



## **NH Small Business Development Center 2017 Annual Report**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The NH SBDC is pleased to submit our annual report, for CY 2017. CY 2016 and CY 2017 have produced amazing successes for the NH SBDC program by the numbers, and we continue to set records in a range of client metric categories' most recently business starts and jobs created.

Our relationships in-state, and at the federal level, continue to remain strong. We have a close partnership with our SBA District Office, and OSBDC, both of whom work closely with us to answer questions, provide guidance, and connect us with crucially important local resources.

We benefit from stability in our staff. Typically turnover is among our part-time employees, and we have been fortunate to retain a strong team of full-time advisors and Regional Directors, whose relationships drive outstanding clients to our SBDC, and whose reputations continue to grow and enhance the SBDC's brand.

Work with our Host, the Peter T. Paul College of Business & Economics at the University of New Hampshire (PTPC), also continues to thrive. This year's "Paul College Honors Project," which connects small businesses in New Hampshire with undergraduate students who work on experiential learning projects, saw a doubling of both enrollment (from students), and applications for projects (from businesses). This Project, and other smaller efforts, continue to strengthen our relationship with our Host. Many of our University and Community College system partnerships and projects are highlighted throughout this report.

We speak briefly during the "problems" section about funding, which remains a crucial concern at the SBDC in New Hampshire. Our State has traditionally not provided our 50% match, and in last year's report I wrote about concerns related to the new Economic Development structure at the State level. I'm happy to report in this document that those concerns have been alleviated, and we are optimistic about growing our State-based allocation in 2019 and beyond, removing some of the fundraising pressure from the State Director. It is also important to thank you, the SBA, at this juncture, for your flexibility in willingness to allow us to use SBA funds as matching funds so that we can pursue other sources of revenue.

Before highlighting some of the elements of our report in more depth below, I would be remiss in not mentioning that it is with mixed emotions that I've decided to leave the SBDC program, after 5.5 years as both a business advisor and now as State Director. It has been a true joy to work with this program, and with the SBA. My next stop, an SBA microlender, will ensure that I remain connected to the SBA and the incredibly important work that the agency does for our nation's entrepreneurs and small business owners. I am incredibly grateful for the support, partnership, and professionalism of our SBA partners at both the federal and state level; you all helped to ensure a foundation that has allowed us to move the SBDC program forward in just three short years.

A few additional highlights:

**Metrics:** As mentioned above, we continue to set near-term records (for our organization) with respect to impact. In CY 2017, these were in the area of business starts, and client jobs created. This follows CY 2016, where in particular client capital access was very strong for a small rural state. CY 2017 also saw an increase in volume for us, as we worked to continually streamline our administrative processes and free up time for advising; we saw a 22% increase in the number of clients in CY 2017 compared with CY 2016.

**Our staff continues to innovate:** We continue to address the lack of alternative capital in the state by scaling the *Funding Readiness Clinic*, which we began in earnest in 2016. The Clinic expanded beyond funding pitches to include strategy pitches in CY 2017. Utilizing multiple SBDC advisors to share their expertise in this format is producing real results for our clients, and we hope it will be a long-term partnership opportunity with other business development entities in New England.

**SBA Partnership:** We continue to partner extremely well with our SBA District Office, led by DD Greta Johansson. We conducted another successful Small Business Matchmaker in 2017, and based on demand, we plan to continue to hold this event in November, 2018. Following a series of successful (and very well-attended) SBA-SBDC regional lender roundtables in CY 2017, we are planning to schedule these again in CY 2018. Also on the horizon for CY 2018 are our Advising and Lead Center reviews with our Project Officer.

**University Partnerships:** As highlighted throughout this document, and mentioned briefly above, we have strong partnerships throughout the University System of New Hampshire and the Community College system. These relationships consist of advising space, co-promotional opportunities, research collaborations, and experiential and internship opportunities between students and businesses. They are also a source of young entrepreneurial clients!

**National Presence:** On the national scene, New Hampshire continued to play a leadership role in the ASBDC initiative “Small But Mighty.” We successfully convened meetings at the 2017 National Conference, and Spring Meeting, and have already continued this work in CY 2018. Small But Mighty consists of all of the “minimally funded states” sharing ideas and collaborating on common programmatic challenges.

**Environmental & Sustainability Work:** Throughout this report you will note activity by our Business Sustainability Program. We are thrilled to have finally advanced some of the initiatives that complement the strengths of our Manchester advisor, and to spread these throughout the State. Through partnerships, such as with Manomet, we have been able to leverage partner resources, and offer crucial programming to our clients without adding staff.

Overall, I think we are doing extremely well, and have a lot of momentum heading into the remainder of CY 2018. We continue to appreciate the partnership and collaboration among our SBA partners, and we look forward to continuing to build NH’s economy, one small business at a time.

Best regards,



Rich Grogan  
State Director, NH Small Business Development Center

[www.nhsbdc.org](http://www.nhsbdc.org)

## **BUSINESS ADVISING**

### ***CY 2017 Impact***

**NH SBDC Business Advisors delivered 6,395+ hours of in-depth business counseling to 851 clients in CY 2017 (an average of 7.5 hours/client) - a 22% increase in clients over CY 2016.** Analysis of counseling hours continues to indicate demand for business start-up, business planning, market & sales, marketing plans, sources of capital, loan package development, cash flow projections, and financial analysis and review. This is a reflection of the economy, with many existing businesses seeking to build sustainability into their strategy, refocus their marketing efforts and repackage existing debt.

## **STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The NH SBDC Education Program complements our business advising services. The website, e-Learning for Entrepreneurs program, in-person workshops, and large events are designed to supplement learning for client business owners and for New Hampshire residents who are thinking about starting a business, have a new or young business, or are looking for vetted material on a more advanced topic.

In fact, the education program reaches approximately 2,000 individuals annually who do not become advising clients, providing them with what they need without overtaxing our advising staff.

### **Online Learning Opportunities**

Our signature online education program - e-Learning for Entrepreneurs - launched in 2008 with 20 courses, leased from SmallBizU. Since then we have developed and built 24 more courses of our own, and 1,400 courses are taken annually. SmallBizU informed us that they would be sunsetting their program, so we spent much of summer and fall 2017 researching, surveying, and collecting and analyzing data to aid in revamping and planning our next decade of online learning opportunities for New Hampshire entrepreneurs. We decided to drop the SmallBizU program as of 1/1/2018 and begin rebuilding our online learning program to fit entrepreneurs' needs for the near future.

### **In-person Workshops and Seminars**

We often work with partners when offering in-person workshops and filling the seats. During 2017 NH SBDC ran two ongoing, established in-person series and one pilot series:

- *General Industry Safety Roundtables* – a partnership between NH OSHA, OSHA Training Institute Education Center at Keene State College, and NH SBDC's Business Sustainability Program. This program regularly sees 40-50 attendees at its ten roundtables per year. Each month, roundtables feature safety topic-specific presenters.
- *How to Start a Business in NH Workshop Series* – This series, presented by community experts, attracts people interested in starting a business from central and southern New Hampshire. Pathway to Work clients (program explained elsewhere in this report) are encouraged to attend, and there is no cost to them. Other business owners not affiliated with the program pay \$50 for the whole 4-week series. SBDC offers this series in partnership with Manchester Community College.
- The Manchester office and the Education Director partnered with Citizens Bank to offer a 4-week series on best banking practices during August.

## Actual e-courses, workshops and seminars offered in 2017:

The NH SBDC served 2,081 attendees through 167 workshops in 2017, with both live and online offerings (eLearning mini-courses are not counted in this total, as they do not meet the SBA's one-hour length criterion for an official "training" session).

### Sample workshops offered include:

- Chemical Hazard Reduction & Transitioning to Safer Chemicals
- OSHA's New Requirements for Improved Tracking of Workplace Injuries
- Financing Your Business Workshop (with TD Ameritrade)
- Top 10 Mistakes Small Business Owners Make
- Social Media for Small Business
- Insurance 101
- Basics of Online Global Marketing
- Legal Forms of Business
- Writing a Business Plan
- Understanding Drugs & How the Drug Problem is Impacting Your Workplace.
- Getting to Know Your Financial Statements
- How to Start a Business in NH
- 44 different eLearning courses and mini courses<sup>1</sup>

## Large Events

NH SBDC also was a cosponsor with the U.S. SBA and NH GovCon to host the 2018 NH Small Business Matchmaker on December 1, 2017 at Manchester Community College. More information about this event appears in the *400 Procurement* section.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### *100 Capital Formation*

The NH SBDC plays a leadership role in the state by helping small businesses gain access to both traditional and non-traditional sources of capital to finance growth. This continues to be one of the NH SBDC's strategic goals and staff continue to build relationships in the community to advocate for small businesses entrepreneurs, and to grow the SBDC staff knowledge base about traditional and non-traditional sources of capital.

