



UNIVERSITY OF  
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BUSINESS

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### Veterans entrepreneur grant

#### **U.S. Small Business Administration renews, extends UTA Veterans Business Outreach Center entrepreneur grant**

The U.S. Small Business Administration has renewed and extended a Veterans Business Outreach Center grant for \$1.375 million over the next five years.

This brings the total support to UTA to \$1.875 million.

The grant supports the education, training and consulting services provided to veterans, National Guard, active duty and reserve component members and their spouses who are starting or growing a business in North Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas.

UTA's VBOC is housed in the College of Business and was established in 2016 through a two-year, \$500,000 SBA grant. The program is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the SBA. Approximately 5,000 student veterans or military-connected family members are currently pursuing UTA degrees. *Military Times* ranked UTA the No. 1 four-year institution in Texas for veterans and their families to earn a degree. It also ranked UTA No. 14 in the nation.

Edmund Prater, professor in the College of Business' Department of Information Systems and Operations Management, serves as co-principal investigator of the research grant and executive director of the Veterans Business Outreach Center.

Prater said the success the center has experienced since its inception is due to the VBOC staff: Patrick Alcorn, Myron Pullum and Michele Lawson.

"They work hard to increase veteran awareness of entrepreneurial development services and to increase veteran access to those services," Prater said. As veterans and entrepreneurs themselves this helps to sell the legitimacy of the material to the vets."

VBOCs are directed by the Small Business Act to participate in the Defense Department's Transition Assistance Program. Since 2013, the Boots to Business program has trained more than 40,000 transitioning service members, reservists, National Guard members and military spouses. The VBOCs also counsel and mentor approximately 60,000 veteran clients each year.

The grant will support the continuation of:

- Collaborative, hands-on, interactive learning opportunities
- Training at area military bases through Operation Boots to Business: From Service to Startup
- A UTA Entrepreneur Manufacturing Boot Camp for Veterans
- Ongoing one-on-one business counseling and training programs
- Building a community of collaborative resource partners locally and across SBA Region VI, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas



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- Building a community of collaborative resource partners locally and across SBA Region VI, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas
- An annual Veterans Business Symposium and Resources Fair (#vbocvbs) hosted in November during National Veterans Small Business Week
- Outreach workshops to include Third Thursday Think Tank, Startup Saturday internet podcast, learning about the SBA loan programs and more
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UTA VBOC is housed in the College of Business and was established in 2016 through a two-year, \$500,000 SBA grant.

Under the leadership of Patrick Alcorn, co-principal investigator of the research grant and director of the Veterans Business Outreach Center, UTA VBOC has assisted 1,397 military connected clients through 34 Boots to Business and Reboot courses on nine military installations; 12 Third Thursday Think Tank mastermind sessions and Walk-through Wednesday radio and internet podcasts; 34 outreach events, including Hiring Our Heroes job fairs, Franchise Expo, Small Business Expo and Boots to Business courses.

Alcorn said veterans have the background, skills and passion to own and operate their own business. “Many of the veterans who come to us already have an idea. However, they are not familiar with the entrepreneurial resources and the steps for getting started,” Alcorn said. “We are the connector. We serve as a one-stop shop for veterans who are transitioning to business beyond the battlefield. The renewal and extension of the SBA grant validates how effective we are at assisting veterans through the startup process.”

Call 817-272-6789 for more information about UTA’s Veterans Business Outreach Center.

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### **About the College of Business**

Each year the UTA College of Business provides more than 6,000 future business leaders with an excellent, high quality and affordable education at the undergraduate, master's and doctoral levels. The College of Business is home to innovative thinkers who are setting the course for the future of business—a place where blazing new trails is the norm. Providing an extensive selection of degree programs and specializations, from entrepreneurship to leadership and from business analytics to professional sales, the college is a part of the fifth most diverse campus in the United States. For more than 50 years, the evolution of academic programs and research illuminating the future of the business landscape has produced more than 42,000 graduates who flourish as executives, entrepreneurs and vanguards in their fields. The College of Business is fully accredited by AACSB International, the world's premier professional accreditation association for business and accounting programs. Visit [www.uta.edu/business](http://www.uta.edu/business) to learn more.