

Business Briefs

Private Eye Uses Experience To Start Business

By LORI MCELRAITH
Advertising Executive

Thaddeus Cook is helping to take a bite out of crime in more ways than one. With nearly twenty years of experience in the North Carolina Criminal Justice System under his belt, Cook has established his own private investigative business and has seized a golden opportunity to give back to his community.

Diversified Investigative Services Inc. is the name of Cook's business. "We provide loss prevention services for businesses to minimize financial losses in the work place," he said. Cook organized the business in 1990 after ending a rewarding nine year career as a law enforcement officer with the Winston-Salem Police Department. Cook prepared himself for his professional career by earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice from North Carolina Central University. He furthered his studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where he received a master of public affairs degree. Fortunately, there is substantial evidence that Cook's services are badly needed. He explained that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has documented that American businesses lose an estimated 40 to 60 billion dollars a year because of employee theft, improprieties and insurance fraud. "My business helps, other businesses to address those issues internally by providing services such as investigations, interviews, interrogations, surveillances, crime scene reconstructions, and public records research," explained Cook.



Thaddeus Cook - Diversified Investigative Services, stands outside the new jail facility being built in the city

Cook's business is destined for success. He's already obtained a great deal of work from national vendors and major insurance companies, and has done major case work with various attorneys. Marked with a high level of professionalism Cook's business is a viable alternative to other services that have been offered in the past.

Although Cook began his business three years ago, it wasn't until recently that he began running it full time. While operating his business on a part-time basis, Cook was an instructor at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, where he worked in the Corrections and Juvenile System. While in Charlotte, Cook developed comprehensive treatment after care programs for inmates and ex-offenders who have been released from the North

Carolina Dept. of Corrections to the Mecklenburg County area, of N.C. Cook has also done in-depth research and investigative work at the Children's Law Center of Charlotte. His hard work and dedication has definitely not gone unnoticed. In 1992, Cook was awarded the prestigious Governor's Award for Outstanding Volunteerism for Mecklenburg Co. and has also been featured on radio and television talk shows in the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Community.

As if he hasn't already done enough, Cook has embarked on another venture.

He is in the process of implementing the Youthful Offenders School Retention Program in Forsyth Co. Cook is trying to change the direction of youth who have

started down the wrong path. Cook considers this program an advocacy program for youths in the criminal justice system. "We have to make sure that we provide some type of voice for people who can't articulate those different processes that might be associated with the Criminal Justice System, and the school exclusionary system. That's what the services are for," said Cook. "What we're looking for are kids who might be experiencing some type of crisis either at home or in the criminal justice, or school systems, that they or their parents are unable to resolve. We want to become an alternative to what's already offered in the community," explained Cook. "I hope to implement the programs in at least three communities in the triad."

FORSYTH COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT & DETENTION CENTER

ROSSER FABRAP INTERNATIONAL

WALTER ROBBS CALLAHAN & PIERCE ARCHITECTS P.A.

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS SUTTON-KENNERLY & ASSOCIATES CIVIL ENGINEERS

Unemployment Claims Drop

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment insurance during Christmas week dropped sharply to the lowest level in nearly four years, the government said Thursday.

An unexpectedly large decline of 40,000 claims brought the level for the week ended Dec. 26 to 291,000, the lowest since April 1989. It followed a decrease of 29,000 the previous week and was the 10th drop in 14 weeks.

Meanwhile, large retailing chains released figures in New York showing Christmas sales were even stronger than some anticipated. Christmas 1992 was the best in four years for retailers.

However, since the spending outburst seemed largely financed by credit cards, some store owners are worried that consumers will revert to their frugal recessionary spending habits as the winter wears on.

Nevertheless, the surge in consumer spending and confidence since the election apparently has been strong enough to provoke a response from many employers.

"It's very clear businesses have become much more confident about the economic landscape and that fact is making them go out and hire," said economist Mark Zandi of Regional Financial Associates in West Chester, Pa.

The average was 332,500 during the latest period, down from 341,000 for the four weeks ended Dec. 19.

The Labor Department is scheduled Friday to report the unemployment rate for December and total employment as measured by companies' payrolls. In advance, most economists were expecting payroll employment to climb between 75,000 and 100,000 jobs.

They expected the unemployment rate to stick at 7.2 percent, where it was in November after hitting an eight-year high of 7.8 percent in June. By the end of this year, many economists believe the rate will be approaching 6.5 percent, but they said the confidence of business executives will be a critical factor.

Two previous attempts by the economy to shake off its sluggishness, in 1991 and 1992, stalled because businesses were not sufficiently encouraged to begin hiring again and thus did not give consumers the wherewithal, in the form of job and income growth, to sustain the economic acceleration.

