

Generation Lawns is a landscaping business focusing on lawn-mowing services. The business concept was developed by owner, Matthew Maxwell in the fall of 2008, and this dream turned into a reality in the Spring of 2009. Matthew, owner of Generation Lawns, always wanted to run his own business while at the same time helping low-income families with teenagers looking for work. His business model consists of hiring youth that are referred to him through various churches in the Lafayette area; these youth are then put to work mowing lawns. While this business model is nothing new, what is original is the fact that Matthew teaches the youth how to run the business and expects them to solicit clients for the business, as well as teaching them work ethic, leadership, and quality control. Matthew first approached Heather Clark Reynolds, Business Advisor for the Hoosier Heartland SBDC in January 2009 for assistance in making this dream come true. Matthew, a Purdue student who is enrolled in the Entrepreneurship Certificate Program, heard about the assistance the SBDC office on Purdue's campus could provide. After several hours of business counseling, Matthew not only was able to get his business started, obtain marketing materials, start a website (www.generationlawns.com), but also obtained funding from the Farmer's Bank in Frankfort in the amount of \$7,500.00. These loan proceeds were used to purchase the equipment necessary to get the business rolling. With only four months in operation, Generation Lawns are handling over 70 acres of mowing and expect to gross \$9,000.00 in gross proceeds within six months, with another growth of 1,000 acres in the following six months. Generation Lawns have 5 employees, including owner Matt.

When Matthew first approached Heather, he was looking for guidance on how to get the business started. Writing a business plan, obtaining business cards and other marketing materials, as well as gathering all the documentation necessary for obtaining a business loan were all part of the process of the help he received from the Hoosier Heartland SBDC at Purdue University. As a result of the assistance obtained, not only is Generation Lawns up and running, but five previously unemployed people now have decent paying jobs. In addition, these young adults are also learning how to run a business and the cycle will continue to spiral for future years. "With help from friends and family, and obviously the SBDC, my dream of owning a business and helping disadvantage youth at the same time has come true. The SBDC helped me with market research and marketing materials and without their help there is no way that I could have opened my business as quickly, hitting the ground running".

