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News Release



Small Business Development Center at UCF

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SBDC at UCF Assists Certified Slings & Supply, Inc. Pursue New Export Markets

*Export Marketing Plan Identifies Foreign Opportunities, Recommends Action Plans
and Connects With In-Market Support*

Orlando, FL – The Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF), through the new Export Marketing Plan Services, has provided Certified Slings & Supply, Inc., a Florida-based company headquartered in Casselberry, FL, with a plan for growing its business in foreign markets. With more than 70 percent of the world's purchasing power outside of the United States, if a U.S. business is only selling domestically, it is reaching just a small share of potential customers.

Certified Slings & Supply has a strong tradition of innovation and service led by the Worswick family since 1978. The company's current leadership is made up of dedicated second and third generation family members with a combined 67 years of experience in the rigging, overhead lifting, load securement, and contractor supplies industry. Certified Slings & Supply employs 110 full-time team members and operates independent Rigging and Contractor Supply service centers located throughout Florida: Orlando, West Palm Beach, Miami, Tampa, Ft. Myers, and Ocala. The core business of service centers is the distribution, sale and manufacture of a variety of marine, mining, industrial and general contractor supplies.

Juan Jose Lopez, the International Sales Director for Certified Slings & Supply approached the SBDC at UCF with a goal of growing the company by increasing export sales. He had previously attended the SBDC's *Export 101: An Introduction to Exporting* workshop in 2011. More recently, he had heard about Export Marketing Plan Services, a new program awarded through the State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) grant by the U.S. Small Business Administration. It is offered in partnership with Enterprise Florida, Inc., and the U.S. Commercial Service to assist new-to-export manufacturers in developing their international growth strategy.

SBDC at UCF's International Trade Specialist Nerine Elattar met with Mr. Lopez and Certified Slings' upper management in order to gather information and understand the company's short- and long-term international trade goals. A customized export marketing plan was crafted for the company that included industry and customer analyses along with recommended target markets, overseas trade opportunities and an action plan. The cost for preparation of an Export Marketing Plan is \$3,000. Qualifying companies are eligible for a \$2,500 scholarship, making the cost to the company \$500.

In addition to the plan, the company received an Enterprise Florida Gold Key grant to connect the company with potential buyers overseas. Certified Slings & Supply will continue expanding in Central and South America and the Caribbean, and recently traveled to Trinidad and Tobago with the Export Sales Mission. As a result of this, the company expects an increase of \$120,000 in export sales over the next 24 months. The SBDC at UCF will continue to work closely with Certified Slings to assist in implementing the recommendations from the plan.

“If your company is thinking about exporting products or services abroad, the first thing you should do is meet with a member of the SBDC,” commented Mr. Lopez. “No matter how large or small your company is, an SBDC International Trade Specialist will be able to lay out a customized export marketing program personally designed for your company. It will be filled with data, statistics and facts targeting any region your company wishes to do business with. This is the best investment any company could make if looking for help with an international marketing program.”

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With its main office in the National Entrepreneur Center (formerly the Disney Entrepreneur Center) now located at the Fashion Square Mall in Orlando, the Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF) is part of the UCF College of Business Administration and the Florida Small Business Development Center Network, providing business seminars and no-cost, one-on-one business consultation to small business owners. The SBDC at UCF serves an eight-county area that includes Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties and maintains seven satellite service centers. In 2011, the SBDC at UCF helped entrepreneurs create or retain 1,517 jobs, win contract awards worth \$28.9 million, acquire \$17.7 million in capital formation, and increase sales by \$51.9 million. The SBDC at UCF is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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