

Integral to the success of TechPort UAS Business Incubator and Community Innovation Hub are its partner organizations in Southern Maryland. The [Maryland Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\), Southern Region](#) is dedicated to helping anyone who wants to start or grow a business get the assistance they need, free of charge. They provide vital resources to TechPort entrepreneurs.

The SBDC is the premier resource partner of the United States Small Business Association (SBA) for success for small businesses in the Southern Maryland region, providing no cost training and professional confidential business consulting for new entrepreneurs and existing businesses, says Wynne Briscoe, regional director for SBDC Southern Region.

“We educate empower and sustain your business for its duration,” says Briscoe, who is being honored March 18 by St. Mary’s County Commission for Women as a Woman of the Year nominee. “We know how to start, manage and grow successful businesses, as many of our staff members are current or former entrepreneurs. We bring real life expertise to every business owner we assist.”

For TechPort, working with SBDC, is like getting help from a family member since both fall under the University of Maryland, College Park umbrella. SBDC affiliates across the nation with the flagship university for the state. It makes the relationship that much stronger.

“If you do not have an existing business, we will work with you from scratch,” Briscoe says, noting that SBDC will help create business plans, in every facet including financial, marketing, management, human resources, growth and more. “SBDC is a great no-cost resource that walks you through every step and stays with you along the way.”

The two efforts have become so intertwined, the SBDC has even taken advantage of office space at TechPort.

“It’s great to have a presence here,” says Erin Harrigan, St. Mary’s Small Business Consultant for the Maryland SBDC, Southern Region. “As [TechPort clients] wish to engage with us, we are here.”

Some TechPort clients are longtime, familiar faces for Briscoe and Harrigan, while others are being introduced to the amazing, free support for the first time. TechPort client, Brian Jordan, of Jordan Research & Development, started working with SBDC about six years ago.

“SBDC has been instrumental for our company, especially in terms of research,” Jordan says. “It’s filling the gaps as a small company. We don’t have a human resources department or research department.”

What’s been especially significant has been having a “fresh set of eyes to give us a new perspective,” Jordan said. “It’s an outside entity giving us feedback, someone who doesn’t have anything to gain.”

It's the innovators and entrepreneurs who truly gain from this expertise, says Tommy Luginbill, director of TechPort.

"We work with so many brilliant individuals here at TechPort. They are super-focused on what they are designing, building and developing and maybe not so much on the next steps to actually get their product to market," Luginbill says. "Working with the SBDC is truly lifechanging for these individuals. We are so grateful to have them on our side."

Among the best parts of the SBDC relationship is there is no defined conclusion.

"From start to finish we'll stay with you as long as you want," Briscoe says. "Some businesses have been with the program for 20 to 30 years. Some of these companies earn millions in revenue, but they never outgrow consulting support."

America's SBDC program celebrates its 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary in April 2021, with millions of successful business stories from across the nation and locally in Southern Maryland.

Click [here](#) to return to the newsletter.