### 2017 Highlights:

- **Funding Readiness Clinic:** SBDC staff started this forum in 2016 to assist clients who are ready or near ready to obtain financing. At these meetings, held quarterly, clients present their "pitch" to a panel of SBDC advisors who provide critical feedback to assist the client's pursuit of capital. Recently we have added a strategy clinic component for clients that are looking for assistance with short and long-term strategy options. There were 4 quarterly Clinic's in 2017 with approximately 4-5 clients presenting at each.
- SBDC Business Advisors continue to be active in support of NH Angel groups. The Nashua Regional Director serves in an advisory capacity to the *Northeast Angels Investment Group*, which she was instrumental in launching in 2005. She also continues to support eCoast Angels, attending meetings remotely, and serves as an Angel link for NH's Live Free and Start organization. She regularly assists companies in preparing for presentations, advises businesses and provides follow up assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> We operated for a portion of CY 2017 with 44 courses.

- In 2017 the **NH SBDC assisted clients in obtaining \$11.7 million in loans** (SBA and non SBA), and **\$18.5 million in total capital formation** (loans, owner investment, and other capital).
- The **Pathway to Work Business Advisor** serves on the Advisory Board for **Impact NH**, an angel investment fund that aims to “create and promote positive impacts on the NH economy,” and focuses on investments by female investors, focused on female-run companies. **Impact NH** is referenced again below.
- SBDC staff members continually attend EDC (Economic Development Corporations / Councils) annual meetings, and meet with economic development professionals, EDCs/RDCs (Regional Development Corporations / Councils), bankers, and lenders in order to cultivate linkages and relationships between organizations. These meetings served multiple purposes, including raising awareness of the NH SBDC program in the finance community, and working to strengthen ties with these groups and institutions.
- In 2017 **the NH SBDC’s finance-related e-Learning courses were taken over 230 times**. These include *Accounting 101*, *Creating a Loan Package*, *Creating Financial Projections*, *Finding Money to Start a Business*, *Finding and Attracting Investors*, *Financing a Business in NH*, *Sites That Sell: Building Your e-Commerce Business*, and a 4-(part) mini course series on *Business by the Numbers* (basic mini courses on what is an Income Statement, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement).
- SBDC staff and the State Director co-sponsored and attended six (with the 6<sup>th</sup> taking place in July, technically the second half of the year) **SBA lender roundtables around the state**. These events focused on helping small businesses gain access to credit, and they provide SBDC staff the opportunity to interact with individuals in the small business lending community. The 2017 roundtables boasted much higher participation by SBA resource partners and the lending community than in previous years.
- The **Belknap County Business Advisor** actively develops and cultivates relationships with banks and EDCs in the region. She attends on-going meetings with the Belknap EDC Executive Director and loan officer regarding client needs, loans, and discussion of loan packages involving loans. Additionally, she has spoken at training events sponsored by two major banks in the region and has formed strong contacts with each and provided them with information about SBDC services.
- The State Director and the Assistant State Director attended meetings and trainings with the **NH Charitable Foundation** to learn more about existing grant programs and discuss best practices with other funding recipients.
- The Nashua Regional Director focused intently on understanding and sharing securities law changes at the federal and state levels, which have direct applicability for SBDC clients.
- The Pathway to Work Business Advisor has joined the **Advisory Board of Live Free and Start (and the boards’ Capital Access Committee)**, a joint initiative of the Governor’s Office, the Business Finance Authority and the Department of Resources and Economic Development, aimed at creating jobs and making New Hampshire an even better place for innovative businesses to start, grow and succeed. Her presence there assures continuity of SBDC presence in this important initiative.
- The Keene Regional Director has been collaborating with the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, Monadnock Buy Local, the Monadnock Economic Development Corp., and the Southwestern Regional Planning Commission to **create a model community-based crowdfunding platform** (1 of 5 nationally) as part of *The Local Crowd’s* national demonstration platform. Though planning efforts were underway in 2016, the program officially launched in early 2017 and Keene Regional Director remains very active with the group. The first two crowdfunding campaigns raised over \$15,000 combined.
- The **North Country Business Advisor** continues to strengthen and cultivate key relationships in the region, including those with Northern Community Investment Corporation, Coos Economic Development Corporation, the North Country Council, Passumpsic Savings Bank, and Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank.
- The Nashua Regional Director is involved in multiple initiatives designed to increase the number of women **Angel investors** in New Hampshire. She served on an expert panel at the Center for Women and Enterprise’s Financing Strategies event, and attended the Celebrating Women Angels event in Boston. Additionally, she helped to co-found the **Impact NH Fund**, an angel investment fund that will create and promote positive impacts on the NH economy.
- The Seacoast Regional Director worked with a client to prepare for a start-up competition, at which the client won \$100,000 (last year in CY 2016, NH SBDC clients attracted over \$100K in cash and in-kind services through such competitions).

- The NH SBDC co-hosted, with Citizens Bank, the **Lunch & Learn workshop series** in summer 2017. Topics covered included Business Banking, Payroll and Commercial Insurance, Business Lending and Credit, and Treasury Services.

### ***200 Innovation, Technology Transfer and Technology Assistance***

NH SBDC staff recognize the importance of technology in today's business environment. With the proper education, knowledge and experience, entrepreneurs and small businesses are able to leverage and utilize technology to magnify their efforts, streamline processes and procedures, maintain records, process payments, expand client bases using social media, and invest in research & development. To this end, the NH SBDC attend myriad events, partner with local, state and regional organizations, and leverage knowledge and resources to educate and inform our clients in this increasingly important sphere.

#### **2017 Highlights:**

- The State Director serves on the **Board of the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, EPSCoR**, which facilitates the state's access to federal R&D funds, and conceptualizes research proposals that incorporate practical small business impacts into theory-building.
- The SBDC staff regularly advise clients on the benefits of utilizing various forms of **social media, e-Commerce technology, and cloud computing technologies**. These include Square, search engine optimization, QuickBooks, QuickBooks POS systems, and Dropbox. **Certified QuickBooks Advisors** on staff also provide assistance with accounting system reorganization, analysis of business system reports, designing job-costing systems and providing technical analysis resolving internal software issues.
- The **Seacoast Regional Director attended a workshop on Google applications** to understand how small businesses can use Google to improve their marketing efforts.
- NH SBDC Regional Directors and Advisors have worked with many clients in 2017 that are seeking **SBIR** funding, connecting them with training and expertise. Additionally, staff members attended various SBIR/STTR information sessions and workshops themselves, including SBIR/STTR Proposal Preparation, and SBIR/STTR 101: Commercialization Planning for SBIR-Stage Companies.
- The NH SBDC provides information and education on the use of technology in everyday business activities or processes, including **e-Learning courses and mini courses**: Social Media for Small Business, Advanced Social Media Tools & Tactics for Small Business, Pinterest, Mobile Marketing, Instagram, Customer Service (3 courses), Getting Started on Your Small Business Website, Considering Consulting, and Managing Your Company's Online Reputation. These courses were taken 270 times in 2017.
- Numerous SBDC staff members attended online training sessions on how to use **BizIgnite, a software program business planning tool**. Many have begun utilizing this with clients, allowing both clients and advisors to structure their planning time more efficiently.
- SBDC staff helped promote and refer clients to a **Cybersecurity Conference** at Manchester Community College held in May.
- The NH SBDC also continues to find and utilize tools to make our work more efficient. We are collaborating via video conference software **Zoom** (comparable to Skype), which saves travel time and mileage costs, while still offering meaningful engagement opportunities as a staff and with clients.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** attended a meet-up at the Nashua HUB (a business incubator) on bringing new products to market and prototyping presented by Steven Owen of Finish-Line Product Development Services.

