

February 2016

Inside the Network



A JOINT VENTURE — AREA 6 AND 16

The joint venture between Area 6 & 16 started back in November of 2015. Nancy Grimm, Account Representative for Area 16 was out doing cold calls and stopped in to the Natural Approach Farm Store located in Minerva, Ohio. Nancy talked with owner Alicia Rocco about doing a BRN Interview, in which she agreed. Alicia is a Natural Health Practitioner (certified by the American Association of Integrative Medicine) and is the driving force behind Natural Approach Health. Natural Approach to Health is Alicia's multi-service company consisting of: Journey to Botanical tree essences, Natural Health and Iridology consultations, public speaking and wholesale of products to retail and practitioners. The meeting was arranged for November 23rd at 2:00pm. BRN Area 16 discovered that the business was located in Stark County but very close to Carroll County as well, which enabled both areas to multiservice this employer.



On November 23rd, Nancy and Mike Noe, Area 6 Account Representative, met with Alicia to conduct the BRN Interview. The interview went well with Alicia explaining several challenges facing her company. They ranged from website/marketing needs, retail store sale, minority owned business, drainage problems on the farm, business plan, loans, government contracting, workforce, and sponsorship of her radio show. Nancy and Mike talked after the meeting and decided to organize their notes and compare later before sending out their C. & O. The team came up with 10 challenges facing Alicia's business.

Mike emailed the C. & O. to both Areas' Partners on November 25th to be returned no later than Friday, December 4th. The response from both Areas' Partners was tremendous in finding solutions for all of Alicia's challenges.

On December 16th, Kelly and Mike scheduled an appointment with Alicia to discuss her Proposal (please see the attached Proposal). Mike went over each opportunity with Alicia, answering any questions she had. The Proposal included: help from Randy Monhemius, USDA Rural Development Business Program Specialist for drainage issues and grants; Jeff Hasapis, Senior V.P. of Finance for the Stark Development Board for loans; Carroll County Chamber Executive Director, Amy Rutledge, for loans; and Kent State University-Stark Julie Bland on marketing/website. The meeting went well with Alicia saying, in her own words, 'how she was overwhelmed with all the support that the BRN had given her.'

Mike has followed up several times with Alicia to discuss the proposal and so far:

- Alicia has talked with Jeff Hasapis, SDB, who was able to give her some other financing contacts.
- Alicia talked with Amy Rutledge, Carroll County Chamber, and is working on a \$25,000 revolving loan through the Chamber.
- Julie Bland from KSU has arranged a meeting with Alicia and a KSU business professor who takes on a project each semester using his class to work with a company's marketing and web design at no charge.
- Alicia has contacted AEP for help on Energy Efficient Programs.
- Alicia and Richard Delisio (PTAC) have an appointment scheduled to discuss government contracting assistance.
- Alicia is in process of contacting Kimberly Irvin-Lee from the Minority Business Assistance Center for financial assistance.
- Alicia is contacting Consumers Nation Bank for their agricultural type loan program.
- Alicia is interested in OhioMeans Jobs offering services for youth employment.
- A business plan by the SBDC is a high priority but last on this list of immediate contacts.

This was a collaborative approach that not only brought together two partnerships but helped bring in multiple solutions to benefit this employer.



**Our January BRN Roundtable
featured speaker:**



**John Hoopingarner
Executive Director**

WHAT IS THE MWCD?

The Muskingum River Watershed is part of Ohio's largest drainage system.

Spanning five counties and portions of 22 other, this watershed covers more than 8,000 square miles and includes the area that drains into the Muskingum River and its tributaries. It includes a system of 16 dams and reservoirs that provide flood reduction and water conservation benefits for the property owners and residents of the region. It covers approximately 20 percent of the State of Ohio.

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio organized in 1933 to develop and implement a plan to reduce the effects of flooding and conserve water for beneficial public uses under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 6101 (commonly called the Conservancy Act).

The MWCD mission statement reads as follows: *Responsible stewards dedicated to providing the benefits of flood reduction, conservation and recreation in the Muskingum River Watershed.*

The MWCD is the largest conservancy district in the state and led the effort to construct 14 dams and reservoirs. Two others were built later and the system of dams and reservoirs has been credited by the federal government with saving an estimated \$10.7 billion worth of potential damage from flooding since its original construction in the 1930s.

The MWCD is a partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the operation of the system of dams and reservoirs in the watershed, as the USACE operates the dams for flood reduction and the MWCD manages most of the reservoir areas behind the dams.

The MWCD has jurisdiction for its operations in all or portions of an 18-county area. The 18 counties wholly or partially contained in the MWCD jurisdiction are Ashland, Belmont, Carroll, Coshocton, Guernsey, Holmes, Harrison, Knox, Licking, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Richland, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas, Wayne and Washington.

