

SIUE alumnus launches marketing, branding firm with support from SBDC

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE - Never Industries, Inc., a Metro East-based marketing strategy and personal branding agency, got its name from **Founder and CEO Alexander Burkart's** core values, which include never giving up.

The name fits Burkart's venture, and it also describes the dedication of **Illinois Metro East Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Business Specialist Jo Ann DiMaggio May**. DiMaggio May has worked steadily with Burkart to hone his company's services and strategy since Never Industries began nearly two years ago.

“I started working with the Metro East SBDC as soon as I earned my master’s in speech communication from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville,” said Burkart. “When I created Never Industries, initially my focus was solely on personal branding, such as assisting clients in identifying, quantifying and marketing themselves in their professional job search. But, Never Industries quickly branched out into brand strategy and marketing consulting for commercial clients, providing insight-driven strategies to help clients communicate more effectively and drive results for their business.”

DiMaggio May worked one-on-one with Burkart to offer expertise in contract negotiation. “I learned how to negotiate my time when securing clients, rather than merely negotiating pay,” said Burkart. “This enabled me to serve more clients and to increase my revenues, too.”

The SBDC, at no cost to Burkart, provided expertise on pay structure for niche contracts. It also proved helpful in directing Burkart to starting points – both primary and secondary sources – for client-specific research. “Figuring out audience segmentations was another valuable service that Jo Ann and the SBDC provided,” he said.

DiMaggio May said Burkart took the SBDC’s information and expertise to heart and is becoming a savvy business owner. “Alex is receptive to our advice and is willing to work hard at implementing strategy. He is confident in his skills and knows how to network. It is a true inspiration to see his success.”

For more information on Never Industries, Inc., visit www.neverindustries.com.

The [Metro East SBDC](#) assists new and existing businesses like Never Industries, Inc. that are headquartered in the nine-county Metro East region of Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe and Randolph. It is a service to the community supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

By aiding entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the Metro East by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining jobs and encouraging capital investment. It enhances the region’s economic interests by providing one-stop assistance to individuals by means of counseling, training, research and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses. When appropriate, the SBDC strives to affiliate its ties to the region to support the goals and objectives of both the SIUE School of Business and the University at large. To learn how the SBDC can help your small business, contact the Metro East SBDC at (618) 650-2929 or sbdcwdw@gmail.com.