### ***300 International Trade***

The SBDC will continue to work with the NH Office of International Commerce at the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (previously NH Department of Resources and Economic Development) to meet small business exporting needs. Additionally, the NH SBDC shares information and events related to International Trade/Exporting on its website and social media platforms. The NH SBDC has positioned itself and its advisors as great referral resources for banks and lenders relative to getting businesses ready for exporting.

## 2017 Highlights:

- The State Director serves on the Board of the **International Trade Advisory Committee**.
- The SBDC works with the **NH Office of International Commerce** to assist many start-up and established businesses that export or would like to export to nations such as Canada, China and India. A number of SBDC clients were referred to and attended the **Exporting Boot Camp** in October-November.
- The Seacoast Regional Director is an **SBA Intermediate Level Certified Export Business Advisor**. In that role he assists clients with the creation of exporting business plans, as well as referrals to exporting resources through the SBA and lending institutions. He works collaboratively with the US Dept. of Commerce, EXIM Bank, the SBA, Granite State District Export Council, as well as the NH International Trade Resource Center to assist small businesses that are exporting. Additionally, he is a member of the NH International Trade Resource Network, a group of NH agencies who work together as an organization to leverage all export resources for NH companies.
- The Education and External Relations Director met with staff at the **NH Office of International Commerce and the U.S. Department of Commerce** to discuss the NH SBDC's online export courses, our plans, and other ways in which we can collaborate to provide exporting resources to small businesses. Additionally, she attended the **International Marketing at the Export Boot Camp** hosted by the Office of International Commerce in November.
- In October, the State Director and the Education and External Relations Director met with economic development professionals from Nicaragua, at an event convened by the **NH World Affairs Council**.

## *400 Procurement*

The NH SBDC is active in fostering opportunities for increasing small business' share of procurement dollars spent by the government and private sector.

## 2017 Highlights

- Throughout 2017, advisors worked with the **NH Government Contracting Assistance Center (Now NH Procurement Technical Assistance Center)** to build programs and assist clients. Their efforts have been specifically targeted to promoting innovation and supporting manufacturing clients, and the two organizations refer clients and businesses to each other on a regular basis.
- The Manchester Business Advisor attended an SBA sponsored small business roundtable – Exploring Government Contracting in April, 2017.
- Business Advisors worked with clients in preparation for **government procurement Matchmaker events**. In December, the SBDC partnered with NH GovCon and the U.S. Small Business Administration to cosponsor the **2017 NH Small Business Matchmaker**, which was attended by 153 small businesses, 31 prime contractors and government agencies, and 15 resource partners. In addition to the NH event, staff have also assisted clients prep for a recent Matchmaker in Maine, as well as Rhode Island.

## *500 Manufacturing*

Manufacturing is part of New Hampshire's identity, and is represented on our Advisory Board, in our event attendance, through our business advising, and is a special emphasis of our Business Sustainability Program.

## 2017 Highlights:

- The State Director and staff continue to attend the annual Governor's Manufacturing Summit, which shares trends in New Hampshire's manufacturing economy, as well as a chance to connect with companies seeking technical assistance.

- The NH SBDC staff continue to promote opportunities for firms to apply for SBIR funding through partnerships and relationships with organizations, such as the NH High Technology Council, EPSCoR (a statewide initiative with UNH, Dartmouth and the state and the private sector), the UNH Innovation Research Center, the Dartmouth Region Technology Center (an incubator) and the AlphaLoft accelerator.
- Approximately **8%** of SBDC clients were manufacturing clients in CY 2017 (10% in 2014, 2015, 2016), making manufacturers our fifth most popular industry group.
- The Nashua Regional Director continues to work with a significant number of manufacturing companies, many in technology, hardware, software, and a good number in consumer products. The common theme in consumer products is the challenge of cost accounting, and the common theme in technology is funding. These companies range from start-up to 5<sup>th</sup> generation.
- The **NH SBDC's Business Sustainability Program** housed at UNH Manchester, works closely with manufacturing clients to help them incorporate sustainable business practices. The program's director also helped to develop, market and facilitate 7 OSHA Safety Roundtables for general industry in 2017, and she facilitated client visits with Eversource (electricity provider) in order to access energy efficiency programs.
  - The Manchester Business Advisor works closely with manufacturing clients to assess environmental compliance in a number of issues including air emissions, oil storage, hazardous waste storage and wastewater discharges as part of the Business Sustainability Program.
- The **Keene Regional Director** attended the NH Made Farm & Forest Expo, held in February in Manchester. As part of the event, NH Made hosted a business development seminar, "**Is Wholesaling Right for Your Business**", geared towards small business owners looking to make the transition from selling at farms and festivals to selling wholesale. The Keene Regional Director was one of 4 presenters at the seminar.
- Business advisors continue to partner with NH's Manufacturing Extension Partnership, through a referral process.

## *600 Special Emphasis Groups*

### Student Projects, which benefit regional companies

- The **Keene Regional Center** engages students on a regular basis. It continues to successfully place student interns and student capstone projects with NH SBDC client businesses, helping with research, strategic planning and analysis, and business plan development throughout the year. The Regional Center, itself, continues to offer at minimum one in-house internship per year to students seeking training and mentorship in business research and business planning. Additionally, the Regional Director supports faculty and students at the college by participating in entrepreneurship instruction, provision of and access to entrepreneurship resources, and professional networking, and worked with management faculty to design a model for entrepreneurship training.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** continues to work with the UNH Manchester campus' ENACTUS club, which is collaborating with a community venue client to organize a film festival to be held in Manchester. She also continues to work with the marketing department at UNH's PTPC to provide clients for a semester-long capstone project.
- The **Seacoast Office** works with interns from our host institution through a senior level Entrepreneurship Internship course, as well as the Executive MBA Program. The students are placed with businesses of various stages of development and gain experience in a variety of areas. The businesses are recipients of students' expertise with mutually agreed upon deliverables. The Seacoast Regional Director helps manage the deliverables such as marketing plans, financial projections, financial analysis, and social media marketing strategy.
- The **Lead Center in Durham** continues to develop and strengthen relationships with faculty and staff at its host institution, UNH's PTPC
  - Collaborating with faculty to identify SBDC clients who might be interested in attending Paul College events.
  - Assisting faculty in identifying small business clients for their student projects – this provides much needed assistance for the small business (recent examples include eCommerce,

cybersecurity, and website development), and crucial experiential learning for the students and the faculty.

- Collaborating with Undergraduate Advising staff and the Dean's Office to launch an undergraduate Honors program which partners Honors students with small businesses, providing experiential learning opportunities for the students, and much needed creative solutions to small business challenges for local businesses. The inaugural program ran during the spring 2017 semester. The number of business applicants for the Spring 2018 semester doubled.

## Young Entrepreneurs

- **The SBDC Manchester Business Advisor** mentored, coached, and assisted **high school teams** in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **BizGen Competition** sponsored by the PTPC. She also served as a judge at the **UNH Peter T. Paul College's annual Holloway Competition** (which features teams of students creating business plans and presentations around a business idea), presented to entrepreneurship classes at UNH, and paired 8 students with clients for mentorship. The Business Advisor assisted one of the 2017 winners who became an SBDC client, in entering the **UNH Carsey School of Public Policy/PTPC Social Venture Innovation Challenge**. She also worked with him to prepare him to present at an **NH SBDC Pitch Clinic**, from which he obtained valuable feedback to prepare for presentations to the investment community.
- **The NH SBDC's Pathway to Work Business Advisor** collaborates with The Derryfield School in Manchester to help foster ties to the community. She also serves on committees at the school, including the **STEM Education Advisory Board** and a **Research Committee** for the **Board of Trustees**.
- The **Nashua Business Advisor** served as a judge for the **Souhegan High School BizGen Internal Shark Tank Competition**, which ultimately determined which teams would move onto the Statewide BizGen competition.
- Because of the demographic makeup of the Seacoast, business advisors in this region see a high volume of young entrepreneurs, and this Center works to foster inter-generational mentoring and interaction. On the other side of the state in the Monadnock Region, advisors work with many millennials whose goals are to attract more millennials to the region.
- The **State Director** works with students at the Monadnock Waldorf School on an annual basis to help them develop business plans as capstone projects. He then serves as a judge during their presentations later in the semester.

