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Valley CDC gives businesses a boost

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EASTHAMPTON - An occupational therapist, artists and a man who repairs pipe organs are just some of the entrepreneurs who have sought the services of the new Valley Community Development Corp. office in the Eastworks building.

Since the office was established in October, Gene R. Talsky, Valley CDC's director of small-business development, said he has helped a steady stream of people wanting to start a business or make their own small business more profitable.

"You name it and they've been here," said Talsky, describing the types of businesses he has helped. "I never know what people are going to bring up next."

The Valley CDC office in Easthampton offers, among other things, technical assistance for small businesses (with five or fewer employees) in creating business or marketing plans, advice on how to make a business more profitable, pathways to secure business loans and help finding affordable office space.

Talsky said he meets with about five people every week looking for help with their new or small business and artists looking to sell their work.

"The common thread I hear from those already in business is, 'How can I make money at it?'" Talsky said.

The Valley CDC in Easthampton has also hired a new part-time small business program coordinator, Colleen Loveless, who owns her own imaging business for hardware and services.

"Colleen has great ideas, being an entrepreneur herself," Talsky said. "She brings a fresh perspective."

The Valley CDC in Easthampton is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For business assistance, contact Talsky at 529-0420.

Valley CDC, founded in 1988, is a regional nonprofit organization that works with low- to moderate-income people, minorities and small businesses in Northampton, Easthampton, Hadley and Amherst by providing technical business support and assistance in gaining affordable housing.

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