In the third quarter of 2009, the GSW Center for Business and Economic Development hosted a workshop with the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute on government contracting. More details below. Director Cheokas continues to work one-on-one with small business owners in our service area. Consulting was offer to 14 small business clients this quarter.

Activities in which Director Cheokas participated during the quarter were:

- Contracting with the Government, July 22, 2009 – Larry Selman with the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute partnered with the Center to teach a one day training class to small business owners on how to contract with the Government. This collaboration was successful, with 10 individuals attending.
- Phoebe Sumter Hospital, August 24th – Director Cheokas invited to attend an informational meeting being held by Phoebe administration. Purpose of meeting - to gain feedback from the community on the state of the hospital, direction, communication, future plans, etc.
- Columbus State University, September 15, 2009 – Appreciation event for University partners and supports. Director Cheokas used the opportunity to network with CSU faculty members. Initial discussion on ways to collaborate.

Program Measures Impact Statements

Third quarter client profile:
- Start-ups – 65%
- Existing businesses – 35%
- Total employment (existing companies) – 90
- Consulting Hours: 126
- Capital investment of $ 0
- In-kind investment of $ 0
- Grant funding $ 0
- Total investment $ 0
**Points of Interest**

Director Cheokas continues to field questions concerning the stimulus package and how funding is being allocated to small businesses. One of the most important features of the recovery package is the increased amount of the loan the SBA is guaranteeing. This has been extremely beneficial for both the lenders and the small businesses.

The SBA waived all fees associated with the 504, 7(a), and micro-loan programs. With the aforementioned loans the SBA is currently guaranteeing up to 90% of the loan. This amount practically eliminates any of the risk the private lender would assume on the loan. Eligible loan amount for the micro-loan program has increased from $35,000 to $50,000. Again the SBA is guaranteeing 90%.

Hopefully this will open capital resources for small business owners/start-up companies.

**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 *Early Fall 2009* include:

- Starting Your Own Business – Free one hour class
- Owning Your Own Business: Step One
- How to Write a Winning Business Plan: Step Two