

Helping Businesses Grow and Succeed

News Release



Florida Small Business Development Center at UCF

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Furry Tails Pet Grooming Benefits from Assistance by FSBDC at UCF in Osceola County

Co-founders Follow Their Passion with FSBDC's Help

Orlando, FL – Making your passion your life's work sounds like a good plan but often is filled with challenges and obstacles. For Carlos Hernandez and Lesly Miranda, co-founders and owners of Furry Tails Pet Grooming LLC, located in the heart of Poinciana, Florida, that was certainly the case, particularly when they wanted to grow their business.

Established in 2008, Furry Tails Pet Grooming is an independent, full-service grooming salon that caters to all breeds of dogs and cats and emphasizes convenience for the dog owner. The owners started the business after being professionally trained at the Florida Institute of Animal Arts in Winter Park. They complement their business background with a strong retail, customer service experience, and with membership in the National Dog Groomers Association. However, as they reflect back in their journey they confessed "it all started with a deep sense of passion towards animals...dogs in particular! We love animals and thought pet grooming would be an ideal business venture to go into. It was that simple for us...and family support was key." But how do you turn a passion for animals into a sustainable business? There is not an easy answer especially when their unique story is filled with challenges from raising enough capital for running operations, limited square footage space, and gaining pet owner's trust.

Earlier this year, they decided assistance was needed to expand their pet grooming business in Osceola County. Fortunately they had heard of the FSBDC at UCF thru a local newspaper. They met with FSBDC at UCF and started to proactively work with the trials of surviving and thriving in a tough economic climate. The FSBDC's Certified Business Analyst Rafael Pratts assisted and guided them to refocus on marketing; redefine their target market, look for complimentary product/services to offer, invest marketing dollars wisely, and helped identify effective ways to keep in touch with current and past customer. Equally important, he provided insights into how to properly secure additional working capital for our business operations! "The key to their success will likely be in continuing to offer exceptional high quality service, paying attention to the overall retail image and in being proactive business owners," commented Rafael Pratts of the FSBDC at UCF.

With that said, "Furry Tails Pet Grooming expects to reach 20% projected sales growth by end of 2014," according to the owners. They are more excited than ever about their efforts with the assistance of the FSBDC at UCF to increase overall retail space by 300% and at the same time lowering total retail square footage cost by 30% with new services like washing stations, day care services, and boarding. "We are very grateful to the FSBDC at UCF because they are helping

with the expansion of the business.” Best of all, they will strive to expand their commitment to the local charities in Poinciana in more than one way like providing prizes, gift certificates, and dog food for a wide range of different non-profits. Together with this, they even help animals find a new home! Furry Tails Pet Grooming, “where belly rubs are always free.”

-- 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 Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (FSBDC at UCF) is part of the UCF Office of Research & Commercialization and the Florida Small Business Development Center 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 2012, the FSBDC at UCF served almost 6500 entrepreneurs and small business owners through consulting and training, resulting in 9,961 Central Florida jobs created, retained or saved; \$1.3 billion in sales growth; \$50.4 million in capital formation; \$104.6 million in government contract awards; and 108 new businesses started.

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

In 2012, the Florida SBDCs served approximately 38,000 entrepreneurs and small business owners through consulting and training, resulting in 47,845 jobs created, retained and saved; \$6.3 billion in sales growth; \$235.2 million in capital accessed; \$588.4 million in government contract awards; and 744 new businesses started. And, for every \$1 of Florida public and private sector investment in the FSBDC programing 2012, \$40 was returned to the state in tax revenue.

The FSBDC at UCF and the FSBDC Network are funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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