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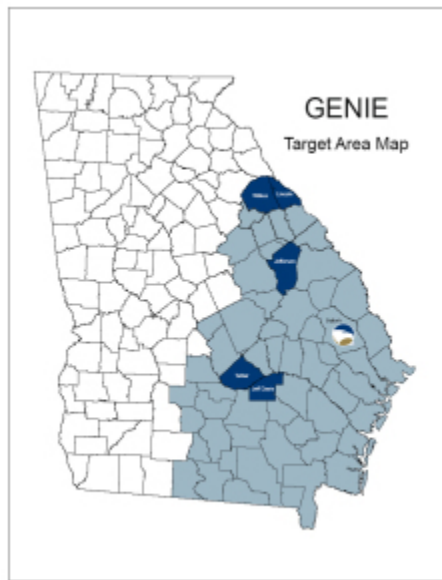
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Grant to Help Rural Business Owners

July 15, 2013

Georgia Southern University's Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development (BBRED) has been awarded a \$295,927 grant by the North American Development Bank (NADBank) to expand Georgia's Enterprise Network for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (GENIE) project. GENIE will extend services of the Georgia Southern City Campus and assist entrepreneurs and small business owners in the rural counties of Jeff Davis, Jefferson, Lincoln, Telfair and Wilkes, all of which are defined as the Designated Eligible Areas (DEAs) for Georgia.



GENIE map

NADBank's U.S. Community Adjustment and Investment Program (CAIP) was created in connection with the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to assist new or expanding businesses in communities with significant job losses due to changes in trade patterns. The five designated counties will receive the guidance and support they need to create new businesses, grow existing businesses and create a climate that leads to more jobs for area residents.

"We are building the City Campus to become a vital part of the state's entrepreneurial economy," said Dominique Halaby, D.P.A., BBRED director. "Through GENIE, we will be able to provide much needed planning assistance and guidance to some of the most economically challenged communities."

GENIE will assist area businesses through mentoring, connecting and training. In addition, at least three community capacity building projects will be coordinated with the area's regional commissions or development authorities. For many small business owners in these communities, accessing these services is only possible by taking several hours out of their business day to travel to a workshop or to receive counseling from support service organizations located in larger population centers. GENIE provides a new solution for participating in business programming.

Business owners will be able to access timely economic information and receive technical assistance from a skilled business advisor who will work to establish financial goals and performance benchmarks based on the clients' business needs and training interests. GENIE capitalizes on the University's central position and provides physical meeting space for clients to hold meetings and events.

Interested business owners can contact Halaby at (912) 478-2733 or dhalaby@georgiasouthern.edu.

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