

Helping Businesses Grow and Succeed

News Release



Florida Small Business Development Center at UCF

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sterling Building Services, Inc.: The American Dream In Progress *FSBDC at UCF's Growth Acceleration Services at Work*

Orlando, FL – Achieving the “American Dream” demands, in equal measures: hard work, passion, subject matter expertise, patient and caring leadership; characteristics that accurately describe Cesar and Yazmin Bermudez, founders and co-owners of Sterling Building Services, Inc.

Following immigration to the United States in 1989 with a professional background in financial management, Cesar Bermudez earned his stripes as a part time employee of ABM Janitorial Building Services where he rose from building supervisor to Assistant Branch Manager to Branch Manager of Central Florida. He then joined D&A Building Services as Vice President of Operations, transforming an emerging company with \$2.5 million in sales and 200 employees to a mature entity with sales ranging exceeding) the \$15 to \$20 million a year and about 1,100 employees.

Motivated by the goal of sustainable financial independence, Cesar and Yazmin Bermudez leveraged their experience and industry relationships to open Sterling Building Services, Inc. in 2007. The firm provides interior and exterior cleaning and maintenance services to property managers, owners and commercial clients. As a Minority Owned Enterprise the company achieved 8(a) certification in 2008.

The business gained serious traction in 2011 followed by an impressive 34% growth rate in 2012. The company is on track to double in size in 2013 with sales projected to increase 113%.

Faced with the challenge of rapid growth, Cesar and Yazmin began working with the FSBDC at UCF's certified business analyst Roger Greenwald to help devise plans to manage and accelerate future growth.

The Growth Acceleration Services offered by the FSBDC at UCF are designed to provide in-depth professional business consulting, at no cost, to qualified emerging and growth businesses in Florida by delivering the counseling, strategies and expertise businesses need to hasten the growth and success of their business. The Growth Acceleration consultant provides an in-depth financial analysis of the business and identifies key performance indicators to monitor performance, as well as identifying strategies for new business development.

In Cesar Bermudez's words, “We are fortunate to have a growing business, but the challenges that come with growth are sometimes enormous. The advice and counsel we received from the Florida Small Business Development Center at UCF's Growth Acceleration consultant, Roger Greenwald, has been very helpful enabling us to adjust to growth, keeping our cash flow in check, aligning our management structure with strategic goals and assisting in defining our need for and obtaining working capital.”

At the same time, Cesar and Yazmin launched an ambitious business development plan and made three key management assignments. Andrea Vargas was promoted to General Manager, Janitorial and Window Cleaning Divisions. Industry veteran Jerry Garner was named General Manager of the company's new Facilities Services Division and Sonny Acevedo was hired as Director of Business Development.

This management structure synergy and the new business development initiatives in all three divisions have created a pipeline that will ensure continuation of dramatic growth in 2014 and beyond.

Cesar and Yazmin take pride in their journey to achieve the American Dream, not only for themselves and their family, but for their employees as well. Their dedication to their employees' success by providing meaningful employment and career opportunities is a central tenet of their business model.

The Florida SBDC's no-cost Growth Acceleration services are available to companies throughout the state. To qualify for the services, the company must have growth as a goal, be in operation for at least three years, have annual revenues ranging from \$500,000 to \$10 million, and employ five or more workers. Florida SBDC Growth Acceleration consultants are available statewide to provide assistance to qualified emerging and growth business who are looking to advance. Specifically, the SBDC at UCF Growth Acceleration services consultants will provide high level consulting of 50 – 100 hours (fair market value of over \$10,000) to help qualified SMEs develop sustainable growth strategies.

For more information about the SBDC's Growth Acceleration services, contact FSBDC at UCF Regional Director Eunice Choi at 407-420-4850 or echoi@bus.ucf.edu.

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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 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.

In 2012, for every \$1 of Florida public and private sector investment in the FSBDC program, \$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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