

Midstate Caulking & Construction Services, LLC



MEET BRENDA & LEON CLEMENT

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Managing a small- to medium-sized business is all about challenges: some big, some small, some harrowing, some pleasing. But whatever size or shape they come in, they are still challenges and must be met or consequences will ensue.

Midstate Caulking & Construction Services LLC, and its founders and principals Brenda and Leon Clement, faced a major challenge in 2014. Fortunately, it was the good kind. The company they had started in their garage – really – was exploding and growing faster than they could finance.

Midstate provides caulking, waterproofing, fire stopping, stucco, and deck coating services for commercial buildings in Central Florida and across the state. Their construction contractor customers find that work quality, scheduling and safety are as important to the company as they are to its clients. Midstate understands the need for timely project completion, working with other trades, shift work, and accomplishing zero (0) punch list. It's a formula that has meant exceptional growth and success for the company.

"We expected to be small and stay small," says Brenda Clement. "But this is a niche market that started growing faster than we could ever have expected. As a small business with low overhead, we came out of the '08 recession in good shape. When the economy started to grow again, demand for our services did too."

And that's where the challenge for Midstate arose. "In construction, you pay your people and expenses before you get paid. When you are growing fast, it can be tough to manage that float," Clement continued. "We needed to know where to go to get more money to finance our growth." That's when she turned to the Kissimmee office of the Florida SBDC at the University of Central Florida (FSBDC at UCF) and its Area Manager, consultant Rafael Martinez-Pratts.

Clement and her bookkeeper met with Pratt-Martinez to develop a financing plan. Together, they identified Midstate's financing options, who might provide the needed funds, what information they would want and what kind of questions would need to be answered by the company. In the end, Clement was ready and fully prepared when she approached the bank she had selected for financing, and was successful in getting the funding that Midstate needed to pay for its continued growth.

"I recommend the FSBDC to any business owner," concluded Clement. "If you have questions or need information, ask the FSBDC. If they don't have the answer, they'll lead you to someone who does."

"Rafael and the FSBDC have let us know we are not alone in this. They care. They let you know you are supported. They have worked to build a relationship with us and have been a great resource for our company," says Clement. "Along with helping us deal with our financing needs, their seminars and workshops have been very valuable. We've been able to learn new things and network with other, local business owners. We've gotten assistance with human resources issues and recruiting. I don't see us outgrowing the need for them in any way, shape or form."

Providing the tools, strategies, and expertise to help Florida's business community thrive.

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