

Arla Murphy is the Assistant Director of the Workforce and Illinois Small Business Development Center at Southeastern Illinois College. She began her career with the SBDC in 2018 as the Business Development Specialist and transitioned to Assistant Director in 2021. Currently, she assists clients with starting their businesses, financial projections, business plans, and marketing plans. In addition to working with clients, Arla holds weekly forums for the Illinois SBDC network to provide education, camaraderie, and support for all advisors/network staff. She has previously served on various strategic planning groups in her network.

Since joining the Illinois SBDC Network, Arla has assisted:

- 294 new clients and many existing clients
- Clients obtain over \$13 million in capital funding
- Contributed over 4,500 hours to the growth and expansion of small business

Before her tenure with the Illinois SBDC Network, Arla worked as the Director of Marketing and Marketing Coordinator for community financial institutions and was a writer and editor for various publications. She received a Bachelor's degree in journalism with a minor in political science from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and completed postgraduate studies in Mass Communication at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. She has earned certifications in banking, credit, lending, and is a GrowthWheel® licensed user.

In previous years, Arla served as the President of the Saline County Chamber of Commerce, as a member of her local Rotary, and served as co-Director of the Board for Saline County CEO, a youth entrepreneurial program. Currently, Arla is a partner with her husband, Jason Murphy, of Wise Ridge Property Management LLC in southern Illinois.

Born and raised in Carrier Mills, Illinois, Arla is the proud mother to her son, William, and wife to Jason. She enjoys spending time with her family and dogs, freelance writing, hiking, and textile arts.