

# Karen Kimberl settles in at MSU-Meridian's Small Business Development Center

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Submitted photo

Karen Kimberl, the new counselor with the Small Business Development Center at MSU-Meridian.

The small business development center at MSU-Meridian has a new counselor in charge.

Karen Kimberl was hired in November 2018, but started the job earlier this month. She takes over for Dustin Odom, who left the position to complete his doctorate.

The Mississippi State University Small Business Development Center in Starkville was established in 1981 to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs. The SBDC aims to help existing business owners be more economically viable and assist entrepreneurs in starting businesses that are competitive in the marketplace, according to the MSU website.

### Want to start a business?

The MSU Small Business Development Center has some upcoming seminars:

- **Starting A Business - First Steps**, 1-2:30 p.m. Feb. 12 and 1-2:30 p.m. March 12. This seminar outlines the basic steps to starting a business. Topics include: regulations such as licenses and permits; legal forms of business ownership; basic marketing concepts to help analyze the revenue potential; lending terminology; outline for a business plan and other resources to assist in starting a business.
- **Developing Your Business Plan** - 1-2:30 p.m. Feb. 19 and 1-2:30 p.m. March 19. This seminar is designed to assist in preparing a business plan. The parts of a business plan are explained (industry research, description of company products and services, identifying target customer groups and a marketing plan). Financial components discussed include startup costs and preparation of a projected cash flow statement.
- **Cash Flow Projections For Your Business Plan** - 1-2:30 p.m. Feb. 26 and 1-2:30 p.m. March 26. This seminar provides entrepreneurial financial training by demonstrating the process of establishing and analyzing capital requirements and cash flow projections for a business plan, break-even analysis, and introduction of the contribution margin.

To register go to [www.mssbdc.org](http://www.mssbdc.org) and click on Workshops. For more information, email Karen Kimberl at [kkimberl@business.msstate.edu](mailto:kkimberl@business.msstate.edu).

Kimberl said she became aware of the position in Meridian after speaking at a conference. Charles “Chip” Templeton, the director of the SBDC in Starkville, approached her and encouraged her to apply. Kimberl's background and business knowledge made her a good fit for the job, Templeton said.

William Hill, head of MSU-Meridian's Business Division, said having someone with connections to the

community was one trait they were looking for.

“We feel blessed to have her, ” Hill said.

Kimberl, who has more than 25 years of business experience, says she can relate to people starting a business because she has been in their shoes.

“If I can educate them, it makes me happy,” she said.

Since coming to MSU-Meridian, Kimberl has been holding workshops and counseling sessions for new business owners. The workshops, which are free and open to the public, focus on topics such as developing a business plan and cash flow.

She also wants to develop relationships with her clients beyond the counseling sessions, encouraging them to call her if they need assistance.

Looking ahead, Kimberl hopes to see more people participate in the workshops, and see more small businesses started in Meridian. She'd also like the community to support small businesses.

Her main goal, Kimberl said, is to let entrepreneurs know they aren't alone when it comes to starting their own companies.

“I think I found my dream job because I enjoy helping people,” she said.