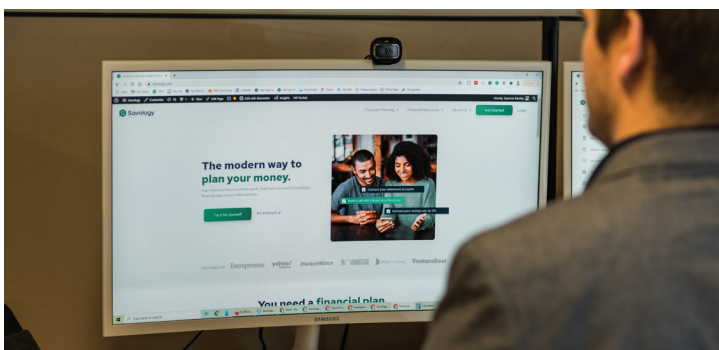
Counselors and other entrepreneurs were eager to help. These interactions prompted Barclay to perform broader market research to find and validate a business model. He ended up doing thousands of surveys, hundreds of one-on-one interviews, and dozens of small focus groups. Over several weeks, his ideas became more focused as he discovered a few key concepts from his market research.

Barclay outlined a business plan for financial planning. He and his team adopted a mission to increase the financial security for digital generations by making financial planning more accessible, more actionable, and more effective than ever before. He summarized his business in a clear and concise introduction, "At Savology, we provide free financial plans in just five minutes."

When Barclay was ready, the local SBDC advisor who he worked closely with, Jim Beckstrom, invited him to a pitch event where he met a group that became Savology's first venture investors.

After months of development, Barclay built a team and launched their fast and free financial planning technology. He stayed in touch with Beckstrom to keep him apprised of their progress. After establishing a few months of traction, Savology was able to raise a \$750,000 seed round to accelerate their growth. The company has since created jobs for several families, built financial plans for tens of thousands of households, and partnered with dozens of industry leaders.

Savology's connection to the SBDC continues to this day. The SBDC helped them secure office space nearby where they can meet intermittently to consult and solve problems. Savology is building off a strong foundation and is well on its way to reaching their goal to increase the financial security of millions of American households.



**BUSINESS ASSISTED
BY THE SBDC AT:**

**UTAH VALLEY
UVU
UNIVERSITY**



Mason Winters is a welding engineer by trade, and Angie Johannsen's background is in aviation. Managing a few airports through her career, she experienced a recurring problem. When an aircraft got a flat tire from a hard landing, the entire runway had to be shut down until the tire could be fixed, which was often a lengthy process. Angie asked Mason to design a dolly that could scoop the flat tire and tow the plane to the hanger to be fixed.

Alloyed Solutions was born after the first aircraft recovery dolly was designed and patented.

The Iron Tire recovery dolly caught the attention of other airports and an aviation ground support distributor, and the company has now expanded their services into additional areas as well.

Angie originally came to the SBDC for general business and marketing questions. She then approached them about international trade and patents. The SBDC answered her questions and connected her with World Trade Center Utah. Angie and Mason began the process of getting international

patents, and they now have plans to participate in international tradeshows.

The SBDC also helped put Alloyed Solutions in contact with an International Organization for Standardization certification training program. The completion of their certification will make them an even stronger business and allow them to provide unique products and services to government contractors.

Like all businesses, the company was affected by COVID-19. Angie and Mason were planning to hire several full-time employees, but the pandemic changed that. The SBDC provided information and counseled with them, and in the end, Alloyed Solutions was able to receive a Paycheck Protection Program Loan. This was a huge benefit in helping them move forward with their business plans and goals.



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:

EXTENSION
UtahStateUniversity

EPHRAIM



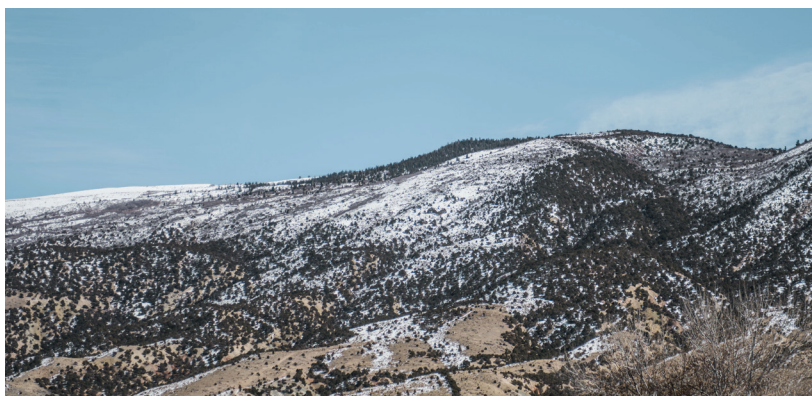
Goats and Grooming Become Booming Businesses