## Recently Unemployed

In July of 2013, NH Governor Maggie Hassan signed into law a piece of legislation that created the Pathway to Work Program (PTW), a partnership program of NH Employment Security (NHES) and the NH SBDC. The PTW program allows a small subset of individuals, who are identified as eligible by NHES to participate (after review by NH SBDC and approval by NHES), to work full time to start a small business, rather than applying for jobs.

- Since its inception, the NH SBDC has reviewed approximately **607 applications** from individuals eligible for the PTW program.
- In 2017 we worked with **154 PTW clients (20 more than in 2016) and provided over 1,025 hours of business advising** assistance.
- The program was signed into law without any funding attached and has created a large amount of increased demand for SBDC services (up to 15% of our client demand in some years). The NH SBDC has been able to obtain CDBG funding through the NH CDFR to support the PTW program statewide. Despite a de-funding threat, the SBDC **was awarded funding again for the 2017-2018 program year** from the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFR). We have also been invited to apply for 2018-2019 funding, which was submitted in March.

## Industry Sectors

NH SBDC staff continue to work with small businesses that have developed as a result of growth in specific industries/sectors in various regions throughout NH.

- A number of small business clients have been assisted by our **Nashua Regional Office** that fall into some industry specific groups – **the gaming industry, software industry, and technology hardware industry**. Part of the reason why these specific industries are concentrated in the Nashua region is because of its proximity to the Greater Boston region. While the number of these businesses assisted is higher than in other regions, there seems to be a shift away from software and towards applications.
- The Manchester Business Advisor/Business Sustainability Program Director continues to cultivate a partnership with the **NH Grocer's Association**. The NH SBDC partners with Manomet's ([www.manomet.org](http://www.manomet.org)) Grocery Stewardship Certification program, which assists the grocery industry in improving best management practices related to sustainability.
- **Farm to Table** business practices are becoming increasingly popular and this is a strength of the Seacoast Regional Director. He works with farms as well as restaurants to incorporate and improve Farm to Table business practices.
- In the Greater Nashua and Manchester regions, advisors note an uptick in the number of "Arts and Experience" businesses coming to the SBDC for assistance. Downtown location is key and accessibility is important. Examples: master chocolatier, paint bars, art studios, photographers, etc.
- At the Lead Center, the Data Dashboard project uses data from EMSI to predict economic growth by sector, and by region. Beginning in 2016, we use these data to more closely align advisors' professional development goals with anticipated growth (by industry) in their respective regions.

## Clients with Disabilities

The NH SBDC provides business advising services to disabled clients who are referred by the NH Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. For CY 2017, nearly **5%** of NH SBDC clients served had disabilities.

## 2017 Highlights

- The Manchester office continues to have a special focus on entrepreneurs with disabilities. Several clients are supported by NH Vocational Rehabilitation and NH SBDC works closely with these individuals as well as their support team to improve their business management skills.
- The **Belknap County Business Advisor** presented at a program sponsored by **Lakes Region Community Services** entitled "Wealth for All", with the goal of encouraging attendees to utilize the free and confidential services of the NH SBDC. Attendees included individuals who were low-income and/or disabled.

## Business Sustainability Program

The Business Sustainability Program, located at the Manchester Regional Office of the NH SBDC, provides confidential business advising in environmental management to promote sustainable business practices. This program also helps small businesses access resources and develop tools they need to effectively manage environmental and workplace safety requirements.

## **2017 Business Sustainability highlights:**

- In partnership with the OSHA Training Institute out of Keene State College and the Department of Labor OSHA, the NH SBDC Manchester Regional Office organized and facilitated **seven General Industry Safety Roundtables with 300 participants in 2017**.
- As part of the NH SBDC's new partnership with **Manomet** (a non-profit centered in Boston, MA with a satellite office in Brunswick, ME) the Sustainability Program Director participated as a judge of approximately 14 student projects under Manomet's U360 Competition at UNH. U360 uses students to reach out to business and industry in order to ultimately make these businesses more sustainable.
  - Additionally, the State Director served as a judge for the finals of the U360 competition for New England in early December.

- The **Sustainability Program Director** worked with a faculty member to develop a statewide survey aimed at assessing the level of preparedness and business continuity planning (a.k.a. business resiliency) to generate a statewide baseline of data. This data reflects the impact of weather-related events on the ability of small businesses to withstand disruption and recover operations quickly. The survey targeted the top four industry segments for SBDC advising during the most recent 2 year period: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Retail Trade, Manufacturing, and Hospitality.

## ***700 Minority Small Business Development***

The NH SBDC serves a higher percentage of minority<sup>2</sup> clients than are present in the NH population (approximately **7.0% of clients compared to 4.5% of the population**).

### **2017 Highlights/Goals:**

- The Manchester Business Advisor and the Director of Education and External Relations met with individuals to discuss how the NH SBDC can better serve “**New American Entrepreneurs.**”
  - Among other outcomes, this meeting resulted in the production and launch of the French version of our most popular eLearning course, *Starting a Business in NH. Démarrer une Entreprise dans le New Hampshire* benefits new Americans from French-speaking countries
- The NH SBDC re-affirmed our MOU with the **International Institute of New England** to receive referrals of refugees in New Hampshire who wish to start businesses.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** assisted a client from Niger in establishing an import/export business, connecting him to a digital marketing class at UNH and providing him with graphic design services through a community college intern.
- One of the resource partners at the 2017 NH Small Business Matchmaker was the **Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council**.
- The **Director of Education and External Relations** met with individuals to discuss the Welcoming New Hampshire Initiative, which works to “bring the foreign born and native born together to achieve a positive integration of immigrants and refugees into the social fabric of their receiving communities.”

## ***800 Women-owned Businesses***

The NH SBDC has traditionally served a higher percentage of women-owned businesses than the **32.6 % that exist in the state (based on SBA Profile 2014-2015). In CY 2017, businesses with some degree of ownership by women accounted for 42.2% of clients and 46.4% of clients were women.** In addition to direct service to women-owned businesses, the NH SBDC has worked closely with three organizations, the Center for Women’s Business Advancement (formerly Women’s Business Center), the Center for Women and Enterprise (WBC), and the Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN), that provide education, mentoring, and other services, as well as supporting SBA initiatives for women entrepreneurs.

### **2017 Highlights**

- SBDC staff **maintain close relationships with Women’s Entrepreneurship** groups across the state, and have attended many of their events, including Social Media Simple and Marketing Canvas. Staff provide numerous referrals to, and receive referrals from, these organizations as well. The North Country Business Advisor presented at a workshop hosted by WREN in October.
- The **Keene Regional Director** collaborated with **the Center for Women and Enterprise** and the **City of Claremont Planning and Economic Development Office** to launch a series of workshops in the Claremont region on starting a business.

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<sup>2</sup> Defined as individuals who identified as non-white

- The Nashua Regional Director, who sat on the NH Live Free and Start Advisory Committee, is active in that organizations' **Women Investors Initiative**.
- SBDC staff members attended an ACA Women Angel Training event in Boston geared toward helping women investors fund women-owned business.
- The **Pathway to Work Business Advisor** is a member of the Northern New England Women Investor Network, whose purpose is to educate new women investors to help fund women-owned businesses.

## ***900 Veterans***

The NH SBDC is committed to providing business counseling to our men and women who have served in the armed forces. **Veterans accounted for 9.4% of the total clients served** who received counseling from the NH SBDC in CY 2017. The NH SBDC collaborates with other organizations to provide services to veterans, including special outreach events.

### **2017 Highlights:**

- A number of NH SBDC staff have taught **Boots 2 Business Modules** at every occurrence of B2B over the last year, including the Nashua Regional Director, the Manchester area business advisor, our Nashua/Concord area business advisor, and the Seacoast Regional Director.
- We are actively engaged with our SBA District Office's Veterans' outreach specialist to plan for Boots to Business coverage for 2018.

## ***1000 Rural Assistance***

**38%** of New Hampshire's population lives in rural communities (compared to 16% nationally), making the state the 11<sup>th</sup> most rural in the nation. The NH SBDC has consistently provided service through regional offices, satellite locations, and via technology to the most remote areas of the state, serving clients in **200 of NH's 233 communities**.

