

KUSBDC Welcomes Two New Graduate Assistants

Please Welcome Andrés Toral and Derrick Smith as KU SBDC's newest graduate assistants (A.k.a. Associate Business Consultants). Both Toral and Smith bring a wide range of experiences that will provide a tremendous contribution to the KU SBDC team.

Andrés Toral was born in Cuenca, Ecuador and graduated from Rafael Borja High School with a bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics. He went on to obtain a second high school degree from Van Buren High School in Van Buren, Arkansas, USA as an exchange student. In 2003 Toral earned what in the US would be the equivalent of a master's degree in economics from the University del Azuzy, Cuenca Ecuador. Toral has also completed intensive studies in English and business at Yale University.

Toral's work experience includes an assistantship in strategic commercial planning and monitoring with Marcimex, an administrative assistant and sales executive for Skyflower, a financial assistant for Marcimex and a tributary control analyst for the Internal Revenue Services, Ecuador.

Toral will assist in developing the Business Skills for Success program for Latino (Hispanic) business entrepreneurs in Coatesville and I adding Spanish content to the KU SBDC's website.

Derek Smith earned his bachelor's degree in political science from West Virginia University. He then began a master's degree in public administration at the Kutztown University. Smith took a brief sabbatical to work as a director of field operations in gubernatorial campaigns in both Illinois and Connecticut. He returned to Kutztown University to complete his thesis based on those experiences, earning his master's degree in public administration.

Smith then went on to work for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) - the largest union under the AFL-CIO - as a political organizing coordinator for the state of Maryland and DC. Smith transferred to Pennsylvania to work on the SEIU HERO program in the Lehigh Valley.

Smith will be helping the KU SBDC with our legislative work and will work with small businesses with human resource issues.

Welcome Andrés and Derrick!