Pam Matherne came to the Ephraim SBDC with passion and a drive for small businesses. At the time, she was working at a local goat farm and quickly learned that she wanted to run her own business. Her love for animals and enjoyment seeing them healthy and happy gave her the determination to buy a herd of goats and a small farm to raise them on. She then successfully found a market for selling them. With this venture, the entrepreneurship bug struck, and Pam opened a second business – Lovey's Pet Grooming in Manti. She acquired the skills through experience and now has the opportunity to use it in her own business.

With two successful businesses that keep her busy, Pam has provided an income for herself as well part-time employees who help her with Lovey's Pet Grooming. She has found great satisfaction in providing for herself, but the joy she gets from helping others receive income has been huge.





These ventures did not come easy for Pam, but she is not afraid of hard work or furthering her knowledge and education, and she has taken classes to increase her skill level.

"As I finish off my bachelor's degree at USU, I am reminded of the incredible start I got at Snow College," she said. "They are not just in the business of education, they provide resources for students to take their education to the next level – the real world. For me, this was the most frightening part. But Tim Chamberlain from the SBDC has been instrumental in helping me achieve my goals through his encouragement and business expertise. Keep in mind that I began my studies at Snow at 40 years old, and most colleges may have written me off as not having any chance at success. But the people at Snow kept pushing me to take chances, and I felt they were there as a safety net. The SBDC also helped me apply for farm grants."

During COVID-19, the SBDC offered a web design course that allowed Pam to get a fully functioning website up and running. Upon completion, the course cost was covered 100%. With funding tight, this was a huge benefit to Pam.

By improving her professional skills and having her services available online for customers to view, Pam was able to achieve her dream of working with animals while generating an income for herself and others.



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:



COMMUNITY SUPPORT HELPS SWEETEN RICHFIELD BAKERY

For many years, Whitney Olsen dreamed of owning her own bakery – something she could call her own and share with others. She was afraid it wouldn't be possible, and it would always remain a dream. However, after a lot of encouragement from friends and family, in May of 2019, she decided to take the plunge and start her business.

"It was the best decision I have ever made, well except for marrying my husband and having two wonderful children," she said. "It has been a great ride ever since!"

Whitney said in 2012, her sister-in-law talked her into making her wedding cake.

"I thought, how hard can it be?" she said. "I've always enjoyed baking and cooking. After many hours figuring out how to do a three-tiered fondant cake, I fell in love with decorating cakes. I really didn't think about having it be a business, because it was my niche and a hobby I loved doing."

A few years later, Whitney decided to do something fun and creative for a fair. She had a custom ice cream sandwich booth featuring homemade cookies and toppings.

"It was a huge success," she said. "Everyone thought the cookies were pretty yummy. This is when I knew I really wanted to pursue my dream and open a bakery."

Whitney said the business started as Sweet Haven Custom Ice Cream Sandwiches and has now turned into Sweet Haven Bakery. Whitney works out of her home making custom orders, which means lots of cookies, brownies, bars, and cakes. This year she took her dream a little farther and expanded her business into a food trailer. She and her husband, along with help from many others, gutted and re-built a camp trailer and turned it into a mobile bakery. They opened it in June of 2020 and now park it on Richfield's Main Street and also take it to events.

"The success of the business has amazed me," she said. "We are truly blessed with the support from our community, and I am so grateful I get to live my dream and share my passion with others. I have to thank the SBDC for the many things they taught me about growing a business. I wouldn't have been able to accomplish this without their help. They have shown me how to get my name out there. I know they'll be there to continue to advise and assist me, and I will always be appreciative of that."



BUSINESS ASSISTED BY THE SBDC AT:





PORKBELLY'S
EATERY & CATERING CO.

PORK BELLY'S EATERY & CATERING CO. COMMITTED TO CUSTOMERS



Charles (Eddie) and Kate Meek have been in the restaurant industry for over 20 years. They owned and sold a successful restaurant in California, then chose Cedar City, Utah, to start Pork Belly's Eatery & Catering Co. in 2016. They opened a second location in St. George in 2019.

