MANUFACTURERS RESOURCE CENTER (MRC)

Founded in 1988 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Lehigh University, MRC is one of seven statewide Industrial Resource Centers (IRCs) established to help small and mid-size manufacturers grow and remain competitive. In 1994, MRC joined the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) which is comprised of 59 nationwide centers. MRC works with manufacturing companies by leveraging its own staff of experienced Business Development Managers with public and private sector resources. Through our assistance and work with manufacturers, we help raise the economic level of the region by creating high impact, cost-competitive manufacturers.

Due to space restrictions MRC moved off the Goodman Campus to the Hanover Plaza in Allentown, a central location for Lehigh Valley manufacturers. MRC serves all of Lehigh, Northampton, Berks, Carbon and Schuylkill counties and offers services in six broad areas:

- Technology Acceleration Services that include Technology Scouting and Technology Driven Market Intelligence (TDMI), Innovation Engineering, and Product Development.
- Strategic Business Growth Services and top line initiatives that include strategic planning, market opportunity research, focused lead generation, website and brand strategies, marketing/sales coaching, export services and supplier development.
- Operational Excellence services that include Lean, Six Sigma, Quality and Hoshin Deployment programs. We incorporated sustainability and coaching components into our Lean training and now apply a Green lens for greater profitability and cost savings;
- Business Performance Services to help mentor companies in financial analysis and strategies, capital sourcing and management, mergers and acquisitions, establishing visual business intelligence systems, technology and innovation strategies, “Green” and Sustainability transformations, tax credit opportunities, and other related services.
- Leadership Development & Training that includes the Manufacturing Leadership Institute (MLI), individual Culture Assessments, CoreValue® Business Assessments, Customized Leadership Coaching, Human Resource Development and the Image of Manufacturing. Through one-on-one coaching, strategic “doing” management and milestone development, we can help you grow your effectiveness as a leader.
- A strategic mix of Training and Certification programs that are beneficial to any manufacturing organization. We connect manufacturers with experienced, proven resources that specialize in Lean manufacturing training, tools, coaching and certification. We also offer our own 13-part “Lean Master Certification” program, a “train and do” curriculum that includes everything you need to prepare for and pass the SME Bronze Exam. The course curriculum includes ex-Toyota keynote instructors and other national presenters, as well. The hands-on elements of the program are also adding to the excitement from the classes. Participants get to actually use the tools when they are taught – reinforcing the proper protocol and use in real time. MRC also offers Six Sigma Training and Certifications, as well as coaching, mentoring and SPC-based assessments. We also offer Quality Certifications that connect manufacturers in need of quality management process solutions with best-in-breed resources. Whether it’s ISO, AS, API, HACCP or another quality-related certification, we have the experts and connections to help you gain certification.

For further information or assistance, please contact MRC at 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 200, Allentown, PA 18109. Jack E. Pflunder is President & CEO and can be reached at (610) 628-4575 or email him at jack.pflunder@mrcpa.org. Please visit our website at www.mrcpa.org (http://www.mrcpa.org).
For more information, write to Anne Nierer, Coordinator, The Philip Rauch Center for Business Communications, Lehigh University, 621 Taylor Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015-3117, or email JMM6@lehigh.edu or phone 610-758-4863.

**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

James A. Fischer, Director; Brett Smith, BA, MBA, Associate Director and Program Director LEXNET; Robert Mineo B.S., MBA, program director, Financing Assistance Program; Jasmita Saini, BA, MBA, Consultant; Andrea Hampton, Consultant; (https://sbdc.lehigh.edu/)

Established in 1978, the SBDC provides general management assistance to over 1,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses per year in the Lehigh Valley and surrounding areas. Primary funding for this program comes from major grants from the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Specialized Programs**

The Management Assistance Program delivers general management consulting to existing small firms and startup ventures. Services are offered to retail, service, wholesale, construction and manufacturing firms. Research is offered through electronic data base research. Seminars are offered on many topics of interest to start-up and growing firms.

**International Trade Development Program (ITDP)**

The International Trade Development Program (ITDP) is a specialized outreach effort of the Small Business Development Center. The ITDP helps companies with exportable products to develop export marketing plans and establish direct contacts with international markets. Seminars, trade missions and research projects support the efforts of this program.

**Financing Assistance Program**

The Financing Assistance Program provides assistance in loan packaging and financial planning and helps clients identify appropriate financing sources. The program administers the Lehigh Valley Small Business Loan Pool and the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Angel Network, a partnership program with the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern PA. Contracts with the Lehigh/Northampton Revolving Loan Fund, the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation and other funding agencies provide resources for this assistance.

**Lehigh Valley Export Network (LEXNET)**

The Lehigh Valley Export Network (LEXNET) is the regional office of the Team Pennsylvania Export Network. Throughout the year LEXNET brings PA foreign office representatives to the Lehigh Valley to meet with SBDC clients and discuss in-country export assistance needs. LEXNET also assists with export finance programs such as Market Access Grants allowing small and mid-sized manufacturing or service companies to participate in international trade events. Specialized training events and seminars are also held throughout the year.

**Business Education and Training Program (BETP)**

The Business Education and Training Program of the Small Business Development Center provides specialized workshops, seminars and customized training for the small business community.

For more information, write to James Fischer, Director, Small Business Development Center, 416 E 5th Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015