

Business Services

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The Big Picture



SBDC/Workforce Center Strategic Alliance Aids Area Employers

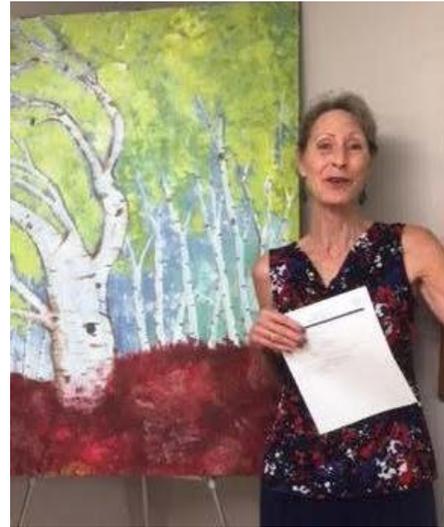
Strategic partnerships are critical success factors for any business organization, private or public. The Workforce Center happens to enjoy an excellent alliance with an outstanding partner in the **Larimer Small Business Development Center** (SBDC).

Larimer SBDC Director Mike O'Connell, instrumental in his leadership role on our Workforce Development

Service Spotlight

Fort Collins Nonprofit Opens New Career Pathways for Interns

Sandie Cogswell, Volunteer Coordinator at Elderhaus, has worked with interns from Larimer County Workforce Center for more than five years. In that time, she has worked with **65 interns** who came from diverse walks of life; some newly relocated to Colorado, some newly divorced, some with criminal backgrounds needing a new start, and some single mothers seeking a career path to independence.



Most interns at Elderhaus join as Activities Assistants helping program directors with outings and projects that support Elderhaus' clientele. Supervising an intern has many challenges and rewards – it's not just overseeing a trainee. While interns need varying degrees of guidance, it's good for the organization as they discover their strengths and shore up weaknesses.

Sandie noted that “the best reward is watching someone bloom as they discover themselves, realize their strengths, overcome their weaknesses, and develop a plan that will improve their future.”

An outstanding intern moment for Sandie was working with a challenging intern who was “very stubborn and head-strong.” They worked together to turn those qualities into strengths. That intern is now an integral member of Elderhaus' management team!

Sandie offered a piece of advice for businesses considering offering internships: “Be realistic in accepting that some interns need an investment of your time and effort to fulfill the potential you see in them. It is well worth the work!”

Business Insights

Free Candidate Assessments Save

Board, frequently cites the strength of the alliance.

The Larimer SBDC's mission is simple and straightforward: To help small businesses in Larimer County start, grow, and prosper. They do that, Mike said, through three different methods:

1. Free one-on-one consulting to both existing businesses and prospective startups.
2. Classes and workshops designed to improve business operations.
3. Connections to all kind of resources: legal, bookkeepers, banking resources, and more.

Larimer SBDC's one-on-one confidential consulting is free to any clients who contact them. Their consulting, training classes and workshops are led by experienced business professionals.

The SBDC and Workforce Center enjoy a productive work relationship marked by clear understanding of our complementary goals. "The Workforce Center is really our strategic partner as far as anything related to human resources, the employee/employer interface and managerial training," says Mike. "At the same time, the SBDC provides operating, consulting, financial and accounting, and sales and marketing support."

The SBDC and Workforce Center are committed to making sure employers have the talent they need and that area workers find skilled work at a productive

Employers Time and Money

Enterprise Holdings Inc. (EHI) has discovered what more Larimer County employers need to know – the value of free candidate assessment services provided by the Larimer County Workforce Center.

According to EHI's James Walters, "The Workforce Center's free assessments work especially well when we want to expedite our recruitment process. They save us and the candidates' valuable time." In addition, notes Walters, the risk management nature of EHI's business demands a high degree of certainty about candidate credentials.

Offered at no charge, the Workforce Center's free assessments help employers more efficiently screen candidate pools when they post positions. For example, if an EHI posting requires computer skills at an intermediate level or higher, the free assessments validate their candidates' skills, alleviating uncomfortable conversations at a later date.

More than 1,200 tools are available and cover a broad range of topics, including internet, sales, office, computer and behavioral skills, said the Workforce Center's Marie Meier. Meier noted that these evaluations are recognized as the standard test throughout the United States.

To find out more about these assessment services, please contact **Marie Meier** at 970-498-6650 or via email at mmeier@larimer.org.

Strengthening the Workforce

ELEVATE Training Solutions "Hit the Road"



Each month, the Workforce Center offers leadership and management training opportunities to employers throughout Larimer County. The Elevate Training program publishes a schedule at its [Elevate Workshops page](#) and invites area managers and supervisors to enroll.

But those are just the ELEVATE "showroom models!"

Although publicly published workshops will continue, Larimer County employers are increasingly discovering the value of tailored training solutions scheduled at convenient times and locations. In many instances, employers arrange for training at their business locations, a real time-saver for busy managers and supervisors.

ELEVATE offers training in three curriculum areas:

- **Communication and Employee Engagement:** Teaching and brainstorming best practices in productivity and team motivation. How to maximize employee satisfaction and productively lead today's dynamic multi-generational workforce.

wage. As a key link between our two organizations, seasoned HR professional Stacy Stolen is part of the SBDC consulting team and now provides one-on-one business HR consulting help for SBDC's business owner clients.

For more information about SBDC's services, call (970) 498-9295 or visit www.larimersbdc.org.



Workforce Management: A focus on the basic HR "blocking and tackling." Conducting meaningful performance reviews, navigating workplace conflict and refining effective recruitment strategies.

- **Leadership Development:** Personal professional growth opportunities for Larimer County's leaders and leaders-to-be.

For a catalog of training workshops and to schedule a free consultation on your organization's needs, please contact **Mike Kohler**, *Elevate Training Coordinator*, at (970) 498-6658 or mkohler@larimer.org.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Elevate Training Events

December 8

Employees for Profit Growth---[Fort Collins](#)

December 13

Your Brain at Work in Conversation---[Fort Collins](#)

December 20

Prepare for Anything: Crisis Comms---[Fort Collins](#)

Our Strategic Partners



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Larimer County Workforce Center is an equal opportunity agency and supports Veterans priority of service. Accommodations for persons with disabilities provided upon request.

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