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Help for Utah Businesses

Rebecca Farraway, 31 Jul 2007

Utah businesses and local entrepreneurs have a new resource to help them obtain government contracts.

During the 2006 Utah legislative session, state lawmakers appropriated a one-time expenditure of \$250,000 to fund a pilot program designed to educate and aid Utah businesses in securing lucrative federal and state government contracts. As part of a plan to help the state realize significant economic growth and statewide revenues, the Governor's Office of Economic Development OK'd the decision to contract with the Utah Defense Alliance and Logistic Specialties, Inc. to provide guidance for Utah businesses interested in obtaining government accounts. Through the success of the pilot program, the 2007 Utah legislatures appropriated additional funding to continue the program.

Senator Sheldon Killpack, who helped sponsor the initial legislation that resulted in the UBiDS program.

"In the past," said Killpack, "the opportunities haven't been there for companies and just having someone walk them through the proposal process can produce powerful results."

The Utah Bid Development Solutions program, located in Kaysville and housed within the Roy W. and Elizabeth E. Simmons Entrepreneurship Center is run through a partnership with the Davis and Ogden/Weber chambers of commerce, the Utah Defense Alliance and Logistics Specialties Inc. Currently, over 100 Utah companies are utilizing the education, training classes and on-going mentoring provided by UBiDS.

Kori Ann Edwards, UBiDS director at LSI, said in addition to educating and training companies on how to obtain government contracts, there is also great emphasis placed on time -saving techniques such as ensuring that companies specific services and products are carefully matched with the needs of government buyers.

"We help Utah companies with the full spectrum," said Edwards.

Often companies must register with multiple organizations such as Dunn and Bradstreet, the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), and other procurement organizations before their goods or services will be considered for purchase by government agencies. According to Edwards, UBiDS assists in untangling the web of federal and state

registration requirements. Since the program's inception, UBiDS has helped Utah companies secure approximately \$36 million in government contracts and taught over 250 people in its training programs.

"We are giving Utah businesses a competitive advantage in this market," said Edwards.

Reid Leland, President of the Ogden-based precision manufacturing automation company Leanwerks, agrees with Edward's assertions stating that the UBiDS program helped his company to secure a contract with Hill Air force Base by matching the needs of HAFB with Leanwerks products.

"They were at a critical point in the war and we were able to step in and respond with the exact part they needed for an urgent battlefield requirement," said Leland, regarding HAFB.

Leanwerks continues to utilize the services, training and referrals provided by LSI and the UBiDS program.

Another UBiDS participant, Robert Sadler, is the president of Ensign Global Solutions. The Kaysville-based company specializes in providing consulting and technology to meet the needs of the aviation industry.

"They have brought us some great opportunities," said Sadler. "They have accelerated our business development processes without increasing our costs."

Expressing confidence in UBiDS continued success, Edwards is hopeful that future legislative sessions will add additional monies to the program's one-time funding.

For questions about the UBiDS program, call 801-593-2250.