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Business Solutions Center hires Thurman as its first counselor

By the JG/T-C
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CHARLESTON The recently created Business Solutions Center partnership has hired Stan Thurman, a former area business owner, as its first counselor.

Thurman, a longtime area business owner and two-year volunteer SCORE counselor, will provide free and confidential business counseling and business classes to aspiring entrepreneurs, non-profits, students, farmers and inventors, as well as existing business owners in a designated eight-county region.

Thurman's main office is at the Crossroads Workforce Investment Board office located at 80 Broadway Ave. in Mattoon. He also will have satellite offices in Effingham, Paris and Charleston.

"I am very excited about this new project. For more than 21 years these communities were incredibly supportive of not only my former business, but of me personally," Thurman said. "I feel very privileged to have the opportunity to serve them in a

Thurman opened his business with 18 existing accounts in 1984 and by 1996 had grown it to more than 600 accounts with annual sales well in excess of \$1 million.

Prior to becoming a business owner, Thurman was an operations manager/program director at two radio stations for seven years.

The BSC partnership announced its formation in July and its mission is to provide early entrepreneurship education and business support services to entrepreneurs and existing businesses with the expressed goal of nurturing business growth in the region. The partnership is comprised of more than 25 organizations, governmental agencies, businesses and financial institutions

BSC Platinum Members Include:
Eastern Illinois University's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Crossroads Workforce Investment Board, Communityworks of Effingham County and Mattoon Community Foundations, The Lumpkin Family Foundation, the Charleston Charitable Land States Bank of Effingham.

"Although the BSC is being privately capitalized, it is still an affiliate member of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Entrepreneurship Network and will be working very closely with all of the state agencies as well as the local SCORE chapter in providing this much-needed business and entrepreneurial support to the region," said Jeanne Dau, director of the BSC.

Last week, Dau and Thurman attended the annual meeting of the Illinois Entrepreneurial Small Business Growth Alliance that is composed of the Illinois Entrepreneurship, Small Business Development, Procurement, International Trade and Technology

Thurman also spent three days at the Association of Small Business Development Center's annual conference in Chicago to attend seminars, classes and workshops. The BSC will serve Clark, Cumberland, Coles, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Moultrie and

Anyone interested in contacting Thurman to set up an appointment or to get more information on the services being offered may call him at 581-2913, or email stthurman@slu.edu.

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