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Spotlight on Success – Diva Doll Hair Company

Kimberly Scott, founder of **Diva Doll Hair Company**, started working with the **Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBEDC) at Governors State University (GSU)** in March, 2014. Ms. Scott's goal is to open a brick and mortar location to supplement her online retail business.

Diva Doll Virgin Hair is non-dyed and non-chemically processed natural hair that comes from a single donor. Ms. Scott's product is a lightweight and is of top of the line quality that has unlimited styling potential and lasts for up to 2 years. Her company's founding values are based on the belief that their customer's needs and experience is of the utmost importance, and their team is committed to providing a one of a kind experience for their customers to keep them coming back.

The **SBDC advisors at GSU** assisted Ms. Scott with writing a business plan, creating sales projections, developing a brand identity and marketing campaign. They also helped prepare her for the loan process; explaining how her personal finances would impact the request for a business loan.

Diva Doll Hair Company was approved for an Accion loan and opened a retail location in Harvey, IL in July. Since opening, revenues have steadily increased and she has hired three employees. **Diva Doll's** customer base consists predominantly of returning clients and referrals, showing Ms. Scott is successfully implementing her values of providing an excellent customer experience.

The advisors at the **SBDC at GSU** will continue to work with Ms. Scott to assess the efficacy of the marketing plan, implement changes as needed and provide other assistance to help **Diva Doll Hair** grow and become even more profitable. To learn more go to <http://www.divadollhair.com/>

Maximizing Neoserra – Publishing Training Programs on eCenter Direct

Please open the link below for step by step directions on how to publish your training programs on the eCenter Direct site in Neoserra. All members of the Illinois SBDC Network should be maximizing the use of the eCenter Direct feature on Neoserra to assist each center in increasing its effectiveness and efficiency and most importantly to make accessing your services and programs as easy as possible for small business clients.

<http://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n96>

Valued Resources

One of the Kauffman Foundation's major strategies in support of entrepreneurship, is to have expanded data available to both national and local policymakers. For close to 40 years, the U.S. Census has run a large-scale survey of private business through [the Survey of Business Owners \(SBO\)](#), providing the most detailed picture of the changing American entrepreneur every five years. Through a major public-private partnership, the Kauffman Foundation and Census Bureau will be modernizing and annualizing the SBO for years 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The [new annual Survey of Business Owners](#) will:

- Create useful knowledge that will help foster more (and more successful) entrepreneurs.
- Create timely data on a wide-variety of industries and entrepreneurs in the United States, surveying 200,000 U.S businesses annually.
- Expand the data collected to include more detail on barriers to growth, financing, innovation, firm dynamics, demographics, and background characteristics on American entrepreneurs.
- Accelerate the public release of statistics from this program.

IESBGA News

The Illinois Entrepreneurship and Small Business Growth Association (IESBGA) Annual Professional Development Conference for members of the Illinois SBDC Network will be held on May 20-22, 2015 at the State Farm Hall of Business on the campus of Illinois State University. Once again, we offer huge thanks to Elizabeth Binning and the Illinois SBDC at ISU for hosting this extremely informative and valuable training opportunity for the programs that make up the Illinois Network. Please save the dates and look for additional details about the conference and IESBGA in this section of the Weekly Connection Email.

Network News and Moves – Getting Down to Business

Illinois Country Living magazine is published monthly by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). The magazine covers rural issues, and provides commentaries from Illinois leaders, columns on safety, health, energy conservation, gardening, a calendar of events, and of course, the ever popular recipes from Illinois' best country cooks.

Nineteen Illinois electric cooperatives provide Illinois Country Living magazine to their members, with a circulation approximately 190,000 in downstate Illinois. The February issue has a special feature by Les O'Dell entitled [Getting Down to Business](http://icl.coop/getting-business/) <http://icl.coop/getting-business/> which highlights the assistance provided by the Illinois SBDC and features quotes and information from several Illinois SBDC directors. Please take a few minutes to review the article and feel free to forward it to your partners and stakeholders.

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to Tom.Becker@illinois.gov.

Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.



Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success