### **2017 Highlights**

- **E-Learning for Entrepreneurs, launched in 2008**, offers an alternative to long-distance travel and increases access to NH SBDC's business management education. **13,812 courses were taken by individuals throughout the state in 2017**. Many of these business owners are from rural locations in NH, and are now able to easily access NH SBDC's services via the Internet and broadband access.
- Through a partnership with the Wentworth Economic Development Corporation, the SBDC continues to serve businesses in the low income, distressed area served by WEDCO (Carroll County).
- **Counselors use email and Zoom** to conduct counseling online, and utilized Business Model Canvas, **NH SBDC's Business Plan OnLine**, and BizIgnite to develop business plans virtually with clients. We also utilize Zoom to co-advise in rural areas, bringing expertise from our urban centers to rural environments.
- SBDC staff continue to work with North Country partner organizations to provide business owners and entrepreneurs with one-stop access to services they need to help them prosper – management assistance, entrepreneurial counseling, marketing assistance, business financing, educational opportunities and more. Since inception, this initiative, formerly known as **Business Services North**, **has helped create over 150 new jobs, start 38 new businesses, and create \$26 million in capital infusion. It has also provided 4,200+ hours of technical assistance to 400+ clients, and over 80 workshops with 400+ attendees.**
- In the center of the state, a traditionally underserved and rural area, Belknap County Economic Development Council and Grafton Regional Development Corporation continue to contract with the SBDC to fund two part-time business advisors to serve small businesses in these counties. They are funded in part by CDBG funds.
- The **Grafton County Business Advisor** participated in the Enterprise Center at Plymouth's new program called **Apex Business Accelerator Program**. This 8-week program is designed to assist NH entrepreneurs and small businesses owners accelerate their businesses' growth through weekly educational sessions, direct mentorship from experienced industry professionals, and networking opportunities. The program was held twice in 2017 and

will begin a new cohort in early 2018, and will include curricula focused on industries popular in New Hampshire's rural areas.

- The State Director met multiple times with the **NH Charitable Foundation** to discuss funding priorities for economic development activity in New Hampshire's rural North Country.
- SBDC advisors attended a Financing Rural Small Business "Tools of the Trade" workshop, for an overview of loan programs available for rural businesses.

## ***1100 Economic Development, Faith Based and Community Initiatives***

### **Economic Development**

Part of the NH SBDC's vision is to be "**an integral part of New Hampshire's economic development community.**" To this end, the State Director and staff actively engage in statewide and regional economic development programs. The SBDC enjoys productive relationships with such partners as the State Department of Business & Economic Affairs (formerly the Department of Resources and Economic Development), the NH Economic Development Association, NH's business incubator and accelerator network, the New Hampshire High Tech Council, the NH Manufacturing Extension Partnership, NH Employment Security, NH Community Development Finance Authority, and the NH Business and Industry Association.

#### **2017 Highlights**

- The Keene Regional Center remains an active participant with the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, where business advising is offered regularly. The Center is responsible for approximately 25% of Keene Center referrals. The SBDC receives in-kind support in the form of office space, and is a presence there at least twice / week, including one dedicated day / week.
- The State Director attended numerous **economic development and community partner events**, including meetings with local incubators, chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, and the NH Institute of Politics' Forum on the Future events. Additionally, he actively and regularly participates in scheduled meetings with our State partner, the NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs, *Live Free & Start*, the state initiative working to make New Hampshire an even better place for innovative businesses to start, grow and succeed, and NH's Congressional Delegates' roundtables on economic development issues ranging from workforce development to entrepreneurship.
- The Manchester Business Advisor is collaborating with multiple parties, including clients, to expand redevelopment efforts in the town of Franklin.
- SBDC staff collaborated with partners and legislators and NH Employment Security on the **Pathway to Work Program**, including fine-tuning program processes and policies. Signed by the Governor, this bill allows a specific subset of unemployed individuals to continue to collect unemployment benefits while working with the SBDC and Employment Security to start their own business. **SBDC staff to date have reviewed 606 applications.** The SBDC has also been successful in obtaining CDFA grant funds to help support this program.
- The State Director and Assistant State Director continue to cultivate relationships with **the Tillotson Fund in NH's North Country**, and the **NH Community Development Finance Authority**, which provide grant funding for 3 part time Business Advisors (directly and indirectly). Additionally, these organizations serve as convenors for economic development thought leaders in the state.
- The **Belknap County Business Advisor** is very active in the economic development and community initiatives of the Lakes Region. She has participated in a number of Main Street events, is a member of many local Steering Committee and Boards of Directors, and attended Belknap EDC's Annual Meeting.
- The Pathway to Work Advisor participated in the second **Economic Development Academy** offered through the University of NH's Cooperative Extension. The program included 6 weeks of online work, a 3-day in-person conference and a group project.

## ***1200 Research***

The NH SBDC recognizes the importance of gathering and utilizing information about small business needs and issues, as well as collecting feedback concerning SBDC programs. Information is gathered through workshop evaluations, eLearning participant surveys, quarterly client surveys, initial session client surveys, and the ASBDC impact assessment of SBDC services, as well as pre-counseling data (as a baseline for future client surveys). In addition, each center tracks important impact information (jobs created and saved, loans received, new companies started, sales growth, etc.) and conducts client-specific research utilizing various electronic resources.

As we continue to explore ways to add value to our host Institution's core educational mission (and given the State Director's research background), we are working with professors at UNH Manchester and at the flagship Durham campus to collaborate on peer-reviewed research projects. As such, we hope to participate in adding to the small business knowledge base in academic circles, and subsequently act as translators of the results of that research to our clients and peer organizations.

### **2017 Highlights:**

- A Business Advisor working on the **2014-2015 Portable Assistance Grant** developed a database of professional resources as part of a pilot program, the Business Improvement Program. The database is comprised of online resources that provide access to instructional and educational materials focused on management practices for small businesses. The contents of this database are on our website, [www.nhsbdc.org](http://www.nhsbdc.org), as individual resources in our Resource Center. A PTPC student employee continues to maintain and curate the list, and vets and adds additional resources as well.
- Additionally, the Business Sustainability Program Director and State Director continued to work on the topic of business resiliency through the development of a survey instrument, which should be deployed in 2018.
- The SBDC assisted a UNH Manchester Professor with a survey on business planning by small businesses. We are eager to assist him with analysis of these results, and to utilize this information in our own professional development practice with respect to better assisting clients in this topic area.

## ***1300 Online Activity***

### **Online Learning Opportunities**

**e-Learning:** Our signature education program is **e-Learning for Entrepreneurs**. This program launched in 2008, and now a decade later, we have developed, built, and updated 24 of our own courses. Portable Assistance grants and the Small Business Jobs Bill funded the development of several e-courses. As of December 31, 2017, 13,812 courses were taken by 9,235 distinct individuals.

### **2017 Highlights:**

- The online learning program is undergoing much strategic stretching and planning. We spent much of summer and fall 2017 researching, surveying, and collecting and analyzing data to aid in revamping and planning our next decade of online learning opportunities for New Hampshire entrepreneurs.
- During 2017 we launched updated and improved *Starting a Business in New Hampshire* and *Financing a Business in New Hampshire* e-courses in January, and moved them to our new platform, Knovio, off of the SmallBizU platform. *Starting* has an additional section on Evaluating Your Business Idea, using a form adapted from the Missouri SBDC. Our *Starting* course is our most-taken course, 500-600 times annually.
- At the beginning of June, we launched *Démarrer une Entreprise dans le New Hampshire*, the French translation of *Starting a Business in New Hampshire*, which we spent almost a year working on with translator and interpreter Arnold Mikolo from Welcoming Manchester, an organization that aims to make

New Hampshire a welcoming place for New Americans. Many of the immigrants settling in the southern part of New Hampshire are from French-speaking countries, and come hoping to start a business here in the U.S. We aim to find funds to translate *Starting* into more languages.

**Website:** According to Google Analytics, our website had 2,000 – 3,400 users per month over 2017, with 117,617 page views. These were similar statistics to 2016.

**PR/Media/Blog:** We continue to write and publish client stories in our blog, which are also featured on the homepage, and on Facebook and Twitter. The state’s economic development monthly email newsletter features an article on NH SBDC each month and UNH distributes press releases for us via their online portal.

**Advising Resources:** NH SBDC business advisors comfortably utilize online tools to enhance the advising experience. We use email, Skype, Zoom, GoToMeeting, and a number of other tools, including our website, to connect with clients and to offer online learning opportunities. Our staff continually vets possible online tools for use in their advising, and shares the findings internally, often through Box, which is an encrypted cloud-based service that allows for file backups, and file sharing. Advising hours utilizing online/remote tools for CY 2017 totaled 1,880 hours, or approximately 30% of total advising hours.

