

HAWAII SBDC SUCCESS STORY - KAUA'I CENTER

"Green" is in Pete McHugh's blood. As the son of retired Growing Greens nursery owner Liz Ronaldson, Pete was raised in the industry. Pete had acquired a 1,500 sq. ft. shade house and has about \$5,000-6,000 in the '**Anthuriums and More**' business already. The business to date had been run informally, but he was ready to make the business official and pursue funding through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. He was referred to the Hawaii SBDC-Kaua'i Center (John Latkiewicz) by Laurel Brier, DVR counselor.

We worked through the paperwork involved in starting up a business. John and Pete worked back and forth with business plan; with Pete responding to the elements in the business plan format and John editing and providing feedback. As with most business plans, the process of developing cash flow projections proved to be enlightening to Pete and will assist Pete in managing the business. In terms of Pete's overall experience with the SBDC, Pete stated that *"Without John, I wouldn't be here, I learned so much. The learning continues now and I'm having a ball with it"*. Pete continues with a full-time job to complement Anthuriums and More. He's ploughing his profits back into the company as he continues to grow the business. It's certainly paying off, as he just landed a major contract with one of the resort hotels and is working to develop a contract with another.

An interesting punctuation in the process was the impending arrival of tropical storms hurricanes Iselle and Julio. Writing the plan had to take a back seat to preparing for the possible impacts of those storms.

The project is demonstration of the interplay of agencies involved in business development. As Laurel stated, *"I regularly refer my clients who are interested in self-employment to the SBDC. Their staff is able to work with people one on one to discuss their ideas and the many aspects of starting a business and making it viable. I have had many clients through the years who have developed successful businesses with the help of SBDC. It's a great resource that our office is happy to partner with."*

