

Helping Businesses Start, Grow and Succeed

News Release



Small Business Development Center at UCF

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dr. Tom O'Neal Joins SBDC at UCF's Executive Advisory Board

Orlando, FL- Dr. Tom O'Neal, Associate Vice President for Research and Commercialization at the University of Central Florida, Director of the UCF Incubation Program, and one of the leading voices supporting entrepreneurship and business formation in Central Florida, has joined the Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida's (SBDC at UCF) Executive Advisory Board.

With its vision of being the premier resource for small business assistance in Central Florida, the SBDC at UCF's Regional Director Eunice Choi recognized the need for the center to reach out within the community and enlist its strongest advocates to provide support for the SBDC at UCF within the small business community and Central Florida. To that end, the Executive Advisory Board was formed in 2008 and serves as a sounding board for the SBDC at UCF with an emphasis on providing recommendations for program development, promoting SBDC services, advising on funding issues and supporting legislative activities.

The Executive Advisory Board consists of eight members from the Central Florida community including: Scott Cole, Vice President and General Counsel, UCF; Lloyd Fernald, professor emeritus, UCF College of Business Administration; Foard Jones, interim dean, UCF College of Business Administration; John Lewis, president, Good Question, Inc.; Don McGowan, president, BankFIRST; Sharad Mehta, president, ScreenWorks USA; Brindley Pieters, president, Brindley Pieters & Associates, Inc.; and now Dr. Tom O'Neal. John Lewis serves as chair and Don McGowan serves as vice chair for the SBDC at UCF Executive Advisory Board. The SBDC at UCF's Eunice Choi, regional director, and Hal Thayer, communications director, represent the SBDC at UCF on the board.

"We are fortunate beyond words to have so important a champion of small business invention and growth as Tom O'Neal joining the SBDC at UCF's Executive Advisory Board. He provides a very important link between the SBDC, the UCF Business Incubator Program, the UCF Venture Lab and other UCF economic development-related programs. Working with the Board's other members -- all leaders from across central Florida, including several small business owners -- Tom will add valuable experience and insight as this impressive group works to help guide and support the SBDC at UCF," said John Lewis, Executive Advisory Board chair and President of Good Question, Inc.

"I look forward to working with all and hope I can contribute in a meaningful way," commented Dr. O'Neal who has been part of UCF's Office of Research and Commercialization team working to help UCF become a leading metropolitan research university. He has a long history as an entrepreneur and has assisted in the formation of several spin-off companies for technologies developed at UCF. He also serves a core team member of the Florida High Tech Corridor Council and Florida Economic Gardening Institute at the University of Central Florida.

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With its main office in the National Entrepreneur Center (formerly the Disney Entrepreneur Center) now located at the Fashion Square Mall in Orlando, the Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF) is part of the UCF College of Business Administration and the Florida Small Business Development Center Network, providing business seminars and no-cost, one-on-one business consultation to small business owners. The SBDC at UCF serves an eight-county area that includes Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties and maintains seven satellite service centers. In 2010, the SBDC at UCF helped entrepreneurs create or retain 1,241 jobs, win contract awards worth \$38.3 million, acquire \$20 million in capital formation, and increase sales by \$18.4 million. The SBDC at UCF is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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