

# Central Virginia SBDC Digital Business Resiliency Project

Presented at the Go Virginia Region 9 Annual Meeting  
June 30, 2022



[cvsbdc.org](https://cvsbdc.org)

# Digital Business Resiliency

## Overall

Assist Central Virginia's businesses to:

- 1) establish a successful post-pandemic digital foothold, and
- 1) achieve success for the long-term via education and training.

Contract period: April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Contract total: \$131,200

# Why SBDC?



It works because it's local, regional, national.

**We are designed to:**

**level the playing field, break down barriers, kick open doors, be timely with information, respond to clients, and connect to entrepreneurs to resources.**

**As reported in America's SBDCs report in 2017...**

Virginia SBDC clients' average annual sales growth was 15.5% compared to 1.1% for VA's non-SBDC businesses.

Virginia SBDC clients' average annual employment growth was 27.6% compared to 5.3% for the average non-SBDC Virginia business.

# Central Virginia Small Business Development Center

## ENTREPRENEURS EMPOWERED



Training



Advising



Resources



Central Virginia SBDC is hosted by Community Investment Collaborative and funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University, and local supporters. The Virginia SBDC is nationally accredited by America's SBDC.



# Go Virginia Framework Goals Accomplished

- Support Innovation and Entrepreneurship **added capacity, skills & tools**
- Support all Go Virginia target industries **accomplished**
- Facilitate higher paying jobs **in multiple industries**
- Serve counties of Albemarle, Greene, Louisa, Fluvanna, Nelson, Culpeper, Rappahannock, Orange, Madison and the City of Charlottesville **and increased rural, minority, and growth company service**

# Specific Goals

- 1) Hire a contract web developer: to assist small businesses with their digital and e-commerce presence. **We hired 2.**
- 1) Hire a full-time business advisor to expand capacity of the SBDC to deliver business counseling, thus allowing the opportunity to emphasize services to additional rural counties and high growth companies. **Accomplished and ongoing.**
- 1) Deploy business technical experts: and support staff to support the assessment and assist with success of small businesses in the Region. **Accomplished and ongoing.**

# Specific Goals

1) Assist at least 90 businesses with their online

Exceeded goal in Q4 of project

1) Provide technical assistance (via education and training) to 150 businesses

Exceeded goal in Q3 of project



# How?

## Website JUMP START

## Full Time Advisor



**Cameron Nelson**  
CHIEF DIGITAL ADVISOR

Specialties: Startups, e-Commerce, Digital Marketing, Technology Strategy, Multi-channel



**Alexandra Littlehales**

WORDPRESS DEVELOPER

Specialties: WordPress web design and development

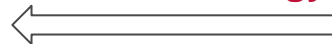


**Margaret McNett Burruss**

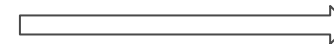
WORDPRESS DEVELOPER

Specialties: WordPress Website Development, e-Commerce, Search Engine Optimization