Pork Belly's is a full-service restaurant offering unique dishes and American-style food with flare. The menu is a culmination of dishes from cities Kate and Eddie have visited, recreated with their own twist. Between the two locations, Pork Belly's has 27 employees and offers space for nearly 150 dining guests.

Catering is a large portion of their business, and Eddie and Kate try to never turn down a catering opportunity. They have obtained state and federal contracts to feed firefighters and pilots. A few years ago, they were chosen to feed the Especially for Youth Organization in Cedar City, where they provided 470 meals, three times a day for five days. Using the profits from this event, they were able to obtain an SBA loan and

open Pork Belly's in St. George. Never sacrificing quality is their goal when catering, and they strive to provide the same homemade, unique flavors at each event.

"What is my secret to success? To keep pushing forward and keep up with the trends."

Kate and Eddie were referred by their bank to the Cedar City SBDC for assistance in preparing their loan package for their restaurant location in St. George. Since then, and due to COVID-19, SBDC counselor Joni Anderson has communicated regularly with them to assist with various federal and state assistance programs and other available resources.

COVID-19 has severely impacted the restaurant industry, and Pork Belly's has had its share of challenges. With federal- and state-mandated health regulations, employee recruitment and retention issues, food and restaurant supply chain

problems, ever-changing regulations and requirements, personal protective equipment requirements, additional sanitizing, and more, the Pork Belly's team has effectively been able to pivot their business in order to manage the restrictions. While Kate acknowledges that it has been a bumpy few months, she is also grateful to live in a state that values and supports small businesses and recognizes their contributions to the state and local economy.

Pork Belly's Eatery & Catering Co. is committed to their customers and to providing high-quality food and service. Eddie and Kate are grateful to be able to work in an industry they love while serving customers who love great food!

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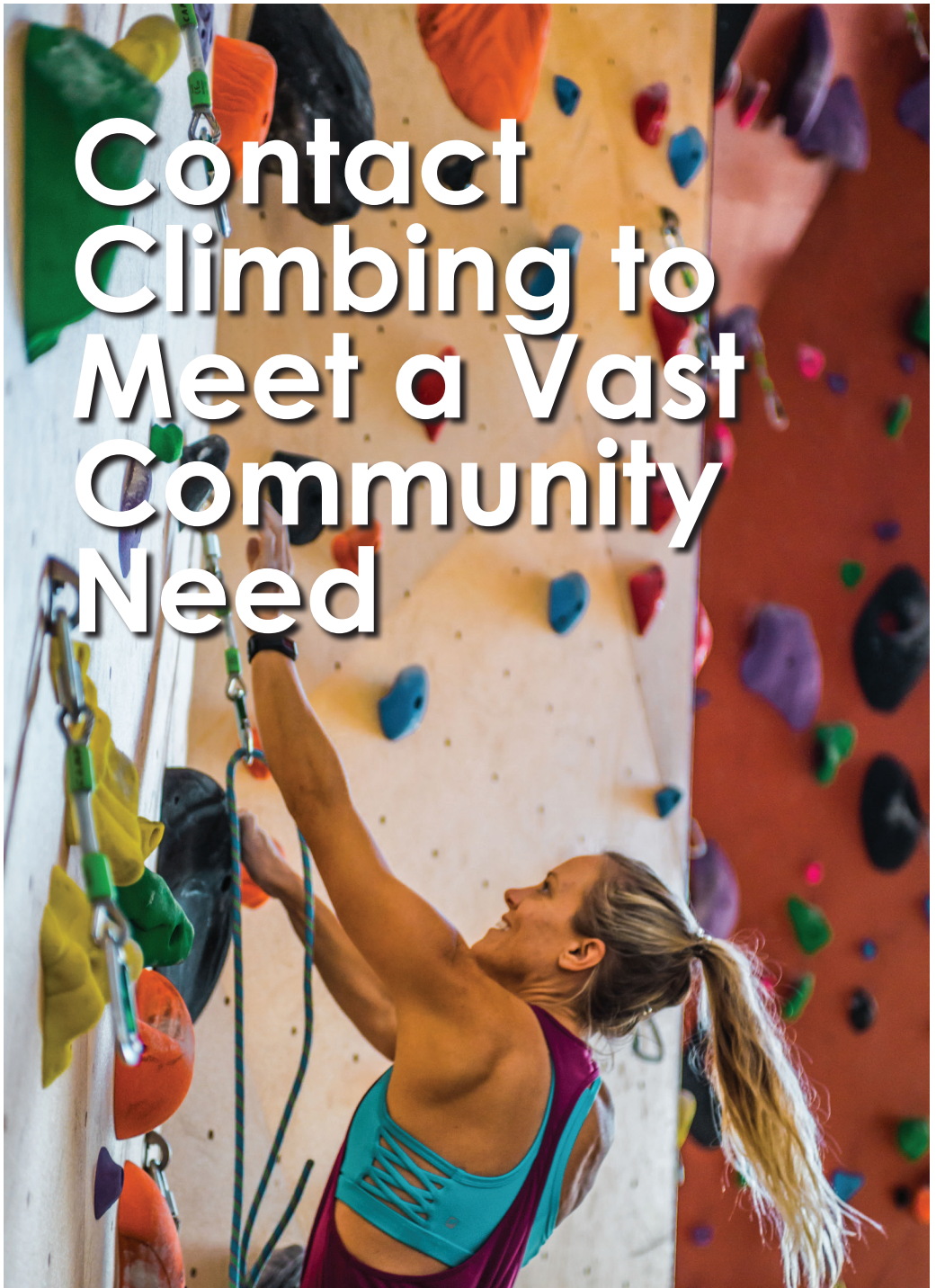
ST. GEORGE

