

The Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation (RCEF) is a non-profit entrepreneur and business development organization. We provide one-on-one confidential business counseling, training, and mentorship to individuals (pre-venture), start-ups, and existing businesses. Our client portfolio ranges from individuals with an idea to \$6 million corporations of 50+ employees from all industries. We have access to a large network of resources to connect clients with the right people at the right time in the facilitation process. We also actively engage in many other entrepreneurial focused projects and events to support and bring value to the community.

About 60% of our clients are individuals that have a concept (pre-venture), who do not know where or how to start a business. Our Business Facilitators conduct a needs assessment and develop a roadmap to success with the client. Throughout this process the client receives homework during each consultation and it is up to the client to schedule another appointment. This ensures our facilitators that the individual has the initiative and tenacity to potentially run a business. We help these individuals take their viable concept, develop a plan, and walk them down the path to success.

The remaining 40% of our clientele consists of start-up and existing businesses. We also work with businesses that are in the early stages of operating. Most of the time these are businesses who may be struggling to cash-flow, having issues with sales and marketing, increasing foot traffic, or having issues with margins, to name a few. We identify and prioritize their needs; from there we realign or develop new tactics and strategies to guide the client in reaching their goals. Some business owners need very specific professional help; this is where we rely on our diverse network of professionals to assist the client.

In addition to working with start-up businesses, we work with established businesses. These types of clients come to us seeking guidance in expanding their business to take it to the next echelon. Some of the professional guidance our clients seek from us in this area include moving to a new facility, launching a new product line, protecting intellectual property, funding packaging, and much more. At this stage, in conjunction with other specialized professionals we help clients develop thorough feasibility assessments of their expansion ideas. After completing this process, our clients have a factual based idea of the viability.

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Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation

at a Glance

Professional Consulting & Training Services

Our professional consultation services are fully confidential and offered to clients at no charge, thanks to our funding partners, Blue Earth County and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). We have the skills, knowledge, and network of resources to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners start, grow, and prosper in the competitive marketplace. We also provide training seminars to provide clients with the necessary management tools to succeed.

- ◆ Needs, Goals & Business Assessments
- ◆ Business Plan Writing/Development
- ◆ Feasibility Studies
- ◆ Sales & Marketing Plans
- ◆ Market Research
- ◆ Start-up & Expansion Assistance
- ◆ Financial Analysis
- ◆ Strategic Planning
- ◆ Professional Management Advice



Mission

We strive to enhance the economic self-sufficiency of individuals and communities in which they live.

Values

- ◇ *Integrity*— we demonstrate the highest level of ethics and honesty in all we do.
- ◇ *Innovation*— we stay on the cutting edge of industry trends to pass to our clients.
- ◇ *Excellence*—we ensure quality in every aspect of our work.

Goals

Our fundamental goal is to start, stabilize and expand businesses, and create a welcoming environment for innovation and economic development.

Outcomes

The outcomes of our services are:

- ◇ New businesses started
- ◇ Capital acquisition
- ◇ Job creation
- ◇ Increased tax revenues
- ◇ Increased sales of clients
- ◇ Cultivation of business leaders

2011 RCEF Highlights

Year-End Summary:

Our main objective is to start, stabilize and grow businesses, retain and create jobs and create a welcoming environment for economic development. In 2011, the Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation successfully provided business assistance to more than 142 clients and spent more than 962 hours in service recognition.

In an effort to help promote our services and involvement, we participated in several community development activities and events. Some of those being: Business Plan in a Day and Knowledge Exchange Program through Minnesota State Mankato.

We are pleased with our success and will continue to strengthen and grow our partnerships and relationships with our clients.

ACTIVITY & CLIENT RESULTS	FY 2011
Entrepreneurs Consulted	142
Consulting Hours	962
New Businesses Created	25
Businesses Stabilized	20
Businesses Expanded	30
Jobs Created and/or Retained	68
New Investment Capital	\$2,689,500
New Business Revenues	\$2,780,720
Increased Sales	
Training Workshops, Seminars, & Courses	2
Entrepreneurial Events Attended	
Community Asset Building Interfaces	28



2011 Success Stories

Lucky's Role in Business Success

Mark Porisch came to RCEF in late Fall 2011 looking for assistance in business planning. At the time, Lucky's Popcorn Dressing, L.L.C had been in business since January 2008, but Mark knew he needed to take a new route with the business. Jon and Bryan assisted throughout the business planning process by answering questions and compiling the necessary resources to move the process forward.

By December of 2011, Lucky's Popcorn Dressing saw an increase in gross revenue/sales. This had been no 'luck of the Irish.' Mark has been amazed by Lucky's rapid growth, and Mark has RCEF to thank for their contribution.

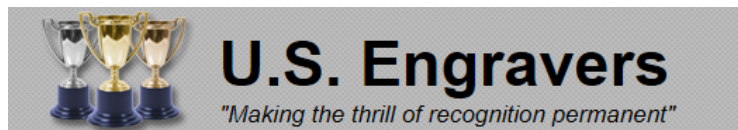
Lucky's Popcorn Dressing includes: Honey Mustard, BBQ Sauce and Hot Sauce; with more on the way. Mark looks forward to what the future holds.

For more information on how to contact Mark and Lucky's Popcorn Dressing, visit <http://luckyspopcorn dressing.com/>

I found RCEF to be an excellent way to kick-start my business. While I already knew what my product was, who my market niche was, I needed the support and advice to turn this into a viable business. RCEF gave me that support, as well as the space and time to build from. Bryan and Jon provided me with great resources and was able to help fill the gaps where need be.

