

Helping Businesses Grow & Succeed

News Release



Florida SBDC at the University of Central Florida

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Osceola County's Growth Creates Opportunity For Allied Professional Services

Accounting Firm Opens with Assistance from FSBDC at UCF - Kissimmee

Kissimmee – Osceola County, Florida has been enjoying double digit population growth in recent years. In fact, according to the 2010 U. S. Census, Osceola County's population grew at a rate of 55% from 2000 to 2010. And that growth is creating opportunities for all type of businesses from car repair to lawyers and other service- related businesses. And that rate of growth did not go unnoticed by Maria Slyman.

Mrs. Slyman recently relocated from Howard Beach, New York to the City of St. Cloud in Osceola County, a community which had grown 13% itself in population between 2010 and 2013. Mrs. Slyman and her husband moved to the area seeking a job opportunity for her husband in the growing medical community just north of St. Cloud known as the Lake Nona Medical City. The Medical City includes the University of Central Florida's Health Sciences Campus (comprised of the university's College of Medicine and Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences and the future home of UCF's College of Nursing, College of Dental Medicine, and a planned teaching hospital) and such renowned medical institutions as the Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, Nemours Children's Hospital, M.D. Anderson Orlando Cancer Research Institute, a University of Florida Academic and Research Center, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. All these organizations have been established within the past six years.

With the growth of the Lake Nona Medical City came a high rate of residential home building that itself triggered an increase for new business expansion to accommodate the County's double digit population growth. All this growth and her vast accounting industry experience awakened Maria Slyman's entrepreneurial spirit. She made the decision to open her own accounting practice, specializing in tax preparation and bookkeeping services. Having spent most of her

career as an accountant in the New York City area, working for firms like J.P. Morgan Chase Bank NA and Bear Sterns & Co., Maria was confident she had what it takes to be successful.

But where to start? New to the area, there was much she didn't know about the Osceola County community and the State of Florida requirements to start a new business. Maria wisely turned to a proven resource for entrepreneurs and business owners and contacted the Florida SBDC AT UCF's office in Kissimmee, Florida. Maria took advantage of the many services offered by the FSBDC, including their training courses; confidential, no-cost, one-on-one business consulting; and extensive market data resources.

Maria put her all into getting her business started in the right way. She attended workshops on starting a business, writing a business plan and IT for the small business. She worked with her FSBDC consultant to develop her business plan and to navigate through the maze of local business regulations and requirements. And her consultant provided her with the FSBDC's secondary research from *IBISWorld* on the Payroll & Bookkeeping Services and Tax Preparation Services, as well as helping Maria on business location selection by identifying competitive locations in the market with research from *Reference USA*. Maria also utilized the FSBDC's Small Business Resource Network to locate a lawyer to review her commercial lease.

With all this assistance from the FSBDC, Maria was on her way. And she was vocal in her appreciation, expressing her high level of satisfaction with the FSBDC when she stated, "The FSBDC was a great source of information and support, especially my consultant Mr. Charles Wheeler, who was very instrumental in the development of the right marketing strategy that led to the creation of my business road map."

Maria's hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and the assistance of the FSBDC at UCF – Kissimmee Office paid off. She registered her business Allied Professional Services, LLC in December of 2013. The business opened its doors to the public in February of 2014 in leased space, located at 1955 S. Narcoossee Road, St. Cloud, FL 34771, next to a Publix Supermarket, at the intersection of two major roadways, which provide her business with excellent drive-by visibility. Her business is doing very well and, with the upcoming tax season, it will exceed revenue and growth expectations. And Maria has become an active contributor in her new community; she is a member of the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce, Osceola Business Partners, and GoBigg Team leads groups.

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About the FSBDC at UCF

With its main office in the National Entrepreneur Center located at the Fashion Square Mall in Orlando, the Florida SBDC at the University of Central Florida (FSBDC at UCF) is part of the UCF Office of Research & Commercialization and the Florida SBDC Network (FSBDC Network). THE FSBDC at UCF provides business seminars and no-cost, one-on-one business consultation to emerging and established businesses. The FSBDC at UCF serves an eight-county area that

includes Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties and maintains 10 service centers across Central Florida.

In 2013, the FSBDC at UCF served more than 7,200 entrepreneurs and small business owners through consulting and training, resulting in 7,507 Central Florida jobs created, retained or saved; \$1.0 billion in sales growth; \$51.5 million in capital formation; \$87.7 million in government contract awards; and 129 new businesses started.

About the FSBDC Network

The FSBDC at UCF is a member of the Florida SBDC Network, a statewide service network funded in part through cooperative agreements with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Defense Logistics Agency, State of Florida and other private and public partners. The Florida SBDC Network is hosted by the University of West Florida and is nationally accredited by the Association of SBDCs. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.

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. The FSBDC Network is a statewide service system of 41 centers with 60 outreach locations, including the FSBDC at UCF.

In 2013, the Florida SBDCs served over 34,000 entrepreneurs and small business owners through consulting and training, resulting in 39,536 jobs created, retained and saved; \$5.5 billion in sales growth; \$197.3 million in capital accessed; \$602.2 million in government contract awards; and 685 new businesses started. And, for every \$1 of Florida public and private sector investment in FSBDC programming, \$35 was returned to the state in tax revenue

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