**Social Media:** Our Facebook page and our Twitter feed are active. We share posts about NH SBDC and our partners and stakeholders on social media regularly, including special campaigns such as #SBDCDay, and we have reciprocal sharing relationships with multiple partners throughout the state. We have developed policies around content creation and management of our social media accounts. 1,412 people have liked us on Facebook, and our posts are seen about 2,500 times per month – in fact, one post about a client story was seen 2,500 times! 673 people follow SBDC on Twitter.

## 1500 *Success Stories*

- **TNT Electrical, Laconia:**

Electrical contracting is booming in New Hampshire’s recovering economy, so one can’t complain, but the resulting fast-paced growth for Tammie and Troy Mahoney's business sent them looking for help last year.

Troy explains his company, TNT Electrical Contractor of Laconia, had two serious challenges: he was spending too much of his time on the day-to-day operations, and Tammie’s regular full-time job was keeping her away from their co-owned business. “I felt like my hair was on fire most of the time,” Troy admits.

Help was found, finally, at the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center and its business advisor, Sally Holder.

“Sally has been helping us now for the better part of a year and she is spectacular,” Troy said. “We’ve been growing by leaps and bounds, and really needed to get a handle on controlling things. We needed to keep it reasonable and manageable so that we didn’t get too big too fast.”

After an initial meeting with Troy, Sally paid a visit to the business and found some quirks in the bookkeeping and in the way QuickBooks had been set up for the business originally. “She was just unbelievable in not only finding the problems, but in helping us fix them as well,” Troy said.

To solve the issue, Troy has now hired an additional office coordinator and a senior bookkeeper. This allows Tammie the freedom for her full time job elsewhere and alleviates pressure on Troy by having office coverage full time during normal working hours. The bookkeeper can also do projections and budgets, which had in the past taken up a great deal of Troy and Tammie’s time.

“Our service department was going berserk,” Troy explains. “We offer everything from changing a lightbulb to multi-million dollar projects, to retail fit-ups. You name it, we do it...and with the economy coming back, we are finding that a lot of homeowners have been loosening up their funds for projects. We just needed to look at different avenues to resolve the backlog and Sally came up with a good game plan.”



With two employees now handling the office and the bookkeeping, Tammie can be less involved with day-to-day operations, and Troy can now concentrate on the big picture items - and there are plenty of those on deck. Meanwhile, TNT is in the midst of serving the electrical needs of several large and small projects and has several large State of NH contracts. It's been busy.

"It's definitely smoothed out now," Troy said, "and we're in a position of seeing where we can go next."

"I'd like to see our sales grow, along with the profit margins. I would like to see us continue to be an effective and efficient crew," Troy said, adding that he considers everyone part of the TNT team, currently up to 22 employees, with several having been at the company for many years.

"Now that we know where we're going and where we're coming from—and I don't feel like my hair is on fire all the time—we can maybe kick it up another notch," Troy said. TNT has always competed with the bigger, top firms in the state, and now he says he continues to win contracts and gain recognition within the market.

"We just want to keep things maintained," Troy says. Meeting with Sally periodically will help to keep things on track.

- *PT United, LLC, Plaistow:*

At the rate he's going, Quinn Worden may become the Bill Gates of his industry by the time he's 30 years old. Recently awarded the Small Business Administration's Young Entrepreneur of the Year for New Hampshire and New England, that's not outside of the realm of possibility.



Quinn's entrepreneurial spirit was sparked in college, and as a witness to the "pain points" his father, a Plaistow-based physical therapist in private practice, experienced at his work. "I just wanted to help him improve his business performance," Quinn says now about his father.

Quinn's business, PT United, LLC, partners with private-practice physical therapy companies to help them control their costs with economies of scale, while also helping to improve the patients' experiences. Through technology-enabled products, physical therapists can come to Quinn's company for equipment purchasing, point-of-sale software, and even help with planning to sell their practices.

Sales are on pace to hit \$2.4 million with about 200 partners who have bought into PT United's systems. Quinn explains that translates into 1,000 therapists who are benefitting, and there are still another 100,000 U.S. physical therapy companies to reach.

Back in 2013-2014, after Quinn had graduated from the University of Miami, he won a chance to take part in Go-Celerator in St. Louis, an accelerator program for start-ups. It offered free housing and office space, so he packed up his business ideas and went. Post Go-Celerator, he moved back to Florida, planning to run and grow his start-up in Miami, but found it difficult to raise money there. He realized that New Hampshire was where he wanted to do business, that he really was homesick for his family, having grown up in Tyngsboro, MA, and so set his mind to relocating.

That's what led him to NH-SBDC's business advisor Hollis McGuire, based in the Nashua regional office. "I stumbled across Hollis at the SBDC in 2015," Quinn explains. "We had an introductory phone call while I was still in Florida and, even as we were on the phone, I started looking at New Hampshire's business ecosystem online. Hollis had bunches of people to suggest I talk to; she was just a wealth of connections. She was like this vital resource."

Quinn says his return to New Hampshire was a good idea - that New Hampshire is "the best place in the world to do business". Even before making the move he made cold calls to dozens of people and pitched the owner of an office facility on Split Brook Road in Nashua. "I told him if he invested in the company, I would sign a lease with him," Quinn says. "We needed a great location and a great setting to do our business and we ultimately moved into this beautiful office space this guy owned."

The move was a good one, Quinn says. Revenues continue to double every year. Early in the process, Quinn would work with Hollis, sending her quarterly emailed reports of his progress. "She knew everything we had going on; she knew our goals and initiatives, and she knew my pain points—accounting, human resources, and access to capital. She knew about all of it," he said.

Now the two meet about three times a year. Meanwhile, Quinn puts most of his waking hours towards growing the business. He employs about 8 people in part- and full-time status, and as contractors.

Back to Quinn's dad and his physical therapy business.

Quinn explains that most of the 100,000 physical therapy offices in the country are owned by hospitals. “However,” he says, “The ones owned by therapists have the best outcomes because that therapist is going to be sure he’s providing the best experience so that area doctors keep referring clients there.”

Word-of-mouth becomes all important in those cases, he said. But, in Tyngsboro, where his father’s business was, the competition was the hospital-owned therapy offices. “He was competing against the odds for getting referrals. He had to assure both doctors and patients that they’d get the best care at his practice, and that meant educating the consumer to understand what constituted best care.”

Meanwhile, insurance companies are paying for less and less every year, costs are rising, and consumers still need to be sent home with therapy products—shoulder pulleys, braces, etc. Quinn explains that businesses the size of his father’s couldn’t afford to stock expensive inventory.

Quinn has developed purchasing systems that can help both the business and the consumer. PT United’s “eDispensary” allows customers to access thousands of therapy products at a good price; therapists like his father now get products, equipment and office supplies at reduced rates, and practices have developed revenue streams that are diversified. Therapists now have point-of-sale systems to take orders, accept credit cards and manage inventory.

Quinn’s no software guru, he’s just a visionary who saw what needed to be done. He found the perfect software developer and has put together a great team with an excellent advisory board.

Once his dad worried that Quinn was putting far too much personal time into the business. Now, Quinn says, his father give's Quinn's "elevator speech" to strangers...on the elevator. "Now he's a proud dad, and I'm just very excited and very grateful."

Quinn insists Hollis was so critical to helping him tap into the "eco-system" of business in New Hampshire that he's convinced she will be a close contact he'll hold for the rest of his life. "Her advice has been so sound and valuable," he said. "I don't see us growing out of the resources she offers for every stage of our business."

- *Mindful Balance Therapy Center, Keene:*

When therapist Allison Carey wondered if she should open her own private practice, she knew that her Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Antioch University in Keene was serving her well. What she didn't have at that point was training in business management.

“I felt like I had a pretty good grip on accounting; I was managing my numbers, but I really wanted a second pair of eyes on them,” she explains. “Being in solo practice, I was the only one reviewing my methods.”

That’s what led Allison to seek help and, when a colleague suggested the Keene office of the NH SBDC in 2013, she became a client of former advisor-now state director Rich Grogan there.

“He immediately helped me in so many unforeseen ways,” Allison says. “I was merely using an Excel spreadsheet. He helped me advance the system, making it more accurate and more user friendly, and easy to use on a day-to-day basis.”

