

## **BIO: Nadia Arbelo**

As the newest Regional Director with the Kansas SBDC Washburn University, Nadia has responsibility for overseeing the 12 counties in the NE Region of Kansas. This region is home to the state's capital, Topeka. Nadia is excited about the collaboration and synergy this opportunity brings. She previously worked in a similar role in Western NC (SBTDC) as a Business Advisor then became an independent consultant in both public and private sectors.

Nadia brings a broad international consulting background back to Kansas. While in Europe, she continued educational consulting, developing a joint Hungarian-USA International English Language secondary school program. As an entrepreneur, Nadia has owned and operated several small businesses from computing to Art and Interior Design.

In the larger business world Nadia has worked across sectors, from retail to manufacturing and delivered educational and administrative services to public and private schools in Kansas City to Abu Dhabi. During her sojourn as head administrator for a private UAE American school, she also obtained a British master's degree in leadership & change management. Furthering her belief in lifelong learning Nadia entered the European Union's only PhD program in *Philosophy and Theory of Visual Culture*, focusing her research on gender equity and Female Identity in Public Spaces and is currently ABD.

Returning to the US in 2016, Nadia volunteered for civic organizations and began serving as a Board member for the *National Center for Craft, Creativity and Design*, Facilitator for *WNC Building Bridges, Western Women's Business Center/AB Tech Business College*. Also helping develop college mentoring programs for female STEM students and minority male student advancement. After serving as Director for a pilot project with the YWCA-WNC Student Enrichment program she continued consulting in cultural and minority community business development.

In addition to her work with KSBDC, Nadia serves as a Member for *Topeka Small Business Council Advisory, Board Member of Spark MHK, current memberships in Topeka Independent Business Association (TIBA), Sales & Marketing Executives of Topeka (SME), Rotarian. and is working on certification with WIKI Commercialization Canada.*

As the area SBDC Interim Director, Nadia believes that supporting lifelong learning helps develop innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit. Her role in KSBDC in cooperation with affiliate organizations is to encourage and support small businesses, put ideas into practice, "engage in the economic vitality of businesses in the region and beyond" (WU), which fulfills individual dreams and lifts underserved urban/rural communities and businesses.