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**News Release**

For Immediate Release

## **Florida SBDC at FIU Earns National SBA Recognition**

*Miami-Dade, Monroe County Regional Office Named National Small Business Week  
'SBDC Excellence and Innovation' Award Recipient*

**Florida SBDC Network State Office (Pensacola, Fla.)** – The [Florida Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\) Network](#), the state's principal provider of small business assistance, is pleased to announce that the Florida SBDC at Florida International University (FIU), its regional center that serves small businesses in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, has received the National Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

During National Small Business Week, which takes place annually the first week in May, the SBA recognizes the contributions of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners, and organizations that support America's small businesses in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

*"Unequivocally, the Florida SBDC at FIU is a center of excellence for its distinguished service and timely solution delivery for our Florida small businesses in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties," said Mark Madrid, associate administrator for the U.S. SBA. "Congratulations to this SBDC Service Center honoree for consistently and tirelessly meeting our resilient Florida entrepreneurs where they are. The FIU SBDC Service Center team has gone the extra mile as a Service Center and as an SBA Community Navigator. Distinguished indeed!"*



The Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award is bestowed to one SBDC annually by the SBA as part of National Small Business Week for excellence in providing value to small businesses from diverse backgrounds and advancing program delivery and management through innovation.

*“The Florida SBDC at FIU team, under the leadership of Brian Van Hook, is very deserving of this honor,” said Greg Britton, state director of the Florida SBDC Network. “This award is a testament to their passion for helping small businesses grow and achieve their dreams, as well as their commitment to cultivating partnerships and driving innovation to expand their footprint and better serve businesses in their community.”*

The Florida SBDC at FIU was selected for the award for their outstanding work to help small businesses in the region. In 2021, the Florida SBDC at FIU delivered over 20,000 hours of consulting to more than 2,000 clients, resulting in business owners securing \$117 million in capital, securing more than \$33.3 million in government contracts, impacting 5,573 jobs, increasing sales by \$154.1 million, and creating 114 new businesses.

*“I thank the SBA for this national recognition for the hard work that our local Florida SBDC at FIU team puts in day in, day out in Miami-Dade and Florida Keys communities,” said Brian Van Hook, regional director of the Florida SBDC at FIU. “The center has seen record levels of assistance and results for our local clients due to these dedicated consultants. We are proud to represent FIU Business and FIU in the community and to see our work on behalf of our clients receive national honors.”*

In addition to exceeding their performance goals for the year, the region recently secured a \$2.5 million SBA Community Navigator grant to strengthen outreach to underserved businesses. The Florida SBDC at FIU, which serves as a hub in partnership with six other community organizations, received the largest Community Navigator grant in Florida and was one of 51 awards nationwide.

National Small Business Week is April 30 - May 6, 2023. As part of the week, the Florida SBDC at FIU will be recognized in Washington, D.C. among winners from other states during a special awards ceremony.

For more information about the Florida SBDC at FIU, please visit <https://business.fiu.edu/centers/sbdc/>.

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**About National Small Business Week:** For 60 years, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation announcing National Small Business Week, recognizing the critical contributions of America’s entrepreneurs and small business owners. More than half of Americans either own or work for a small business and create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year. As part of National Small Business Week, the U.S. Small Business Administration takes the opportunity to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners and others from all 50 states and U.S. territories. Every day, they’re working to grow small businesses, create 21st-century jobs, drive innovation, and increase America’s global competitiveness. In recognizing the changing face of America, the SBA’s National Small Business Week awards honor individuals and businesses that reflect our Nation’s rich diversity.

**About the Florida SBDC Network:** For more than 45 years, the Florida SBDC Network, the state’s principal provider of business assistance [Fl. Stat. 288.001], has nourished a statewide partnership between higher education and economic development to provide existing and emerging small and medium-sized business owners with management and knowledge resources that enable overall growth, increased profitability, and economic prosperity for Florida’s economy. In 2021, the Florida SBDC Network delivered more than 157,000 hours of consulting to more than 18,000 small business clients – resulting in business owners securing over half a billion in capital, securing more than \$380 million in

government contracts, impacting 28,930 jobs, increasing sales by over \$4 billion, and creating 778 new businesses. With over 40 offices statewide, the Florida SBDC is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Defense, State of Florida and other private and public partners. The Florida SBDC Network, headquartered at the University of West Florida, is nationally accredited by the Association of SBDCs and is a recipient of the President's E Award for Export Service. Florida SBDC services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Language assistance services are available for individuals with limited English proficiency. For more information, please visit [www.FloridaSBDC.org](http://www.FloridaSBDC.org).