

Helping Businesses Start, Grow and Succeed

News Release



Small Business Development Center at UCF

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ADVANCED IT CONCEPTS: A SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS STORY *SBDC at UCF Programs Support Rapid Growth*

Orlando, FL – For most small businesses, their greatest challenge is stable and continuous growth, and the faster they can achieve that growth, the better. Advanced IT Concepts, Inc. is a central Florida company that has, on the strength of its founders diligence and hard work, and with the help of the Small Business Development Center at UCF (SBDC at UCF), turned their company into a small business success story.

Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel (Gabe) Ruiz retired from the U.S. Army in 2006. Since then he has leveraged a military career in information technology and an entrepreneurial spirit as owner and CEO of Advanced IT Concepts, Inc., which provides IT consulting services and value added resale of computer hardware and peripherals to both the government and private sectors, into a fast growing small business.

AITC, Inc. was not an overnight success, however; Mr. Ruiz spent four years as a consultant assisting telecommunications companies do business with the DOD, and concurrently engaged with CDW (an \$8 billion business-to-business technology infrastructure and computer resale enterprise).

Blending his military, consulting and corporate experiences, Gabe and his wife Sandra founded AITC, Inc. in 2010; AITC, Inc. is a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business and has recently earned its 8(a) certification.

Since incorporation the company has achieved outstanding results with sales exceeding \$1.5 million in the first fiscal year. Year two was a breakout year which saw sales nearly double with a net profit margin exceeding 12.5%. Sales in this current year will again double exceeding the \$5 million milestone. In the three year period (2010-2012) the company has added 11 full time employees reaffirming the fact that “small business” is this country’s economic engine.

The company’s rapid growth has been accompanied with business challenges and Mr. Ruiz turned to the Small Business Development Center at UCF, in particular its Growth Acceleration Services program and its Advisory Board Council program.

In Mr. Ruiz’s words; “The SBDC at UCF has been a true and invaluable partner to AITC. From our first meeting with Growth Acceleration Services consultant Roger Greenwald who showed a true caring attitude and superb business knowledge we have received expert advice in areas such as Marketing, Business Development, Budgeting and Forecasting, Operational Effectiveness and more. Additionally, the SBDC at UCF has facilitated AITC’s participation in the SBDC’s Advisory Board Council program which has provided a team of senior business experts that provide guidance in

all business areas. Today, we are a much improved, stronger and better positioned company due in great part to the outstanding support and guidance provided by the SBDC at UCF”.

The Small Business Development Center at UCF’s (SBDC at UCF) signature Growth Acceleration Services program is designed to do just that: accelerate business growth for emerging and growth businesses. In the program, professional business consultants deliver the tools, strategies and expertise businesses need to move ahead and grow.

Applying proven methodology, the SBDC’s Growth Acceleration consultants help businesses understand their market and uncover new opportunities; assess their cost structure, budgets and financial situation; uncover hidden profits; and recognize the issues necessary to create sustainable growth and access capital. Then, after producing results-driven recommendations, they work with the business to implement detailed parts of the business plan. All at no cost to the business.

In addition, Advance IT Concepts participated in the SBDC at UCF’s award-winning program, the Advisory Board Council. The Advisory Board Council aims to facilitate business growth through the use of advisory boards for established Orange County companies. The program acts as a matchmaker between established businesses and professionals who volunteer their expertise as members of a ‘custom-fit’ advisory board. Founded in 2003, the SBDC at UCF’s Advisory Board Council is an economic development program funded by Orange County Government. Since its inception, the program has assisted 125 companies and has had more than 450 area professional volunteers.

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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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