The three-story, terracotta red, gray, and glass building rising in eastern St. George is Contact Climbing, a climbing mega-gym. Just as impressive as the large structure is the story behind it. It was only two years ago when the principals of the project first contacted each other, merging years of independent research and a common vision of the same dream.

Jeff and Jenny Compas, who had been climbing for over 13 years, were living and raising their family in northern Utah in 2014. But southern Utah was calling them. Between year-round climbing, a warmer climate, and relatives in the area, the Compas family was feeling the desire to relocate. Surprised that no one had yet opened a climbing gym in the St. George area, they moved south and started researching the feasibility of creating such a facility.

At the same time, Chris and Jacquelyn Horton were doing similar research. After living in Wyoming, they moved to southern Utah in 2020. With a background in owning and managing businesses that included a yoga studio and various hotels and hospitality businesses, coupled with a lifestyle of climbing, camping, and backpacking, Chris and Jacquelyn had a vision. This led them to Vertical Solutions, the nation's leading climbing gym-building company headquartered in Salt Lake City. The Hortons were told by their Vertical Solutions contact that another couple in southern Utah was looking to build a climbing mega-gym and might be looking for someone to collaborate on operations.

After several phone conversations, the Compas and Hortons met in 2018, and Contact Climbing was born. Jacquelyn said it was pure ser-





endipity. The experience, research, and vision of the two couples meshed perfectly.

Like most entrepreneurs, the Contact Climbing team will tell you that climbing to the summit of a dream is hard work. Jeff, Jenny, Chris, and Jacquelyn jumped through the hoops, burned the midnight oil, overcame obstacles, and moved toward groundbreaking day. They researched area demographics, how many rainy days per year, the amount of time locals spend outside, and a multitude of other factors.

"It turns out that after all the analysis, St. George is one of the best places in the country to have a gym like this," said Jeff.

"The SBDC regional director's optimism and belief in our vision was critical and pivotal to energize the team for that last push to reach the summit."

The St. George area hit the sweet spot on all the factors, forecasting both a need and a niche. Skills such as being environmentally responsible and physically safe are vital to learn, and life-threatening mistakes can be made outdoors by those who have not trained indoors. Their research showed that climbing gyms are most successful in climbing areas.

The Contact Climbing team was assisted by the SBDC in St. George, and Jeff Mather, regional director, provided market research and analysis, business plan assistance, and advice on the financial forecasts needed. Each member of the Contact Climbing team said that even more valuable than business counseling was the validation, encouragement, and support the SBDC provided them.

"The days when we would all wake up and say, 'The wheels are going to come off of this thing!' was when the SBDC regional director's optimism and belief in our vision was critical and pivotal to energize the team for that last push to reach the summit," said Jeff.

The result of that determination and perseverance is a beautiful, nearly cathedral-like space of wood, glass, color, and structures.

"This is a large building, but at the same time it has the soul of your living room – a place where you'll want to be," said Jeff. "No matter what your age, fitness level, or interest and



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experience level in climbing, Contact Climbing will provide a community hub where you will feel like you belong."

While there are a couple thousand climbers in the area, Jenny said there are between 50,000 to 80,000 active, outdoor-minded residents looking for something new to discover and experience.

"It is a stunning space to enjoy the social aspect of it while at the same time doing healthy things with like-minded people," she said.

Chris noted that all four owners are supremely guest focused and have entirely opened up the space and themselves to the community.