"This is the moment of truth. Is business going to respond or is it not? If it doesn't, then the consumer is going to run out of spending power," said economist Robert G. Dederick of Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

During the latest week, nine states showed a decrease of 1,000 or more claims, led by California, with a decline of 11,930. The drop was attributed to the holiday-shortened week and fewer layoffs.

Nine states reported an increase of 1,000 or more, led by Wisconsin with 6,355. It reported layoffs in construction, transportation and manufacturing.

The national claims figures are adjusted to remove distortions from normal seasonal variations. The state numbers are not.

Meanwhile, the number of claims filed under a special emergency program enacted by Congress last summer totaled 27,430 in the week ended Dec. 26, up from 25,209 the week before.

SBA Overhaul Of Small Business Standards

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 47,000 businesses will become eligible for U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loan and procurement programs under a major overhaul of SBA rules for assistance, SBA Administrator Patricia Saiki announced today.

Besides expanding eligibility and streamlining the process, the changes reduce the number of different standards from 30 to nine, account for eight years of inflation and, for financial assistance, establish a two-tier eligibility test under which a company can qualify as a small business if it meets test conditions. The new rules have been published in the Federal Register.

"This is the most far-reaching overhaul of SBA size standards since the agency was founded," Saiki said. "It means that more than 47,000 small businesses that had been unable to qualify for SBA credit and federal contracting programs will become eligible for assistance."

"As a result, the process is simplified and made more responsive to change," Saiki said. "eligibility will be expanded at a time when small businesses are hungry for credit to expand their operations and create new jobs," Saiki said.

The most significant change - establishing an "alternate standard" for 7 (a) loan program eligibility based on net income and net worth - was published as an interim final rule and takes effect immediately. The rule was already in place for SBA's 504 Development Company loan program and the Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program. Extending it to the business loan program will expand eligibility to an estimated 47,000 small

business.

The second test, published for comment as a proposed rule, indexes the standards for inflation since 1984 and compresses 30 industry-by-industry size standards into nine. It applies to all SBA loan programs except those elements of the disaster loan program that are not subject to size tests, and to the procurement and 8 (a) Business Development programs. Saiki estimated that about 10,400 businesses would gain small business eligibility for SBA's federal contract procurement programs as a result of the changes to the industry-by-industry standards, the vast majority of them operating in the service sector. All

but a few hundred are included in the estimated 47,000 that gain eligibility under the net worth/net income test.

Saiki said that no small business that was eligible under the old rules will be made ineligible by the new standards.

The alternate standard will allow a company to qualify as a small business if its net worth is less than \$6 million and it has had an average annual after-tax net income of less than \$2 million over the past two years.

The vast majority of the estimated 47,000 small businesses that will become eligible for 7 (a) general business loan guarantees as a

result of this change are in the retail and service industries.

ENJOY LIFESTYLE FREEDOM

You can enjoy the lifestyle freedoms you've dreamed of...and improve your health at the same time. Matol Botanical provides the most healthful products on the market today and an incredible financial opportunity.

For information and literature call

788-0758

WAYNE'S
Restaurant

offers
The Only Lunch Buffet Downtown!

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Week Days
All You Can Eat!

Ample Free Parking!

SUNDAY BRUNCH
11 - 3 p.m.
only \$5.25

Located in Best Western Regency Inn
128 North Cherry Street • Winston-Salem, NC 27101
(919) 723-1150

BUILDING TOMORROW TOGETHER: INVESTMENT

"My philosophy is simple:
The customer!
The customer!
The customer!"

MATTHEW BROWN
Owner
Big Apple Tire & Auto
Service Center
Brooklyn, N.Y.

"On a daily basis, that means service, service, service! My people are trained to listen and then follow through with the best possible work.

But there's more. I believe I have a responsibility to provide employment, be a role model and simply be involved. I believe that the success of any business is bound up in the well-being of the community. By providing seed capital to me through their Specialized Small Business Investment Company (SSBIC) GM has shown that they share that philosophy."

At General Motors, we are committed to building world class cars and trucks and working with the community to build a healthier economic environment in which to market them. Helping entrepreneurs like Matthew Brown start their own business through our Specialized Small Business Investment Company (SSBIC) helps us build both our futures.




GENERAL MOTORS
We never forget who's driving.

1 1 1 1 1 1

1st PAWN CORPORATION
COME BORROW, BUY or just BROWSE

Easy Cash Loan • Jewelry Repair • Bargain Items
723-1234

We are changing the way America shops and saving you money.
2828 University Parkway
In the College Plaza Shopping Center across from the Lawrence and Virginia Memorial Hospital
Monday-Saturday 9-9 / Sundays 1-4

1 1 1 1 1 1