

## ***End of the Year Report for FY '09***

It was a very productive first year for the Business Solutions Center partnership (BSC). By collaborating and pooling resources with 36 partners and 140 volunteers, the new public/private partnership provided early entrepreneurship education and business support services to help spur economic growth in the eight-county region of: Coles, Clark, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Moultrie and Shelby counties. The economic downturn kept the BSC very busy counseling and training both new and existing businesses, nonprofits, students, inventors and farmers. We hope to see even more new businesses start as the economy turns around.

### **Impacts for the Business Solutions Center (BSC counselor for 9 months and SCORE)**

#### **138 Clients Counseled**

- 60% pre-venture or start-up business
- 38% existing businesses
- 2% buy or sell

#### **Client Impacts**

- 201 Full-time / 15 part-time Jobs Retained
- 10 Jobs Created
- 7 Business Starts
- 3 Business Saved
- 2 Business Expansions
- 2 Loans Secured for a total of \$45,000

A wide array of impacts was achieved by the BSC including: legal registration, deal structure and human resource assistance, marketing and business plans development, loans secured, and referrals to other government agencies. The BSC is an affiliate member of the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network and works closely with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Small Business Development Center to help broker tax supported resources.



#### **1105 Clients Trained**

- Wall Street Bailout, Main Street Fallout Panel Discussion
- Jumpstart Series
- How to Start a Business Classes
- Community Investment Forum
- Leadership Coles County
- Sarah Bush Lincoln Leadership Academy
- Various other supervisory trainings



#### **140 Volunteers were Recruited**

- 23 SCORE volunteers
- 25 Camp e3 speakers and judges
- 68 Training, Marketing and Office Support
- 20 Junior Achievement teachers
- 4 Afterschool teachers



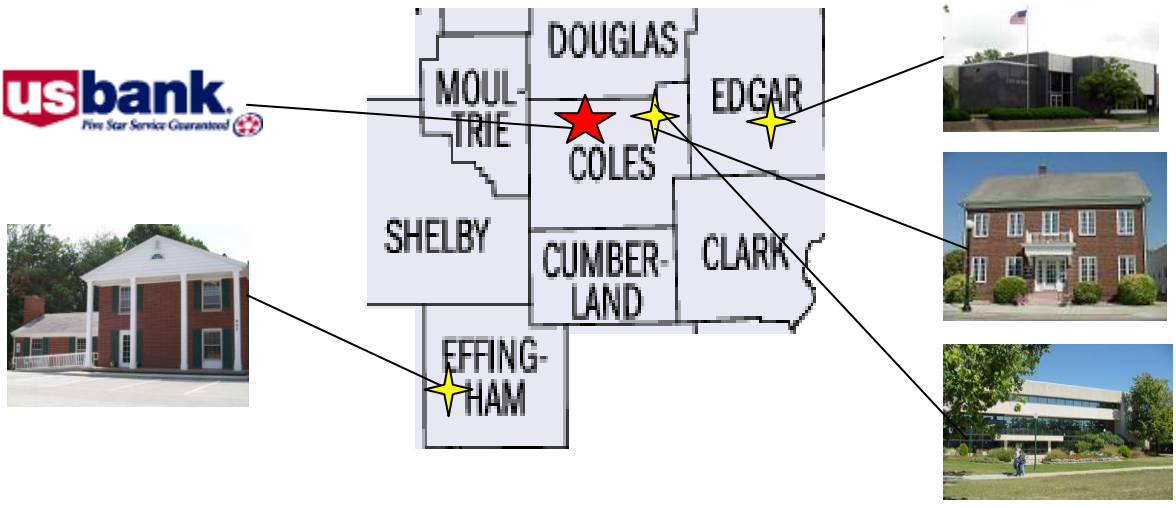
**356 Youths were Trained**

- Camp e3 high school summer camps
- Junior Achievement
- All Terrain Brain Afterschool program
- Leadership Marshall Entrepreneurship presentation
- Charleston Middle School Assembly
- Effingham County CEO Class Pre and post assessment of class

**Satellite Locations and Benefits to Partners**

The business counselor meets with clients at their business or in a convenient location close to their community. The main office was located in Mattoon at Crossroad Workforce Investment Board but will be located on the second floor of US Bank for FY '10. Paris City Hall and the Greater Area Effingham and Charleston Chamber of Commerce's host satellite offices.

★ **Main office** – US Bank in Mattoon      ✨ **Satellites** – Effingham, Charleston, Paris



**What to Expect in the Upcoming Year**

The BSC will continue to provide early entrepreneurship education and business support services. The BSC will also become a capital developer by supporting the efforts to bring money to the ideas of the region. This will be achieved by the Prairie Spark Investment Forum scheduled for September when entrepreneurs pitch their ideas to local angel investors. The center will also assist partners establishing low interest revolving loan funds specifically targeted for entrepreneurs and start-ups.