

H.C. Anderson Company

Five years ago Curtis Anderson worked for a large roofing company in the Rockford area, but dreamed of owning his own business. Before he and his wife decided to start their business, they took the self-employment training course taught by Bob Lowdon, a counselor with the Rock Valley Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The Rock Valley Community College SBDC is supported by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in partnership with the U. S. Small Business Administration.

During the ten-week class, Mr. Anderson and his wife diligently prepared and refined the business plan that would eventually launch the H.C. Anderson Company, a full service roofing company in Rockton Illinois.

Mr. Lowdon said “Curtis and his wife were very dedicated students. They attended every class. Curtis made good money as a supervisor at the other company, but really wanted to be on his own. He is a really driven guy.”

In starting his company, Mr. Anderson, who is African American, had to compete with two other, large and long-established local firms for business. In the beginning according to Mr. Lowdon, “he often would not get the job even if he was the low bidder.” But as time went on he gradually expanded his business and got larger contracts. By the second year Mr. Lowdon said, Mr. Anderson “had won a bid for roofing six Rockford public schools, which helped him build his business. Today he is putting roofs on new Wal-Mart stores in the Springfield area. He has just been very successful.”

The SBDC helped Mr. Anderson incorporate his business, assisted with cash flow projections, and helped with loan packaging. To start the company Mr. Anderson needed financing to pay for necessary equipment. The Rock Valley SBDC helped put a loan package together for US Bank for \$50,000 to purchase equipment, and a \$50,000 line of credit. In addition the Rock Valley SBDC helped the company secure a \$30,000 low interest loan from the City of Rockford’s Community Service Block Grant program which assists small business owners who create jobs. According to Mr. Lowdon, Mr. Anderson “does not like to be in debt. Curtis paid off all of his loans early, preferring to use cash” to finance his business expansion. Today the business employs 18 people.

The SBDC continues to keep in touch with Mr. Anderson and offer assistance on a continuing basis. Mr. Anderson’s wife, Paula manages the office and the company’s finances. She says “it is Curtis’s determination and support from the SBDC that has made H.C. Anderson what it is today.”

Rock Valley Community College Small Business Development Center is a member of the Illinois Small Business Development Center Network, working in partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the U. S. Small Business Administration.