

## SBDC Helps AREUFIT Keep Business Healthy

### January 2007 Success Story *KUSBDC Success Connection*

AREUFIT Health Services, Inc (AREUFIT) began providing wellness and healthcare services to the Philadelphia community and surrounding areas back in 1993. During the past 13 years, AREUFIT has delivered mobile services and health screenings to several thousand clients and recently has benefited from the help of the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Dr. Jeannine Stuart, AREUFIT's president and co-owner, has held a long-time interest in preventive health and wellness. She identified preventive healthcare in the 1990s as a "niche that no one was fulfilling." The AREUFIT staff of health educators, exercise physiologists, registered nurses, massage therapists, CPR and first aid instructors, and paratometric technicians now is filling this niche in unique and creative ways. Blood pressure and cholesterol screenings and flu shots are among AREUFIT's most requested services. The company also offers alternative therapies, including massages, reiki, and reflexology, which are gaining popularity.

Stuart notes that becoming "one of the premiere providers for one of the largest insurance companies in the area" has been a highlight of her business. She is also proud to contribute to the Philadelphia Eagles Youth Partnership, providing the staff and resources to give full eye exams to thousands of the community's students. Stuart and her staff also enjoy the diversity of their clients, who include manufacturers, accounting and legal firms, insurance companies, and service workers.

AREUFIT is particularly busy during the academic school year, open enrollment periods, and sports seasons. According to Stuart, the company delivers most of its services in Philadelphia and its immediate suburbs, but also travels as far away as Harrisburg and Reading in Pennsylvania, and Wilmington in Delaware. The company owns one van used to provide mobile health screenings and wellness services for its clients.

In addition to attending networking events at local chambers of commerce, AREUFIT has taken advantage of free consulting services offered through the SBDC. Business consultant Bud Batcher has shared his expertise in marketing and

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AREUFIT Van, above

business development to help Stuart address the effects of higher gasoline prices and insurance on the company's operations. Stuart and Batcher have also worked to improve the company's website, prepare e-mail promotions, survey customer satisfaction, and locate new target markets. Additionally, Stuart has taken advantage of the SBDC's online marketing and strategic planning courses, as well as the interactive business planning tools. Dr. Stuart sees Batcher as a great consultant "because Bud's only agenda is to have my business succeed." he doesn't have his own agenda. He wants my business to succeed."

However, Stuart acknowledges some business challenges. For instance, it can be difficult to educate potential and current clients about the long-term benefits of coordinating their employees' wellness. Many companies consider cutting wellness services when budgets tighten, even though wellness benefits can improve morale and reduce absenteeism, making the employees more productive.

AREUFIT has grown significantly and recently added four employees, bringing total staff to six full-time and ten part-time employees.

AREUFIT Health Services is located on 270 West Lancaster Avenue, Building J, in Malvern, Pennsylvania. More information about AREUFIT is available at the company's website, [www.areufithealthservices.com](http://www.areufithealthservices.com).

The Kutztown University Small Business Development Center provides one-on-one consulting, business planning tools, and free online business courses. Information about these free services is available at [www.kutztownsbdc.org](http://www.kutztownsbdc.org).