

# Helping Businesses Grow & Succeed

## News Release



Florida SBDC at the University of Central Florida

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hosted by:



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## Local Couple Launches Fishing Apparel and Gear Company With Assistance from the FSBDC at Daytona State College

*“Fishballs” to Produce Environmentally Responsible Fishing Gear*

**Daytona Beach** - Eric Lund and Cindy Hutchings are working to reduce pollution the best way they know how – by having fun! Lund and Hutchings are co-founders of Fishballs, a fishing apparel and gear company dedicated to the environment while retaining an element of “edginess.”

For decades, fishermen have used lead weights to the detriment and degradation of our rivers, lakes and oceans. Lund is in the process of developing a safer weight. His company is funding that pursuit by designing and selling fishing apparel under the trademark “Fishballs.”

The brand combines a humorously edgy tone with a respect for the waters and marine life that provide so many hours of fun for fishermen and fisherwomen. After conceiving several apparel designs in early 2014, Eric and Cindy sought the assistance of the Florida SBDC at Daytona State College, a sub-center of the FSBDC at UCF, to help them realize their dream of turning their ideas into a successful business.

Today the company manufactures and sells a complete line of apparel. As apparel sales increase, the duo continues to innovate. In addition to environmentally friendly fishing weights, the company is set to launch a new product for keeping sunglasses and other valuables afloat when they fall into the water. The floatation device is shaped in Fishballs' trademarked image and boasts a provocative tagline.

Before starting Fishballs, Eric and Cindy operated a lawn care company. They had no apparel or retail business experience. However, when Eric was injured in an accident and unable to continue his lawn care company, he knew it was time to embrace the ideas he had been generating for months about a fishing gear and apparel company.

By the time Cindy and Eric approached the Florida SBDC at Daytona State College for assistance in May 2014, they had amassed many questions. The FSBDC's Certified Business Consultant Art Zimmet has been meeting and guiding them ever since on a bi-weekly basis to assist with strategy, branding, marketing communication and funding options.

Since they began working with the Florida SBDC, they have gone from being a couple with an idea to being the managers of a fully operational company producing and selling apparel that has found success in the creativity and then leverag-

ing technology such as e-commerce and mobile payment systems to their advantage. They have overcome their lack of knowledge about business strategy and are now well positioned for sustainable growth.

“We believe that the assistance from Art Zimmet at the FSBDC has been vital to the success of our company. He kept and continues to keep us focused on the key ingredients for achieving our goals when we start to vary. He has helped us connect with other businesses to get advice and opinions on tools for our company. He is continuously finding and giving us ways to succeed, i.e. a million cups program, crowd funding, tools to write a business plan, connections we never would have had without the help of the FSBDC.”

-- FSBDC --

### **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.]