



Southern Dallas Entrepreneur Network

The Dallas Entrepreneur Center (DEC) is excited to announce the launch of the Southern Dallas Entrepreneur Network (SDEN). There has been an emergence of entrepreneurial activity in Dallas over the past three years. With more than 19,000 businesses a year started in the City of Dallas, there are a growing number of local citizens starting their own businesses. Three years ago, The DEC, launched a 501c3 non-profit with the goal of helping entrepreneurs start, build, and successfully grow their businesses. Shortly after our launch in 2013, we saw distinct need to develop *geographically focused locations* to serve the needs of entrepreneurs across this vast 9200 square mile region. In that short time frame, The DEC has expanded to five different locations across Texas (2 in downtown Dallas, The Addison TreeHouse in Addison, Stoke Coworking in Denton and San Antonio Entrepreneur Center in San Antonio) and has served more than 50,000 people that have come through its doors. Included in this expansion strategy was the desire to develop and launch entrepreneur centers in underserved and minority communities.

In this new SDEN initiative, The DEC is partnering with The Dallas Regional Chamber and The Red Bird Mall redevelopment team to build a central hub for entrepreneurial support for Southern Dallas. With a central hub located at Red Bird Mall and two other satellite locations at UNT Dallas and Paul Quinn College, we can begin to provide necessary training, tools and resources to equip and empower entrepreneurs across the entire Southern Dallas County region. This initiative also directly aligns with the work already underway with Mayor Mike Rawlings Grow South initiative. Our belief is that we can bring together the best solutions to support entrepreneurs in Southern Dallas and provide a source of economic development, workforce development and community development that will continue to help transfer the communities with so much potential in Southern Dallas.

The DEC supports entrepreneurs through our “entrepreneur center” model by providing a physical location that serves entrepreneurs through education, mentorship, training, programs/events, shared co-working space, promotion, and access to capital. The DEC is being recognized across the country as having created a new and effective model that successfully supports entrepreneurs and helps ensure cities have more businesses succeeding in local communities. The DEC recently released a report showcasing the success of their model and member companies (member companies are companies that office out of the DEC co-working space) has an annual economic impact on DFW of more than \$130,000,000 per year. Through the end of 2015, DEC companies had:

- *Raised more than \$115,000,000*
- *Generated nearly \$100,000,000 in revenue*
- *Created 1000 jobs with 500 more slated for 2016*
- *Are paying FTE's an average salary of \$60,000 per year and PTE's \$40,000 per year.*

This proven model is quickly being adopted across the country and we believe that entrepreneur-led entrepreneur centers, like The DEC, are to early stage entrepreneurs what the SBA is trying to be for small businesses.

For more information on the Southern Dallas Entrepreneur Network and expansion, please contact Michelle Williams, Executive Director, at michelle@thedec.co