



## SUCCESS STORY #205: **SECURING A BUSINESS'S SUCCESS**

### **Small Business Development Center hosted by El Camino College**

Denson Pace Enterprises, dba Statewide  
Protective Services/Statewide Maintenance  
Services • Inglewood, CA

#### **Denson Pace Enterprises dba Statewide Protective Services/Statewide Maintenance Services**

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For more information or to sign up  
for a free consulting session,  
go to [www.southbaysbdc.org](http://www.southbaysbdc.org) or  
call (310) 973-3177.



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#### **BEFORE:**

Janice and Charles Kirk had run Statewide Protective Services, which supplies security to residential and commercial construction sites, as a sole proprietorship since 2002. In July 2008, a company the Kirks had subcontracted with became insolvent, and Janice turned to the El Camino College SBDC for help determining their rights.

#### **BEST ADVICE:**

SBDC Business Advisor Daniel Hancuff helped Janice understand her legal options. During this process, she learned that because their debtor was a corporation, its owners were not personally liable for the debts. Realizing their sole proprietorship didn't adequately protect their assets, the Kirks decided to form a corporation, Denson Pace Enterprises; Statewide Protective Services and another company the Kirks own, Statewide Maintenance Services, are now both DBAs of Denson Pace. Hancuff helped Janice through the process and also helped her obtain all required government registrations and licenses.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED:**

- **Get your legal ducks in a row.** When dealing with the debtor, Janice recalls, "I didn't understand the legalities. At a time when we couldn't afford to pay an attorney, I got good, free legal advice." The SBDC was also invaluable during incorporation: "[Hancuff] took me step by step and walked me through it."
- **Do it yourself.** "Taking a QuickBooks class at the SBDC helped tremendously in day-to-day operations," says Janice. "It enabled me to do a lot of work I was paying someone else to do, which was a savings to us."
- **Understand government contracting.** At the SBDC's California Construction Contracting Program, Janice not only learned that she needed a bond to bid, but also met someone who helped her get the bond. "[The program] gave me a lot of insight in terms of business connections and how to market my business to Caltrans and to prime contractors," Janice says. "Thanks to the SBDC, I'm more familiar with what's needed for government contracts."

#### **AFTER:**

The Kirks have owned Statewide Maintenance Services, a janitorial business, since 1970, but had dialed it back as their security company grew. To attract new clients in a tough economy, they have expanded the janitorial business again. "The help the SBDC gave us and the classes I've taken has helped keep our business afloat," says Janice. "We've been able to hang on through the economic downturn."

The Kirks are working to get Denson Pace Enterprises certified as minority/woman-owned business enterprise, and have registered with Caltrans and with BidSync, a government procurement site, enabling them to pursue government contracts. "We have already bid on one contract," says Janice, "and we plan to do more."

She also plans to keep working with the SBDC: "I would advise anybody in business who's going to be bidding with the government to connect with the SBDC program."