



Mississippi SBDC Network's USM Center to Close, Effective Jan. 1, 2025

HATTIESBURG, MS, UNITED STATES, December 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Mississippi Small Business Development Center Network](#) (MSBDCN) announces the closure of the Mississippi SBDC center at the [University of Southern Mississippi](#) (USM), effective January 1, 2025.

This decision follows extensive discussions with USM and a careful review of the long-term financial feasibility of continuing operations at this location.

"Our USM center has been instrumental in providing resources and support to thousands of small businesses," said Sharon Nichols, State Director of the MSBDCN. "We deeply appreciate Dean Bret Becton and the College of Business and Economic Development at the University of Southern Mississippi for their decade-long partnership promoting entrepreneurship and economic growth in the region."

USM's Center Director Rita Mitchell, a respected leader in the Mississippi SBDC Network, will remain an integral part of the team. She will be reassigned to other key projects and initiatives in 2025, where her expertise will continue to be critical in advancing the Network's mission of empowering small business owners across Mississippi.

"We are thrilled that Rita will remain with the Mississippi SBDC Network in this new capacity," Nichols added. "Her dedication and wealth of knowledge will play a pivotal role in ensuring our continued success and innovation as we serve small businesses statewide."

Despite the closure Mississippi SBDC Network's USM center, the Mississippi SBDC Network reaffirms its commitment to serving entrepreneurs in all 82 counties. The Pine Belt region, one of the fastest-growing areas in Mississippi, remains a vital hub of entrepreneurial activity. While business owners in this region will continue to have access to the full suite of services offered by the Network—including business counseling, workshops, and resources to support their growth and success—there will not be an MSBDCN staff member physically located in the Pine Belt region.

Services will be delivered through virtual consultations, remote workshops, and other methods to ensure ongoing support for the region's entrepreneurs.

As part of its long-term commitment to the Pine Belt region, MSBDCN will explore opportunities to enhance its presence in the area, considering partnerships with local organizations to potentially establish a new hub to serve entrepreneurs.

For more information about Mississippi SBDC Network services, visit www.mississippisbdc.org.

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