



Louisiana Small Business Development Center

For Immediate Release

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Owners of Complete Classroom Learn ABCs of Financing from LSBDC

(Gonzales, LA) When Jeremy & Tori Lacour started looking for a business opportunity, they didn't have to look very far for a business idea. Most of the women in Tori's family were teachers, and after years of hearing them complain about not having a place to buy teacher supplies in Ascension Parish, she decided to change that. In May of 2008, the Lacours opened The Complete Classroom in Gonzales, Louisiana with assistance from the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at Southern University.

The LSBDC in Baton Rouge partners with Louisiana Economic Development, U.S. Small Business Administration, and Southern University to provide individual business consulting at no cost to the small business owner. The center also provides low-cost business training. These services are aimed at helping business owners and entrepreneurs start, grow, and expand their companies.



Tori & Jeremy Lacour, owners, The Complete Classroom

"It was very frustrating trying to get financing from the banks. I don't know if we could have made it through the process without help from our LSBDC Consultant, Leighton Bryant. From start to finish, Leighton gave us guidance about the start-up process and the pitfalls. He made sure we didn't miss a step. Leighton opened a lot of doors for us, and informed us about different programs we would have never known about. We couldn't have done this without him," praised Tori.

LSBDC consultant, Leighton Bryant also helped the Lacours develop a comprehensive business plan, including a 24-month cash flow statement, which was used to apply for two U.S. Small Business Administration Community Express loans totaling \$35,000. These loans were funded by Superior Financial Group and by Business Loan Express (BLX).

Immediately, Complete Classroom was a huge success. With nothing more than word-of-mouth advertising, sales at the only teacher supply store in Ascension parish met sales targets.

"We carry everything from A to Z in teacher supplies from award incentives, classroom decors to workbooks. But we want to expand our products to include school supplies and move into a larger facility. Eventually, I would also like to do e-commerce. We continue to keep in contact with our LSBDC consultant as we look to expand. I still have questions for Leighton," said Lacour.

According to an independent ASBDC economic impact study for Louisiana, LSBDC clients experience a 25 percent increase in sales and an 11 percent increase in employment levels as compared to the average Louisiana business.

To contact the LSBDC at Southern University, Baton Rouge, call 225-922-0998 or email lsbdc.subr@lsbdc.org.



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