

Katrina Nowosielski

Owner - Storm Guard of La LLC

Lafayette La - SBDC

When I was 16 I attended my brothers Marine Corps graduation. As we walked onto the base I could hear the thunder of thousands of boots hitting The ground in unison. They were wrapping up a motivational run just before the graduation began. I remember feeling the power when Marines walked by thinking to myself I want to be a part of this. A few years later I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. I served four years as a military police officer. I served a 10 month tour in operation Iraqi freedom. In 2006 after my husband and I finished our service we decided to move to Florida where he began working for a Hurricane Shutter company. He spent one year working in the hurricane shutter industry. After we began our family we decided to move to Louisiana near family. We decided to use the same business model here in Louisiana that James worked for in South Florida. The state had just suffered through both Hurricane Katrina and Rita and there were almost no companies offering these hurricane protection products. We decided to give small business ownership a try. Before opening I contacted the SBDC to get guidance on how to properly apply for a name and tax ID numbers. Through the first several years of being open I used the SBDC often. We were provided help with things such as QuickBooks training, building a website, and counseling services to address pricing our products properly and strategically setting up our manufacturing area in the most efficient manner. This is something that at the time we could not have afforded on our own. The Small Business Administration also helped us to secure a line of credit in our first year of business. The combination of all this help and two hard working people has contributed to our successful business. I can honestly say that if we would not have had so much support from the SBDC we may not be where we are today. I am grateful for this program and the support that it has offered my family and I am honored to testify on behalf of there success.