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## Business Innovation Group receives \$300K to help regional economic development

August 20, 2020



Through the CARES Act and the U.S. Department of Commerce, Georgia Southern University's Business Innovation Group (BIG) has received \$300,000 in grant funding to expand its services to the region in an effort to help communities and businesses respond to and recover from the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"This will really allow us to help businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the entire state ideally get access to the skills, knowledge and services that Georgia Southern has to offer," said Dominique Halaby, DPA, director of BIG.

Over the next two years, BIG will use these funds to expand their services through the Georgia Enterprise Network for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (GENIE).

"We're hoping that we can demonstrate to budding entrepreneurs and small business owners that Georgia Southern can help them develop and grow," Halaby said. "We are hopeful that in two years' time people are going to have a heightened aerial view of awareness for Georgia Southern and our Business Innovation Group services, but more importantly, that they are going to get the type of resources to be able to launch the business that they've always wanted to launch."

Halaby said offering these resources to the region is important for economic growth.

"Any time that we have an ability to do something, we have a responsibility to do it," Halaby said. "The needs of our community are great. Our ability to service those needs by connecting those with the resources on our campus and with the skills that we have fostered within BIG puts us in a very unique position. This way, we are

able to provide services to help as many entrepreneurs and to help as many people looking for jobs as we possibly can.”

BIG will also use part of the grant funding to work with Georgia Southern faculty to strengthen patent and licensing activity.

“We’re working with our intellectual property committee and through the University to let faculty know that if they’ve got a concept, that BIG can help them flesh that out. We can work with them to do an analysis to see the marketability for their concept and determine if it’s patentable or licensable,” Halaby said.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance, which is being administered under the authority of the bureau’s flexible Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, provides a wide range of financial assistance to eligible communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

For complete information, please visit our recently updated [EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance page](#).

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