

# AMHERST BULLETIN

## School Briefs

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### Valley CDC looks to Amherst, Hadley

NORTHAMPTON - A local nonprofit that offers free technical assistance to small businesses in Easthampton and Northampton will be expanding its reach, thanks to a state grant.

The Valley Community Development Corp. has received a \$75,000 economic stimulus grant from the Massachusetts Office of Business and Technology.

The funding will allow the Valley CDC to expand the size and reach of its small business development program.

The corporation will now be able to provide free business assistance to clients in Amherst and Hadley.

"Those two communities have never funded any small business assistance programs," said Gene R. Talsky, the Valley CDC's director of small business development. "I think there's an opportunity to provide some services out there."

The cities of Northampton and Easthampton, under a state Ready Resource grant, pay the CDC to provide free small-business counseling.

Talsky said he is in touch with the Amherst Chamber of Commerce to discuss ways in which the CDC can effectively aid area businesses.

The funding boost will also allow CDC staff to provide technical assistance to companies with 20 or fewer employees. Under the Ready Resource grant, they were restricted to companies with a maximum of five employees.

Talsky said this will allow the CDC to help past clients whose ventures have grown beyond the reach of the assistance program, as well as new companies "all over the landscape."

"We feel that there's a large, untapped market here in Easthampton alone," he said. "There's many companies that are just off the radar."

Interested parties from all four communities may contact Talsky at 529-0420.

- MATT PILON