

OCONEE AND OGLETHORPE PARTNER FOR SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING

Small Business Development Center offers Maximum Marketing Series

Oconee County, GA – Oconee County has completed a partnership with Oglethorpe County to offer a Maximum Marketing series to small businesses within the community.

The Maximum Marketing series is a five-part course provided by the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Developed by the SBDC, this course offers insight into marketing and advertising strategies to allow small businesses to become more competitive in the marketplace. The sessions were held at the Oconee County Civic Center.



Lynn Meyer presents her marketing plan for Karma Salon.

Seats within the class were made available to small businesses from each of the communities, with only one business from any given business sector. Participants included insurance agents, web design firms, bed & breakfast operators, and hair salons among others.

In 2008, both Oconee and Oglethorpe counties completed the Entrepreneur Friendly initiative established by the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Through these efforts, businesses indicated a desire for additional training within the community. The Oconee County Economic Development Department and the Oglethorpe County Chamber of Commerce recognized this need and worked to obtain a \$4,250 state grant to offset the course delivery fee.

Reaction from SBDC instructor Ron Simmons was positive and reinforced the goals of the course. “The Oconee-Oglethorpe Maximum Marketing course was a model of inter-community cooperation. I really enjoyed watching and participating in the chemistry that evolved among the participants as the weeks went by. New business relationships were formed before my eyes.”

Course participants echoed the statements by Simmons. Jonathan Jones of Jones Web Designs commented that, “I learned more than I ever thought I could! Thank you not only for providing the information – but for also teaching us how to apply it to our business.” Melanee McGee, owner of Oglethorpe Children’s Academy stated, “The class was not only productive and beneficial from a business standpoint, but personally was a lot of fun too!”



Ruth Barrow (center) of Main Street Yarns receives her course certificate from Ron Simmons, Jim Luken, Chuck Horton & Melvin Davis.

The course was open to all small business in the communities and offered at a reduced rate due to grant funding through Georgia’s Entrepreneur Friendly Implementation Fund (EFIF) and the OneGeorgia Authority.