"We are hands-on owners who have literally invested everything in this space," said Jacquelyn. "This is going to be our life. And we see it being wildly successful!"

Contact Climbing opened in February 2021. It is St. George's first full-service climbing gym, yoga studio, and strength and conditioning facility – all within 20,000-square foot, 14-foot tall bouldering walls that include training equipment, yoga, and fitness equipment. In addition, it will be home to a strong community and will create a space for like-minded people to gather and become better at whatever inspires them.

For information, visit contactclimbinggym.com or @contactclimbing on Facebook and Instagram.

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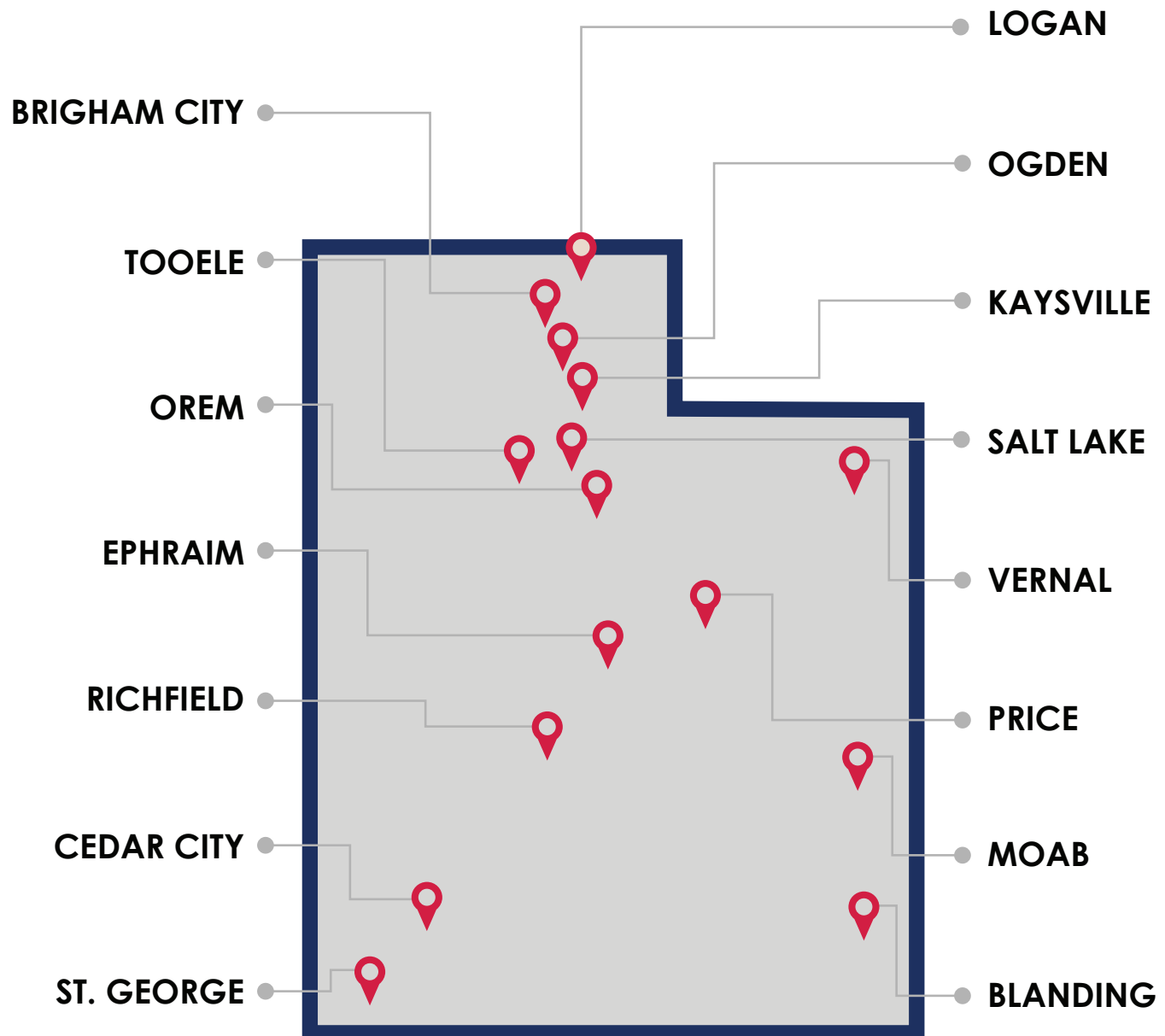


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