Expert e-Commerce, Website & Design Technology Team



Expert Strategy, Digital Marketing & Business Advisor



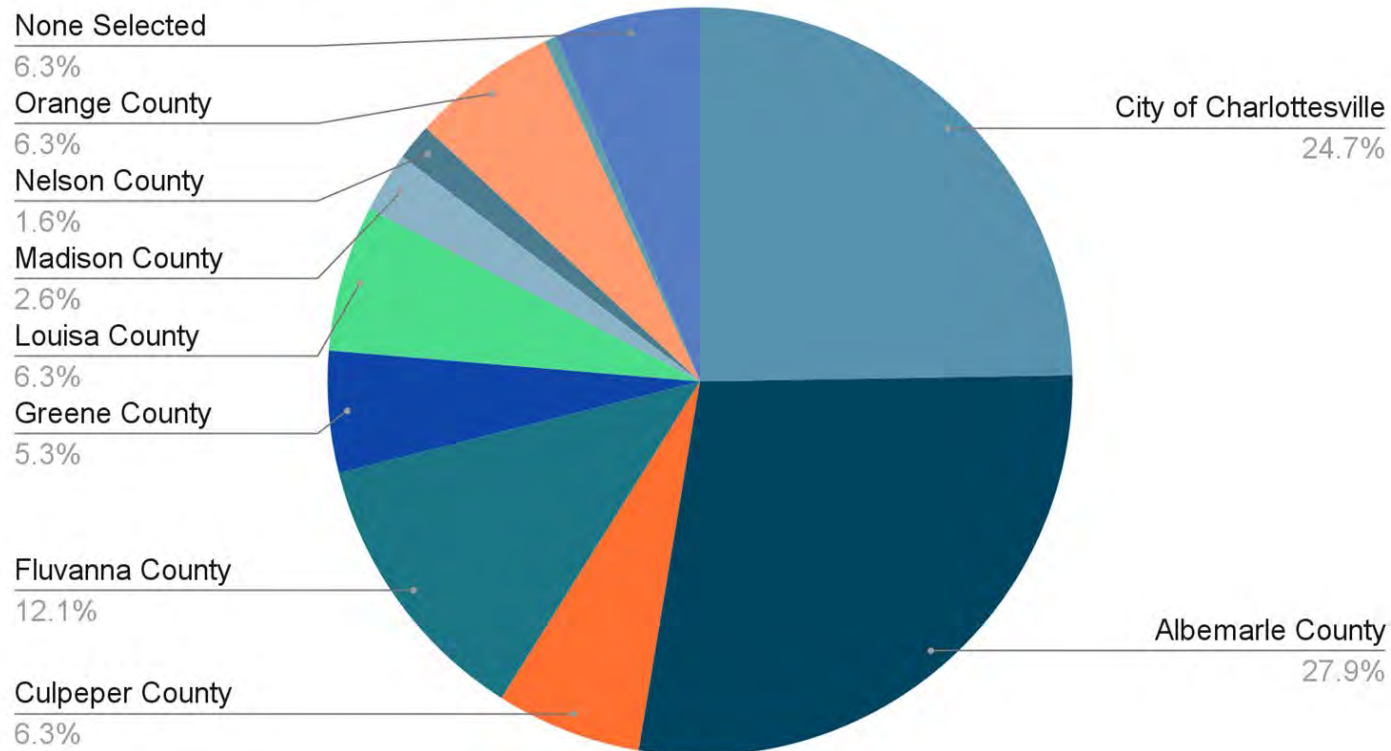
**Greg Dorazio**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Specialties: Strategy, Marketing & Communications, Solopreneurs, Rural Businesses



# Website JUMP START

Source of Website Jump Start Applicants



## Key facts and data

- **Application date range:**  
3/16/2021 - 6/15/2022
- **Total number of applicants:** 190

# Project Goals/ Achievements

	Goal	Actual (as of 3/31/2022)
# businesses assisted - online presence	90	97
# businesses assisted - technical	150	226

# Current status as of 6.27.2022

12 websites in “active build”  
35 in “accepted” applicants

Please Note:  
Website Jump Start Applications are closed. Please contact  
our office for digital assistance.

## Website JUMP START Application

Sponsored by:



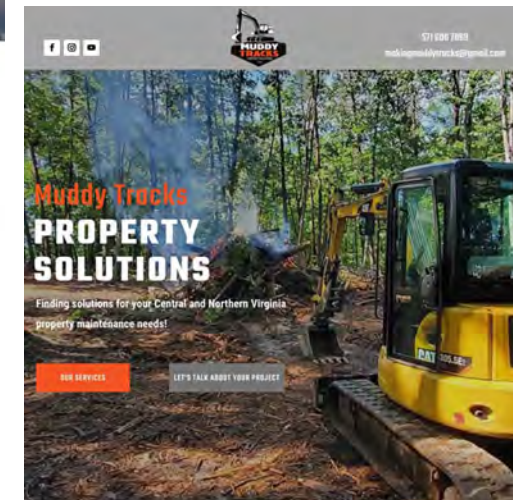
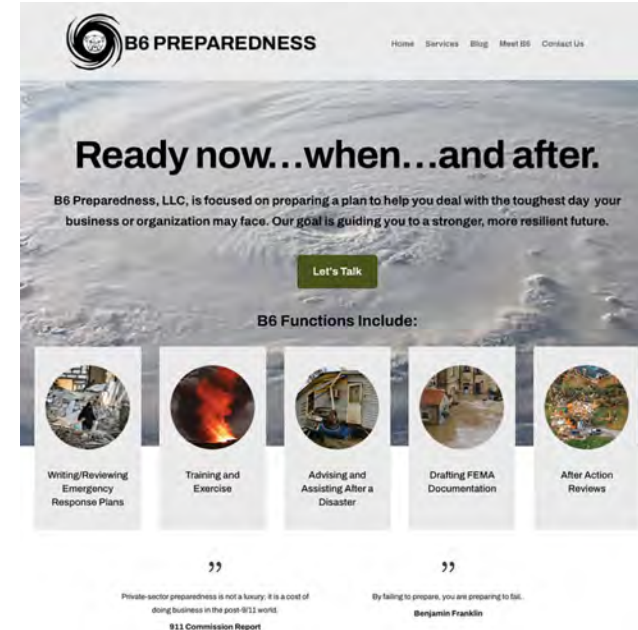
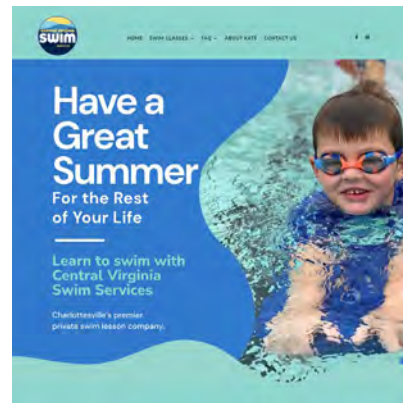
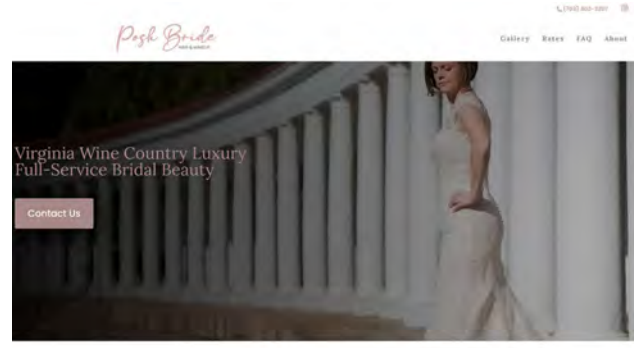
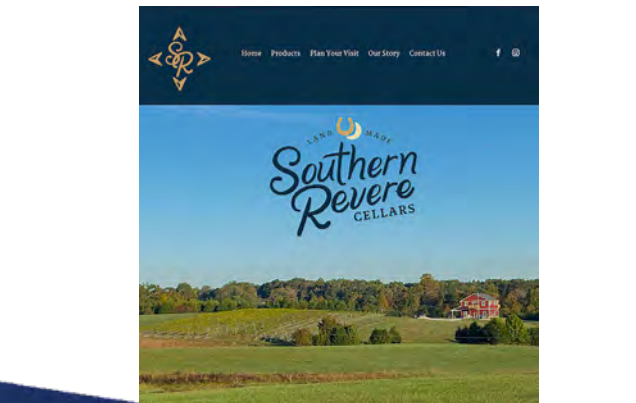
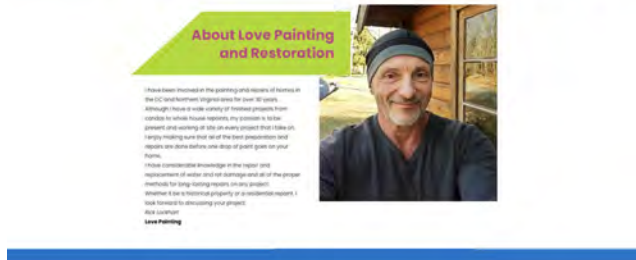
Conducted by:



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Estimated completion:  
Nov. 2022

# ...a few examples





# Supported by:



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR  
**GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY**  
IN EACH REGION



# Ongoing support:

SBA, Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville



# What clients are saying

"You guys have an amazingly talented team to work with, and all of us fledgling entrepreneurs are mighty lucky to have you guys!" - **Nancy Alexander, Marbling Designs**

"I can't even begin to explain how incredibly happy I am with the work that Alexandra did on the website! It far exceeded my expectations and she, as well as Greg, made the process so simple. Her communication was thorough but concise; she only required minimal details from me; she managed a lot of photos and social media content to produce a very impactful presentation of my business on the Internet. Couldn't be happier. It's obvious you're doing a great job managing the resources for the Jumpstart program and Alexandra does an amazing job of helping small businesses get their name out to the public. Thank you!" - **Aaron Brubaker, Muddy Tracks**

"I was shocked I got a response so fast. Everything moved really fast once I was approved." - **Rick Lockheart, Love Painting**

"She loved their website so much she spoke with the owner about it. He told her about us and said that Alexandra was a miracle worker who kicked ass at designing the site! The potential client was floored with the amount of detail and thought that went into the site and is excited about the possibility of getting her own "kick-ass" site." - **Southern Revere Cellars**

## And what are clients saying about the Full-time Business Advisor, Greg Dorazio?

"At first, Greg Dorazio set up an introductory meeting to brainstorm how the SBDC could help my business grow. During the meeting, Greg's enthusiasm, ingenuity, and confidence helped me feel empowered to make my entrepreneurial dreams come true. His ideas were insightful, delivery was kind, and his passion for helping others was evident every step of the way." - **Coach Seth Wilson**

# Full-time Advisor Results



Clients Served:	308
Direct advising & prep hours:	400
Jobs created:	31*
Jobs retained:	79*
Capital Formation:	\$1,096,155*

\*As reported by clients that responded to CV SBDC's 2021 annual survey.



# Office Results



Clients Served:	688
Direct advising & prep hours:	6,454
Jobs created:	268*
Jobs retained:	438*
Capital Formation:	\$24,343,648*

\*As reported by clients that responded to CV SBDC's 2021 annual survey.

# Demonstrated Value

## **SBDC's 1st ever Central Virginia full-time business advisor:**

- Supported by Community Investment Collaborative & VSBDC Go Virginia grant
- Awarded and recognized for rural service
- Leading in connection and preparation for CDFI loans and grants
- Leading in marketing strategy and product & service launch preparation for sustained success
- Assisting with office operations to expand overall capacity

# What we learned

- SBs seek trusted partners during hard times (fear of private sector)
- Awareness building is slow - especially w/out in-person outreach
- Business health checks, strategy & marketing analysis needed
- Multi-page websites instilled fear in smaller businesses
- Technical issues abound (plug ins, connection to platforms)
- Wordpress was the right choice
- The need for assistance is still great, as is lack of awareness
- Collaborations = core success

# CENTRAL VIRGINIA's Partner in Business



## Now What?

- Website JUMP START work and digital technical assistance will continue through 2022
- CV SBDC 2023 base budget has increased due to additional local municipal support
- **CV SBDC anticipates ~ \$130,000 funding gap due to programs ending (CARES, GoVA)**
- CV SBDC will continue to develop sponsorships and support efforts to obtain SBDC financial support from the Commonwealth of Virginia
- If additional funding is not identified, CV SBDC will scale back operations