Allison’s solo practice thrived for three years until she began noticing how many times she had to turn people away when they called to ask for help. Her schedule was simply full. “I was building on a good reputation in the community and getting lots of referrals, lots of calls. I couldn’t fit people in and there was a shortage of therapists in the area.”

Would it make sense for her to expand, to take on another employee? Again she turned to the NH SBDC advisors in Keene for help. She wanted assurance that she could sustain having enough work and revenue for another therapist.

Together she and Rich worked on projecting how adding an employee would change revenues and her profit and loss picture over time. Rich assured her the projections looked good and she was making the right decisions. So Mindful Balance Therapy Center was born, a thriving practice on Main Street in Keene.

Now—5 new counselors and 1 part-time office administrator later—Allison’s revenues have increased substantially over the last year. She currently meets with business advisor Melanie Patterson when there’s another decision to make or changes to contemplate.



“They [SBDC advisors] are such a source of comfort, support and assurance to me, especially since I am otherwise navigating this place 100 percent on my own,” Allison said. “It’s really nice to have that support from them.”

Melanie and Allison recently have been discussing how much time and energy goes into the managerial and administrative aspects of running the practice, how her role has to shift, and how she wants it to shift.

“[SBDC] is really helpful in providing guidance in terms of H.R. and the hiring process, and whenever any issues come up with employees,” Allison said, adding, “I’ve been really fortunate here with our employees. I’m very blessed. It couldn’t be a better situation.”

Allison is hoping to expand the therapies her practice can offer, perhaps by having several therapists receive advanced training in alcohol and drug addiction counseling. A recent grant she applied for may go toward that effort, as Allison explains how the state “really, really needs more treatment options for substance abuse.”

“I have recommended SBDC to several people already and I would recommend them to anyone who wants to invest in their own small business,” she said. “I feel like, in part, the success of my business is because of SBDC. They’ve given me the clarity and confidence to get to this point. I otherwise wouldn’t have had the tools to really make the decision to hire new employees.”

Allison said she hopes to be associated with SBDC for the life of her business, no matter what stage it’s in or what she needs. “I just adore them. They’re great people.”

## ***1600 Advocacy***

The NH SBDC actively promotes small business interests through responses to sudden and severe economic changes, special projects, public outreach, and participation in Small Business Week activities. The State Director, Assistant State Director, Education and External Relations Director, Regional Directors, and Business Advisors frequently present information to groups such as legislators, chambers of commerce, media, economic development committees, and industry associations. Additionally, SBDC staff represent and advocate for small business by serving on various committees, boards, and panels and participate as judges in various contests and challenges.

## **2017 Highlights**

### **Public and Media Appearances**

- SBDC staff members and Business Advisors have participated in a variety of *issue panels*, and have participated in and presented at numerous board and council meetings including those hosted by SCORE, Main Street Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Business Associations, Lions Clubs, College and University groups (UNH, Keene State College, Nashua Community College, Plymouth State University), Congressional Offices, bank roundtables, Federal Reserve Panel, Entrepreneur Forum, Economic Development organizations, and Angel Finance Groups. Examples include: Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, Keene State College, NH Dept. of Environmental Services, Grocers Association, Salem Chamber, WREN, Hannah Grimes Center, NH Business and Industry Association.
- The **State Director** met with Senator Shaheen, Senator Hassan, Congresswoman Kuster, and Congresswoman Shea-Porter, as well as their staffs, to discuss small business issues both in NH and in Washington D.C. SBDC staff have also collaborated with congressional staffers to organize local visits and resource fairs that involve our congressional delegation.
- The State Director talks and meets daily with a variety of partners – existing and potential – to advocate for the SBDC program. These include lenders (e.g., Citizens Bank, TD Bank), state leaders (e.g., new Commissioner of Department of Business & Economic Affairs), local officials (e.g., ED of regional Economic Development Corporations), and University officials (e.g., Dean’s office of PTPC, UNH President’s Office).
- **Regional Directors** met with local bankers, economic development corporations and organizations, and community leaders to discuss the issues that are impacting communities and small businesses.

- SBDC staff have served as **judges, panelists and committee members** for many competitions and committees, including: TechOut judge, Ultimate Connection judge, panelist on Entrepreneur Academy (Dover Chamber of Commerce education series), Entrepreneur of the Year judge, Souhegan High School Shark Tank Competition, and others.
- The **Manchester Business Advisor** advocated for the NH SBDC and small businesses in various media formats this year: wrote a blog on small business start-up growth; participated in the NH SBDC's new initiative, the Funding Readiness Clinic; and she has helped develop and co-host a local radio show focused on small business topics which airs twice a week – Business IQ Radio.
- The Pathway to Work Business advisor does a quarterly **presentation on Starting a Business** for an Organic Lawn Care Institute, where she promotes resources available for those looking to start and grow their business.
- The Seacoast Regional Director is a member of **Dover Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee**. As a member of the Government Affairs Committee, he participated in meeting and planning of event(s). He is also a member of the **Durham Economic Development Committee**.



## Small Business Week

The NH SBDC supports the annual New Hampshire **SBA Small Business Awards**. This year it was hosted at the Manchester Country Club by the U.S. SBA and the NH Bankers Association and honored a wide variety of small businesses including several **nominated by the NH SBDC**. **SBDC client winners include:**

- New Hampshire and New England Young Entrepreneur of the Year
- New Hampshire Woman Owned Small Business of the Year
- New Hampshire Small Business Champions of the Year

## *1700 Resource Development*

### Professional Affiliations and Resource Partners

The SBDC maintains close ties to many NH organizations and affiliations. As an organization and as individuals, we are members of the NH High Technology Council, the NH Lodging and Restaurant Association, the International Trade Advisory Board, and many others. The State Director sits on the NH EPSCoR Board (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research), the UNH PTPC's Dean's Executive Committee, the International Trade Advisory Board, the Keene Endowment Association at Keene State College, and the Board of Directors of the Hannah Grimes Marketplace (associated with our strategic partner, the Hannah Grimes Center) in Keene.

**Regional Directors and advisors** are dedicated to working collaboratively with our affiliated organizations (SCORE, CWBA@ SNHU, Center for Women & Enterprise, NH Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and SBA). They also continue to participate in local groups and associations throughout NH, and are active in numerous organizations such as: local area Chambers of Commerce, Keene State College, the NH Community College System, local community loan funds and EDCs, OSHA, NH Pollution Partnership Advisory Committee, Retail Merchants Association, League of NH Craftsmen, NH Entrepreneur Forum, NH Society of Accountants, and the NH/VT Federal Health and Safety Council.

### 2017 Highlights:

- NH SBDC staff were actively involved in PR and media, featured in various newspapers and magazines (New Hampshire Business Review, Portsmouth Herald, Seacoast Online, Fosters, The Telegraph, Keene Sentinel, etc.), radio shows and local media.

