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Small UP Businesses Get Huge Boost Thanks to Regional SBDC Office at Michigan Tech

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From left, College of Business intern Jaylen Body with Small Business Development Center Associate Regional Director Daniel Yoder and SBDC Business Consultant Jordan Craven onsite at Dina Mia Kitchens, one of the U.P. businesses that the center has assisted. Both Yoder and Craven are Tech alumni. (All images courtesy Michigan SBDC)

The Upper Peninsula Regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC) office hosted at Michigan Tech is making a difference across the U.P. and joining in SBDC Day celebrations across the country.

March 19, 2025 marked the ninth annual national [SBDC Day](https://americassbdc.org/sbdcday/) [<https://americassbdc.org/sbdcday/>], designed to raise awareness about how centers around the country contribute to job creation and measurable economic growth.

“Michigan Tech is honored to serve as the host for the [SBDC regional office](https://www.mtu.edu/research/innovation/small-business-devel-center/),” said Senior Associate Vice President for Research, Innovation [Jim Baker](https://www.mtu.edu/research/people-departments/staff/vpradmin/baker.html). “The SBDC team does exceptional and highly impactful work in providing essential support for small businesses across the entire region.”

Baker said the center offers direct advantages to both campus and community.

“Our host relationship facilitates internship opportunities for students and collaboration with faculty in our [College of Business](https://www.mtu.edu/business/), providing valuable experiences and connecting education with practice,” he said. Current SBDC student interns include business and [marketing](https://www.mtu.edu/business/undergraduate/marketing/) majors Jaylen Body and Kalle Keranen, both in the graduating class of '25; [finance](https://www.mtu.edu/business/undergraduate/finance/) major Andrew Weir '26; and Bri Loftus '27, who is triple majoring in statistics, [mathematics with a concentration in actuarial science](https://www.mtu.edu/math/undergraduate/mathematics/actuarial-science/), and finance, with minors in German and [financial technology](https://www.mtu.edu/business/what-is-fintech/).

Baker noted that the proximity of the U.P. SBDC to other economic development and entrepreneurial resources at Tech is also a plus.

“Active engagement with the University's [Office of Innovation and Commercialization](https://www.mtu.edu/research/innovation/) leverages our complementary expertise in moving discoveries from the lab to the market and building strong local businesses in the process,” he said.

The numbers showing Michigan SBDC's contributions to business development across the state are impressive, with the center's annual report indicating 8,763 clients served, \$276 million in capital formation, 493 new business starts, and 1,008 jobs created. But the real impact of SBDC on the U.P. is perhaps best relayed by recent success stories including [Dina Mia Kitchens](https://michigansbdc.org/growing-companies/dina-mia-kitchens/) in Iron River and [Loukus Technologies](https://michigansbdc.org/advanced-tech-companies/loukus-technologies/), of Calumet.



Yoder in Dina Mia's kitchen getting a tour by owner Jeff Ofsdahl as employees spread sauce and roll dough in the background.

In the case of Dina Mia, owner Jeff Ofsdahl said the 50-year-old business he and his wife Jolene bought in 2023 benefited from SBDC expertise to get it on a growth trajectory. They turned to [Michigan Tech MBA](https://www.mtu.edu/business/graduate/techmba/) grad and SBDC Associate Regional Director Daniel Yoder. “It was a joy to work with Jeff and Jolene. They were enthusiastic and eager to learn. We used a software tool called LivePlan and leveraged my experience as a commercial lender,” Yoder said in the story published on the Michigan SBDC website. “Buying a business is a team approach, and we tapped into the expertise of the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center, the Iron County Economic Chamber Alliance and their local banker.”

The Michigan SBDC supports small businesses and entrepreneurs at every stage of business. To find out about available services, visit the

state [SBDC website](https://michigansbdc.org/).