



## SCOTT DAVIDSON **CAMPUSCOOKIES** HARRISONBURG, VA

[www.campuscookie.com](http://www.campuscookie.com)

Scott Davidson initially sought advice from the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center (SV SBDC) in January 2007 with an idea of opening a business delivering freshly baked cookies as a late night snack. His target market was the large population of college students surrounding the campus of James Madison University. He came to the SV SBDC seeking guidance on his business plan, financial projections, operations, marketing strategies and general start-up obstacles. At the time, Scott was a student in the College of Business at JMU, so he was well-prepared with both a strong academic background and entrepreneurial spirit, but found that enthusiasm and passion are not always enough. He asked for specific feedback about his plan and guidance to assure that his business model would work.

Throughout 2007, SBDC business advisors met frequently with Scott and guided him through market research efforts, brand identity issues, and operational processes. The SBDC introduced him to local food and supply vendors, attorneys, and other professional resources for his business. After his start in September 2007, the SBDC continued in the role of consultant, reviewing his financials, employee and payroll issues, and serving as a sounding board as the business grew.

Here are Scott's words about the services of the SBDC:

*"I don't feel like there is [any other] good avenue for potential business owners to set the foundation for their plans. The SBDC teaches us the basic principles of business, what documents to file, and gives us realistic feedback about the viability. When you're doing everything you can to make your model work and facing so many roadblocks, it's the value of peace of mind that SBDC gives, knowing you can get honest feedback.*

*They showed me the legal steps for business, suggesting solutions for finance and other business management areas, applying managerial practices to business operations, and networking us as we moved into other markets.*

*Sales growth has been substantial. I went from self-employed (1 person business) to 24 employees in 5 years. I am totally self-financed. I have now opened a 2nd location [Blacksburg], and am looking to open 2 more within 3 years. I honestly think there has to be other options than to cut the budget of the SBDC. Supporting businesses is vital for an economic comeback; there are so many areas of red-tape and additional fees/taxes/etc. that hamper business. Those should go first."*