

BIO:

Mary Beth Votava is the Center Director of the Minot Small Business Development Center, serving seven counties in northern North Dakota. She has been with the program since July of 2000, making her the network's longest serving staff member. Mary Beth earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from Minot State University. She is a Kent State University Certified Business Advisor, ISBA licensed Business Certified Appraiser, a NEBB Institute Certified Machinery and Equipment Appraiser, and Co.Starters facilitator. Mary Beth's expertise includes accounting, lending and finance, strategic planning, loan packaging, government procurement, succession planning, business buy/sell planning, business valuation, and turnaround/recovery work. A native of Minot, Mary Beth is an avid hockey fan and loves spending time with her family and friends.

When asked what she finds inspiring and rewarding about her work she responded: "Entrepreneurial drive and energy is contagious and challenging all at the same time. I never tire of hearing new ideas, working on challenging projects or having clients tell me that the SBDC made a difference for them and their journey! Making a difference is my true inspiration. Also working with repeat clients from year to year beyond start-up is very fulfilling. My work pushes me to me to think outside the box and to continuously grow not only in knowledge and skills, but also as a person. I am a better version of me because of my clients and that is pretty rewarding!"

STAFF NOMINATION COMMENTS:

*Mary Beth has shown strong commitment to the network and to small businesses. She is always willing to set aside time to assist with other center's clients and processes. She will introduce clients to other centers with specific skillsets to help the client continue to learn and grow.*

*Mary Beth is always open to helping the network. Our network is appreciative of her assistance because she has been with the SBDC for many years and has seen many situations.*

*She prioritizes her clients, supports and works to enhance her region and is always willing to help anyone in the network. Mary Beth is continually my "go-to" with our various systems, or general client work – the wealth of information she has is plentiful, and her high level of professionalism and credentials bring much value to the whole state.*

*Mary Beth defines an exemplary performer that makes significant contributions to the network, shows a strong commitment to small business, and always keeps compliance top of mind. Her knowledge and experience is second to none. She has mentored me from the very beginning, along with many other advisors in our network. She provides amazing input and feedback and is a leader.*