



Retired Air Force info specialist launches business with SBDC help

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EDWARDSVILLE - After 22 years in the U.S. Air Force, O'Fallon resident **Dwight Dettmann** was ready for a change. With the help of the Illinois Metro East Small Development Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, he made the transformation from a trained expert in information security to small business owner by launching his own handyman business.

Bright Ideas & More, LLC, incorporated in November 2015, provides home improvement services, including installation of ceiling fans and light fixtures, minor electrical work, fence and deck repairs. According to his wife Sara, Dettman's transition into tackling other people's home repairs was a natural one.

"Dwight is very meticulous and honest," she said. "His Air Force background ensures clients that he is ethical, and he's talented to boot. Before he decided to seek this out as a new profession, we had found a flaw in the stairs leading off our deck. Dwight completely rebuilt them."

As part of his preparation, Dettmann completed a 15-month electrician's training program and waited patiently for months to join forces with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. It was during that period that he decided to open his business.

Dettmann sought the expertise of Jo Ann DiMaggio May, small business specialist with the Metro East SBDC, after attending last summer's "Boots to Business" workshop for retiring and transitioning military personnel at Scott Air Force Base. May worked with him to fine-tune his business plan, obtain relevant market demographics, create marketing strategies, and build networking connections to promote his handyman business.

"I was grateful to receive Jo Ann's expertise," said Dettmann. "She has continued to touch base and offer relevant, usable information to enhance my business plan and grow my company. I look forward to reconnecting with her from time to time to benefit from additional one-on-one business assistance. She has been phenomenal."

May said Dettmann has been easy to work with, because of his military discipline, drive and attention to detail. "Dwight is truly passionate and committed to his craft," May said. "He is highly receptive to SBDC assistance, and I look forward to our continued working relationship."

Bright Ideas & More can be contacted at [618-795-2933](tel:618-795-2933).