

**Spotlight on SBDC Client: Hot Glass Houston...From Hobby to New Career**

Bob Paterson first learned to do stained glass in the 1980's. His enthusiasm and excitement for working with glass continued to grow, and it soon became his passion. In 2009, after spending years in corporate America, Bob decided it was time to pursue a new career. He wanted to share the magic of glass - - how you can design architectural wonders using different forms and techniques, create colorful and beautifully fused glass barrettes or hairclips, or use the Pate de Verre process on plates and bowls to give them uniquely brilliant or delicate qualities.

Bob decided to open a glass shop to offer lessons in kiln-formed glass creation as well as sell glass art supplies. Having never owned his own business, he took advantage of the programs offered at the University of Houston Small Business Development Center, first attending a variety of classes including *Starting a Business*, *Understanding Numbers*, *Building a Website* and *QuickBooks*. He was also connected with Lynn Billington, Senior Business Consultant, who worked with him to evaluate his idea, assist in a location analysis, and perform in-depth research on demographics and psychographics, as well as help him develop a business and marketing plan.

Bob's first question was "Where do I start?" He says, "I could not have started my business without taking the time to go to the SBDC for assistance. The business workshops were most beneficial. The consulting was thorough and kept me focused. The SBDC was like a one-stop shop – all the key resources were available in many areas."

In February 2010, Hot Glass Houston opened in Tomball. Bob's new shop offers supplies, equipment and art glass to hobbyists and glass professionals, and is the only distribution point in the area for the distinctive Bullseye Glass. It's also a teaching studio: Bob's kiln-forming workshop topics include fusing glass, reshaping glass, jewelry-making and recycled glass art. Although Bob teaches some of the classes, he also brings in guest artists from around the Houston area and around the county. Class size is limited to 6 to 8 students to allow for an optimal learning environment.

To see wonderful examples of Bob's glass art and to learn more about this fun and creative outlet, visit Bob's website at www.hotglasshouston.com.

Read about other [successful small business clients](#) and how the University of Houston Small Business Development Center helped them realize their dreams.

Top Tips for Working the Room

Networking success shouldn't be left to chance. To make the most of any opportunity, use these tips for before, during and after a networking event.*

- Think about who will be attending. Who do you want to meet? Who can you introduce to whom?

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Government Subcontracting
July 20th
9:00am - Noon



QuickBooks
July 28th and 30th
9:00am - 1:30pm



Improving Your Credit Score
July 28th
7:00pm - 8:30pm



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- Practice a self-introduction. Think about what you will say when asked, "What do you do?"
- Have some topics to talk about: read a newspaper, watch the news
- Arrive early
- Meet more people rather than fewer
- Focus on introductions and relationships, not selling
- Resist interrupting
- Repeat the name throughout conversation (judiciously)
- Don't be afraid to say, "Excuse me – I see someone I need to say hello to"
- Send thank-you notes

*From the classic [Top 100 Tips for Working the Room](#), by Jeffrey M. Horn.

Take advantage of a prime opportunity to practice your own networking skills as well as hear more tips for working any room when you attend our next Fusion Friday on July 30th beginning at 7:30 a.m. at our 2302 Fannin Street location. The free event includes breakfast, networking with other entrepreneurs, and a chance to meet and visit with SBDC staff. We'll also hold a mini-workshop led by Sid Evans, Houston's own networking guru, where you may be chosen to receive a critique of your elevator pitch.

There's always a line out the door waiting to get in to Fusion Friday, so [register now](#) to reserve your space!

And the Answer is...

A *Business Talk* reader wrote in with the question, "I would like to lease office space in an approved HUBZone area within the City of Houston limits. Can you identify those areas by zipcodes?"

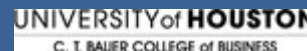
HUBZone stands for "Historically Underutilized Business Zone," and refers to an economically distressed area. If a business is located in such an area, it can be certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration as a HUBZone business, which makes the business eligible for certain federal contracting preferences. The idea is to promote job growth, capital investment and economic development in communities that need the most assistance.

To be eligible for certification a business's primary office must be located within a HUBZone area and at least 35% of its employees must live within a HUBZone. Although there is no list by zipcodes of HUBZone areas, the SBA provides a map that shows HUBZone counties at <http://map.sba.gov/hubzone/init.asp>. You can also check whether a particular county or a specific address is within a HUBZone by clicking on 'Address-Town-County Search' at the top of the page. If you enter Harris county, you will see that there are indeed many HUBZone communities in the Houston metropolitan area.

Before applying for HUBZone certification, a business must first be registered in CCR (Central Contractor Registration). For help with your CCR registration and/or your HUBZone certification, contact the University of Houston Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at sbdcptac@uh.edu. PTAC's assistance with CCR or HUBZone certification is free of charge.



The UH SBDC is a center of the University of Houston SBDC Network. The UH SBDC Network serves 32 counties in Southeast Texas. SBDC programs are nondiscriminatory and available to individuals with disabilities. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. The University of Houston is an EEO/AA institution. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact UH SBDC at **713-752-8488** for accommodations.



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