-Mark Porisch

Owner of Lucky's Popcorn Dressing, LLC



Although we were long time owners of U.S. Engravers, my wife, Elaine, and I had recently taken over full control of the business. After making many changes and upgrades, it became apparent to us that we needed help to make the business grow and become an entity that would be attractive to a potential buyer within a time frame of two years.

We contacted RCEF after reading a newspaper article about them and set up a meeting with Bryan and John. They helped us do a financial review, set a goal, and then helped us set plans for the future using a marketing proposal we created with the help of Brian Maciej of Lime Valley Advertising.

We had an outstanding experience with RCEF and would highly recommend them to anyone starting out or to those people like us who wish to improve their existing business.

-Phil and Elaine Meyer

U.S Engravers

Pushed to the Medal

Phil and Elaine Meyer have been serving schools and businesses in the Mankato area since 1984.

What began as a home-base business, is now a full service awards and recognition dealer offering custom engraved trophies, metals, signs, and more.

In September, Phil and Elaine came to Jon and Bryan in hopes of creating a marketing strategy that would increase gross revenue and gain customers. The four of them worked hard implementing goals, objectives, and overall a new market strategy. Bryan and Jon were able to direct Phil and Elaine to various individuals needed to move the process forward. Through dedication and hard work, U.S Engravers has exceeded their goals.

For more information about U.S Engravers visit <http://usen engravers.com>.

2011 Success Stories

After attending various food-service trade shows, Bruce and Kelli Milbrandt agreed on opening a frozen yogurt shop in Mankato, MN. With all four of their children on board for this new journey, the six of them came together and organized what is now Frozen Yogurt Creations.

Since opening in December, they have learned quickly that the shop and its serve-yourself concept fits the Mankato community well. With business growing faster than expected and the process of opening the business fresh for the two of them, they sought help from Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation for assistance in writing their business plan.

With Frozen Yogurt Creations rapid growth, Bruce and Kelli look forward to what the future brings. For more information on Frozen Yogurt Creations and all the flavors they have to offer, visit www.frozenyogurtcreations.com.



Kelli and I really appreciated the help from RCEF as we started a new business for the first time. John and Bryan sat down with us and talked about our business ideas, helped us put together the business plan, and coached us whenever we needed help through the opening of our store. RCEF is a great asset to the Mankato area and to anyone looking for guidance in their business venture. Thanks for making our dream become a reality.

*-Bruce and Kelli Milbrandt
Frozen Yogurt Creations
Mankato, MN*

2011 Board of Directors & Staff

RCEF Board of Directors

The RCEF board is comprised of business leaders that all have unique backgrounds and contribute to the strategic direction of the organization. They oversee all the activities of RCEF and take an active role in contributing to our client's success. The board meets on a monthly basis to conduct business.

NAME	POSITION	OCCUPATION	AFFILIATION
Scott Weilage	Board President	President	Weilage Corporation
Shane Bowyer	Board Vice President	Business Administration Professor	Bethany Lutheran College
Andy Johnson	Board Member	Attorney	Johnson Law Office
Brian Maciej	Board Member	President	Lime Valley
Dan Robinson	Board Member	Agent	Lidstrom Commercial Realtors
Bob Knutson	Board Member	Financial Representative	Knutson Financial Advisors
Ann Macgregor	Board Member	Underwriter	Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC)
Greg Thomas	Board Member	Business Growth Advisor	Enterprise Minnesota
Kip Bruender	Board Member	County Commissioner	County of Blue Earth
Mark Piepho	Board Member	County Commissioner	County of Blue Earth
Scott Michaletz	Board Member	Principal	Kato Insurance Agency
Matt Michaletz	Board Member	Commercial Account Executive	Kato Insurance Agency
Dawn Schaefer	Board Member	Solutions Specialist/CEO	Creative Ad Solutions
JoRae Galli Storm	Board Member	Owner/Operator	The Pita Pit

RCEF Staff

A large part of RCEF's success is contributed to Bryan Stading and Jon Herzog who diligently work with clients on a daily basis.

Bryan Stading

Executive Director & Senior
Business Facilitator

Jon Herzog

Business Facilitator

New Name—New Location

With the Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation, formerly known as the Riverbend Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation, beginning to see more success in the number of small businesses and entrepreneurs, it was time to re-vamp RCEF's name and location. RCEF is now located on Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato's Campus. With this new location will come more opportunities to get students involved and learn more about RCEF and what it takes to start their own business.

Not long after RCEF's move, the new location is now the center for Bethany Network Ventures, a new and upcoming student-run business housed under RCEF. RCEF will help this new business on campus with business assistance and be the help the students will need in order to get their business up and growing within the next year.



Not only did RCEF move its location and change its name, but is also looking to do a little re-branding in 2012. This new image will provide RCEF with the necessary materials needed in order to effectively market their target audience within Blue Earth and Martin County.



Although we are working on this new image, it has not taken us away from facilitating business retention and growth. 2011 was a successful year and we hope to see the same success in 2012.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation

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Tel: (507) 344-7897

E-mail: bstading@rcef.net

For more information about The Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation, visit us at www.rcef.net.

REGIONAL
CENTER FOR
ENTREPRENEURIAL
FACILITATION