- The **Assistant State Director** serves on the **Staff Advisory Committee** of the SBDC's host, the University of NH's PTPC, and has done so since its inception over 6 years ago. Additionally, he serves on the College's Safety Committee.
- The SBDC received **CDBG funds from the Community Development Finance Authority**, which is money targeted at assisting low-to-moderate income participants in the statewide Pathway to Work Program. The SBDC also receives CDBG funds to support a part-time advisor in Grafton County.
- The **Keene Regional Office** engages with multiple partners on an ongoing basis to ensure the ease of small businesses' efforts to grow and thrive in the Keene area: the Hannah Grimes Center, the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, and the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. The Keene Office meets clients weekly at a permanent satellite office at the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, and as needed at River Valley Community College in Claremont, as well as at a new location at the **Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce**.
- The Keene Regional Director participates in the **Hannah Grimes Startup Lab**, an interactive program of seven classes designed to help entrepreneurs create, implement and present a business plan. The Keene Regional Office also partnered with the **Hannah Grimes Entrepreneurship Center** to offer two workshops: Crowdfunding 101, and Top 10 Mistakes Small Business Owners Make and How to Avoid Them.
- The **Keene Regional Office** collaborated with the new MAXT Makerspace and Franklin Pierce University's Business Department in order to develop an Incubator Feasibility Study.
- The **Nashua Regional Director** actively works with SCORE, the City of Nashua, the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs and Business Resource Partners, and is a member of the Greater Nashua Chamber, the Hudson Chamber, and the Merrimack Chamber of Commerce. She is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the NH Society of Accountants, and sits on the Board of the Northeast Angels. She works closely with the City of Nashua and Regional Economic Development Corp. (REDC) to assist companies in trouble.
- In 2017 the Pathway to Work Advisor replaced the Nashua Regional Director on the advisory council of **Live Free and Start**, a statewide initiative aimed at creating jobs and making New Hampshire an even better place for innovative businesses to start, grow, and succeed.
- **The Manchester Business Advisor** works closely with a law firm, Devine Millimet, which offers small business start-up assistance via its free Launch Program.
- SBDC staff continue to work closely with staff at the **NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs** and its divisions, including Economic Development, International Trade Resource Center, Business Retention Team, and the Government Contracting Assistance Center.
- The Seacoast Regional Director is a member of the Durham Economic Development Corp., as well as the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce, where he did a number of presentations as part of its Entrepreneur Academy. He is also a member of U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen's Small Business Advisor Council.
- The **Wentworth Economic Development Co. (WEDCO)** provided office space to the SBDC, free of charge (in-kind contribution) to meet with that area's small business clients. . In addition to office space, WEDCO also advertises SBDC business advising services on their website and in their newsletter.
- The Seacoast office also offers business advisory sessions in offices provided by the City of Portsmouth Economic Development Department, as well as space in Durham and Exeter
- The SBDC continues to refer clients to the UNH Law School's Intellectual Property Center for assistance with trademark and contract issues, and SBDC staff have attended multiple trainings and workshops there. The Manchester business advisor also works closely with UNH Law Clinic to assist low income clients with legal needs related to business formation and IP.
- The NH SBDC Advisory Board continues to serve as an advocate for the NH SBDC with advice on program development and legislative issues.

## ***1800 Collaboration and Leveraging***

Due in part to the nature of the SBDC and also in part to the small size of the State of NH, the NH SBDC has numerous key partners throughout the state, allowing us to collaborate in a number of ways and leverage our own resources as well

as those of other organizations. As a statewide organization, we collaborate with our SBA District Office and our SBA resource partner organizations (SCORE, WBC), but we also work closely with a number of governmental agencies on multiple levels, as well as regional organizations. All of these partnerships and relationships are important to us and without them, we would not be able to provide the high level of service that we do today.

- The NH SBDC works very closely with the **NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs**, which is our State of NH funding partner. The State Director meets regularly with the head of the Division of Economic Development, who is on our Advisory Board, and our regional staff work closely with BEA's field staff in the areas of economic development, procurement, international trade, and business retention and recruitment.
- As partners in the aforementioned **Pathway to Work Program**, our staff, particularly at the Lead Center, work closely with NH Employment Security to administer and run this statewide program. We have been able to leverage CDBG funding for the SBDC to support this program statewide.
- **Higher Education:** Institutions of Higher Education are key partners of ours throughout NH. Our Lead Center is housed at the University of NH, our Manchester Regional Office is at UNH's Manchester campus, and our Keene Regional Office is at Keene State College. Our Grafton County advising location is located on the outskirts of Plymouth State College, and our advisor there continues to strengthen ties with that institution. Also, we have great connections with the Community College System of NH (CCSNH) – our Nashua Regional office is at Nashua Community College, our Education and External Relations Director is housed at Manchester Community College, and staff in our Keene and North Country offices utilize space at River Valley Community College and White Mountains Community College, respectively. The State Director also met with the new President of New Hampshire's College & University Council in June, along with our Advisory Board chair, to discuss further partnerships system-wide.
- **EDCs:** We have an excellent relationship with the various EDCs, incubators and similar organizations throughout the state. We utilize space at the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, and Wentworth Economic Dev. Co. in Wolfeboro to provide business advising services at their locations at no cost to us. Additionally, the Executive Directors of the Belknap County EDC and Grafton County EDC continue to support the NH SBDC, writing us into grant proposals for funding which has helped to fund 2 part-time business advisors in central NH, an area previously underserved. We have a long-standing collaborative referral relationship with the Regional Economic Development Center (REDC), as well.
- **America's SBDC (ASBDC):** The NH SBDC participated in the ASBDC organized #SBDCDay on March 22, 2017, which was a day of social media posts about the SBDC program. A few highlights:
  - A proclamation by the Governor declaring 3/22/17 as SBDC Day in New Hampshire
  - Developed a media release that was distributed by UNH
  - UNH included the media release in UNH Today
  - Scheduled five Facebook and Twitter posts throughout the day, and responded to shares and comments
  - Senator Jeanne Shaheen wrote about NH SBDC in her part of the Senate Small Business Committee's report in the Congressional Record: <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2017/3/22/senate-section/article/s1930-2?r=31>
  - Facebook post from Governor Chris Sununu re. his proclamation declaring 3/22/17 SBDC Day in NH: <https://www.facebook.com/GovernorChrisSununu/posts/427792524235856>
  - Our blog post with photo of the proclamation, link to the Congressional Record, etc.: <http://www.nhsbdc.org/blog/2017/03/what-sbdcday>
  - We had a small mention in the Union Leader: <http://www.unionleader.com/article/20170313/NEWS02/170319796> (second article down)

## ***1900 Unplanned Travel***

No unplanned travel in 2017/18

## ***2000 Key Personnel Changes***

No key personnel changes in 2017.

## ***2100 Problems***

**Funding** – Funding continues to be a high priority for the NH SBDC, and based on anecdote, the State Director spends much more time on development activities than other peer state colleagues. This is primarily due to limited state appropriation; in NH, our appropriation is approximately 50% of that in other “minimally funded states.” In an effort to resolve this issue, we will be working closely with our Advisory Board to increase our funding allocation for 2017-2019, and we are optimistic that the state’s new economic development structure will relieve some of the constraints that have held our previous funding efforts back.

Another area of funding uncertainty is based on continued threats to programs that have funded / will fund the NH SBDC. Examples include the CDBG program, USDA Rural Development, and the Northern Borders Regional Commission.

On other fronts, like the SBA, we are unable to make sound funding plans for future years because of federal uncertainty. However, we have strong federal representation in NH, and we continue to work to strengthen those relationships; all 4 of our Delegates strongly support the SBDC. Finally, we are hoping to strengthen our relationship with NH’s Community Development Finance Authority to continue our funding after FY 2018.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the SBA again for your willingness to be flexible with us regarding our use of SBA funds as matching funds to allow us to diversify our revenue streams.

**Other Concerns** – We have other organizational challenges, such as the aforementioned loss of SmallBizU courses, but we feel these are typically surmountable because of the expertise of our staff, and the stability of our host and funding partners. Our only existential concerns – that would rise to prominence in this kind of document – are concerning funding issues.

## ***2200 Budget to Actual Comparison (NH SBDC CY 17)***

### Federal

We successfully expended our federal allocation in CY 2017, and as of this writing, anticipate doing so again in CY 2018.

## ***2300 Economic Impact***

The NH SBDC continues to have a significant impact on the NH economy.

**Note: Fewer counseling resources directly impact number of jobs created/saved.**

### **CY 2017 Impact (Includes all funding sources):**

- **# of new Businesses created:** 82
- **Jobs:** Created – 464, Retained - 133
- **Growth in Sales:** \$14,562,421
- **Loans:**
- **SBA** - \$4,355,998
- **Non SBA** – \$7,415,680
- **Capital Formation:** \$18,506,770
- **Export Sales:** \$47,832,952

- **Training:** Attendees – 2,081
- **Advising:** Clients - 851
- Hours – 5,860
- Hours – 6,396

**Progress Towards SBA Milestones – CY 2017**

	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>% of Goal</b>
<b>Long-Term Clients</b>	250	368	<b>147%</b>
<b>Capital Infusion</b>	\$15,000,000	\$18,506,770	<b>123%</b>
<b>Business Starts</b>	40	82	<b>205%</b>

**SBDC: An Investment in New Hampshire’s Economy**

- SBDC assisted businesses have a greater chance of survival than those who do not seek assistance. **After 5 years, 80% of SBDC counseled businesses are still in business. This contrasts with the 44% survival rate of non-assisted businesses.** (Source: Dr. James Chrisman, ASBDC economist)
- Each dollar invested in NH Small Business Development Center business advising returns:
  - **\$158.18 in wages to New Hampshire workers**
  - **\$10.22 in tax revenues to the State of New Hampshire**