

Helping Businesses Grow & Succeed



Media Release

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Florida Ranks 3rd for the Greatest Number of Veteran-Owned Businesses

FSBDCN State Office: On November 11, Americans celebrate those who have served our country. There are over one million service men and women returning over the next five years, many having served multiple tours of duty. These veterans have the leadership, skills, and experience that have the ability to transfer into strong, job-creating businesses.

Currently, veterans own 2.45 million businesses in the United States, about 9% of America's total businesses. These businesses employ approximately 6 million Americans. According to the [March 2012 Report](#) by the U.S. SBA Office of Advocacy highlighting veteran-owned businesses, Florida ranks 3rd for the greatest number of veteran-owned businesses. Florida has 176,727 veteran-owned businesses with revenue of \$61.9 billion. Of these, 35,548 provide jobs for 310,154 people with an annual payroll of \$10.6 billion.

The Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development, created in 2010 by President Obama, identified in their [2011 Report](#) several areas in which veterans needed assistance. These areas included increasing opportunity for growth through capital and federal contracting opportunities; expanding consulting and training services; and reducing barriers to growth.

"America's veterans deserve every opportunity possible to benefit from resources that could help them build successful small businesses and create jobs," said Jerry Cartwright, State Director of the FSBDC Network. "The FSBDC Network provides targeted programs and services to help veterans successfully transition into owning and operating their own small business."

Over the last 10 years, the FSBDC Network served 26,758 veterans through consulting, training and information, resulting in 1.1 million jobs created and saved; \$284 million in sales revenue growth; \$913.3 million in government contracts awarded; \$53 million in capital accessed; and 795 new businesses created.

With the help of the SBDC at the University of South Florida in Tampa, veteran **Giovanni Suarez** was able to grow his one-man operation to a company averaging \$2 million a year. Suarez's business, National Information Assurance Corporation (NIACORP), offers information assurance, communications security and operational support to the federal government and national defense organizations. In 2012, Suarez was selected as the U.S. SBA's South Florida Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year due to his efforts in advancing business ownership opportunities among veterans. [read full story](#)



"My company was born through the direct assistance of the SBDC and PTAC," Suarez said. "The guidance and continued support allows us to grow, learn and nurture relationships with industry partners and other business owners."

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Twenty-five year Air Force veteran **Susan Glasgow** had dreams of growing the small security business she operated part-time with her husband. Glasgow's experience and the help of the SBDC at Brevard Community College in Melbourne gave her the confidence she needed to break into the federal services market. Her vision for Kegman became a reality after being awarded an impressive prime contract. Kegman now operates a \$1.2 million contract with NASA, providing operations and maintenance support for the Doppler Radar Wind Profiler, Lightning Detection and Ranging, Lightning Mapping Array and Weather Station. Kegman currently has a staff of 7 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees and anticipates adding 5 more full-time employees by December. At this time, 100% of Kegman's employees are veterans. [read full story](#)



"Kegman Inc. was able to successfully navigate through the process by utilizing the exceptional guidance of the SBDC." Glasgow said. "I can honestly say that Kegman would not be where it is today without the guidance and support provided by Tony, Vicki and their teams [at the SBDC and PTAC]."

The FSBDC Network and its specialized programs, including the [Procurement Technical Assistance Center](#) (PTAC) and the [Veteran's Business Outreach Center](#) (VBOC), continue to reach out to support veterans by providing the tools they need to succeed in business, such as access to capital, entrepreneurial education, markets, services and business networking opportunities.

About the FSBDC Network

For over 35 years, the FSBDC Network has nourished a statewide partnership between higher education and economic development organizations, dedicated to providing emerging and established business owners with management and technical assistance, enabling overall growth and increased profitability for the businesses and economic prosperity for the state. A statewide service network of 39 centers with 65 outreach locations, the FSBDC Network is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#), hosted by the [University of West Florida](#) and accredited through the national [Association of SBDCs](#). To learn more about the FSBDC Network or to find a SBDC near you, visit www.FloridaSBDC.org or call 1.866.737.7232.

In 2011, the FSBDC Network served 38,444 entrepreneurs and small business owners, resulting in 16,914 jobs created and saved; \$317.9 million in sales growth; \$96.6 million in capital accessed; \$313.9 million in government contract awards; and 1,026 new businesses started.

State Designated as Florida's Principal Provider of Business Assistance [§ 288.001, Fla. Stat.]

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