

JEDI — Helping Build Prosperity



Scott Sordahl

**Mt. Shasta
Specialty Marine
Dunsmuir, CA.**

**“I felt confident this was
something
I could do.”**



JEDI & Cascade SBDC...
Partnership supporting Small Business

Jedi Program Helped Faller Change Careers

Scott Sordahl was a self-employed timber faller for over ten years until back injuries, and subsequent surgeries, led him to seek a new way to support himself and his young family. The idea of his new business was sparked when a friend told him he could not find a place between Redding and Medford to get his boat repaired. “I’d worked on boats for years and had always worked on my own and other peoples boats,” said Sordahl. “I felt confident this was something I could do.” That gave rise to Mt. Shasta Specialty Marine, a boat repair shop now located in Dunsmuir.

“Although I was confident that I could do business, I needed to do more research to feel sure that it was a good idea,” said Sordahl, now age 36. “I found out about the *It’s Your Business* class that JEDI offers at the College of the Siskiyous and signed up. The class really made me figure out the demographics of the local market for my business. I did some research and learned that there were 3,393 registered boat ownerships in Siskiyou County and thought if I could get even 5% of that market, I could build a viable business.”

Sordahl had limited capital because much of his personal finances had gone to living and medical expenses while he was injured. He pulled together all the resources he had, along with some assistance from family and friends. After finding a small garage/shop in Mt Shasta, he opened for business in June 1998. “In the break-even analysis I did in the *It’s Your Business* class, I had determined that I needed to bill out 20 hours a week,” said Sordahl. “I felt really good about that number starting out, but it was harder to achieve than I thought.”

“Scott has done one of the best jobs of bootstrapping I have seen,” said Chris Giallongo, instructor of the *It’s your Business* class. “He just put in a lot of time and legwork on the research which gave him the confidence to take the leap of faith at the right time to get the business going.”

Specialty Marine now draws customers from throughout Siskiyou and Shasta counties, as well as some out of area customers who find Sordahl when they have problems with their boats on local waters. “Now that I have been through five years of business, I’m facing some new and exciting challenges ahead,” said Sordahl. I am working on expanding into a boat dealership so that I can sell boats and motors as well as repair them. “His plans for expansion, along with a need to change location after the shop he was renting sold, led him to find a larger building in Dunsmuir with great highway visibility and plenty of space to park the boats lined up for repair.

With the expansion, Sordahl anticipates hiring a couple more employees including an office manager and a mechanic. He is working on obtaining the financing to take his business to the next level.

- Mt Shasta Herald, August 18, 2002