



West Texas A&M University *Enterprise Center*

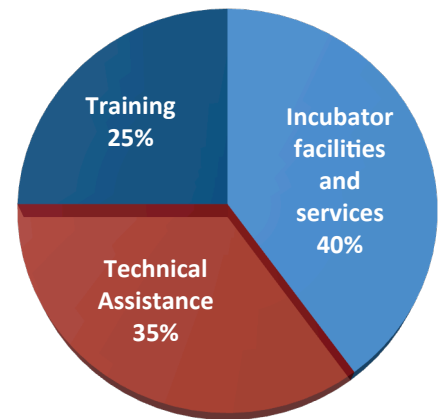
West Texas A&M University Enterprise Center

The West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) Enterprise Center applies the principles of business incubation as a catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurial development in order to foster economic growth for Amarillo and the Texas panhandle region. The Center seeks to be a leader in providing business resources and linkages among economic development organizations in the broader community.

Activities

The Enterprise Center's focus is facilitating technical assistance and training for entrepreneurs through a variety of programs and services. It especially targets growth-oriented, basic industry businesses that export goods and services outside the region. Its primary program is providing incubator facilities for entrepreneurs and start-ups – including office space, production space, co-working space, and a commercial kitchen. Services are provided from the pre-incubation to graduation phase. Since its founding, incubator clients have brought over \$5 million in capital

investment and 300 jobs to the region. The Enterprise Center also delivers its services in the wider community. For example, it uses consultants who travel to rural communities weekly to provide technical assistance and consulting for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs. The Idea Village program uses group coaching and training to teach technology transfer and commercialization skills to entrepreneurs in the pre-incubation



stage. Entrepreneurs can also apply for matching scholarship dollars to assist them with bookkeeping, legal assistance, marketing, and other needs. Other services include monthly “Lunch & Learn” entrepreneur networking events and the Amarillo EnterPrize Challenge business plan

University

West Texas A&M University

Center Director

David Terry

Center Location

College of Business

Center since 2010

Center Activities

- Technical assistance
- Entrepreneurship support
- Innovation and commercialization support

Clients

- Entrepreneurs
- Start-ups
- Existing businesses
- Faculty and students

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competition (which provides up to \$500,000 in capital funding grants for entrepreneurs seeking to expand or launch a business). The Center also focuses on building an entrepreneurial culture among youth, through programs such as a youth entrepreneurship fair, a student business plan competition, and a youth internship program.

Leveraging

The Enterprise Center collaborates with over 65 services providers and resources for entrepreneurs in the region and worldwide. Regional

partners that assist in program and service delivery include the

Network, Texas Panhandle Regional Development Corporation, and others. Membership and collaboration with business incubation professionals in the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) provide the Center and its clients with access to a wide network of resources and best practices.

“Wonderful to have experienced minds helping me avoid pitfalls.”
--Center Client

Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, Amarillo EDC, Amarillo College, WTAMU SBDC, West Texas Angel

Success

Culinary Co-op incubator facilities and support

A recent addition to the incubator space at WTAMU’s Enterprise Center is the Culinary Co-op. This commercial kitchen, which opened in June 2012, offers a shared-use kitchen available to rent 24 hours per day. This is the first shared-use commercial kitchen in the region. Culinary Co-op is designed to provide culinary entrepreneurs with kitchen space and the necessary tools to develop and successfully commercialize food products. Its range of services extend from pre-incubation to post-graduation, and

facilities include a shared-use distribution warehouse space and collaborative co-working area in addition to the health department approved, fully-equipped commercial kitchen. A developing partnership with the Dallas Market Center is expected to connect food entrepreneurs at the Culinary Co-op with broader distribution resources and channels. One client of the Culinary Co-op, Fanelli’s Finest, has received a patent for its lasagna sauce and now has products in more than 700 stores nationwide. This family-based business produces, bottles, and labels all of its products

at the Culinary Co-op.

By providing the specialized facilities required by entrepreneurs in the food sector, combined with specialized entrepreneurial training and support, WTAMU’s Enterprise Center is supporting entrepreneurial growth and catalyzing an emerging food cluster in the region.