Program Summary

Director Cheokas continues to work one-on-one with small business owners in our service area. Consulting was offered to 10 small business/pre-venture clients this quarter.

Activities in which Director Cheokas participated during the quarter are:

- **January 22** – River Valley Regional Commission sponsored a luncheon and workshop on revolving loan programs and SBA 504 loan packages. Director Cheokas received an invitation to attend from local banker Charlene Pennymone with Citizens Bank of Americus. Citizens Bank is pushing to become more active with SBA programs.
- **February 5** - Economic Outlook Luncheon: Director Cheokas organizes this annual event as part of the Center’s outreach services. This year’s event was again co-sponsored by the Americus Rotary Club. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Philip Szmedra and Dr. Randall Valentine, both professors in the School of Business at GSW. Dr. Szmedra and Dr. Valentine last spoke at our luncheon in 2010 when they shared their comments on the economic climate at that time. Their talk this year will focus on current economic conditions in our area, as well as, provide an economic forecast for Southwest Georgia. Over 100 attended; community and regional leaders in economic development. Bob Slenker with the GSW-IT Department filmed the presentation for use on GSW-TV.
- **February 11** – Bruce Colston, Director for Vision for Sumter talked with Director Cheokas about was in which the two could collaborate on future projects.
- **March 6** – Director Cheokas attended a luncheon given by Mrs. Sandra Deal at the Governor’s mansion. Several resource contacts were made. These will be held on file for future use. Around-the-room updates from participates work and activities were shared. This provided an opportunity to highlight Georgia Southwestern and specifically the School of Business and the Center’s initiative to create better engagement with the community – one program is the utilization of SOBA’s advisory board for a speaker repository and internships.
- **March 13 & 14** – Advisor Board visits: Cheokas along with Dr. Bennett made personal visits to 8 SOBA advisor board members. Purpose – to update members on School’s actions to address items discusses during Fall meeting. 1) Program to address interviewing soft skills. This project was undertaken by students in two business leadership classes. Three advisor board members participated in a panel discussion which was video and link to SOBA homepage.
2) Summer and Fall internships. In order to address the timing of requesting interns and placing interns with employers. Feedback was sought and program has been developed to meet the needs of employers and students. These one-on-one meetings took the place of spring board meeting,

**Program Measures Impact Statements**

January - March 2013: A total of 10 clients were offered one-on-one consulting during the first quarter of 2013; all new client files were opened.

First quarter client profile:
- Start-ups – 34%
- Existing businesses – 66%
- Total employment (existing companies) – 34
- Consulting Hours - 80
- Capital investment: N/A

**Points of Interest**

n/a

**Advocacy**

The GSW Center for Business continues to collaborate with the Small Business Development Center consultants; identifying available resources for small business clients in our area. Upcoming Continuing Education classes for *Spring 2013* sponsored by the Albany SBDC Center include:
- Writing a Winner Business Plan: Step One
- Starting Your Own Business: Step Two

GGC
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