

# SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER SUCCESS STORY

## SOMIS LIVING

4111 Sand Canyon Road  
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### BEFORE:

Owners Lillian Alarcon and Jocelyn Cacal are sisters and registered nurses with over 25 years of nursing experience. For quite some time, the pair wanted to bring their experience and compassion together to start their own residential care facility. In 2015, they got their chance when an existing care facility came on the market.

Located near the historic town of Somis, the facility's idyllic setting matched their vision of providing residential non-medical care services for the elderly in a family-like setting that would promote emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

"The location was perfect but we did not have enough funding available," Lillian said. "We approached several banks and business funding agencies but found it difficult to get funding because we had no experience in the business arena."

### BEST ADVICE:

The owners turned to the Economic Development Collaborative-Ventura County and loan officer Marvin Boateng for help.

"We met with Marvin to discuss our plans and our business agenda," she continued. "Marvin was very knowledgeable of the business arena and loan process, and above all he was very courteous and friendly, which helped reduce the stress of starting a new business and obtaining a loan."

With Marvin's expert guidance, Lillian and Jocelyn were able to gain access to the financing needed to purchase the business. In all, EDC-VC loaned the sisters \$250,000, which they used to complete the purchase of the business and hire additional employees to improve the care for their residents.

### AFTER:

The business is doing well. After a year of running the business, they added two additional full-time staff members and on-call staff to fill in as needed to continue providing quality care, which is increasingly in demand. "We barely have room availability," Lillian noted.

Because of that demand, the sisters are in the process of purchasing another property, which they will convert to a third residential care facility.



### LESSONS LEARNED:

#### • Experienced Advisors:

EDC-VC and its SBDC have programs and services to help owners in almost every business area, all available at no cost. "As first-time business owners, we couldn't have gotten our business off the ground without the expert advice and guidance of the EDC-VC," said Lillian.

#### • Valuable Resource:

Lillian is grateful to the EDC-VC and its loan officer for their assistance. "Marvin was very approachable and helped us all the way," she said. "We would not have found the financing we needed without the EDC-VC."

#### • Future Support:

As demand for elderly care increases, Somis Living will look for ways to help meet the needs of the senior community. "Having access to advisors with so many different business specialties is a great resource to help us fill in gaps where we don't have a lot of experience and gives us a broader perspective on how to successfully operate a growing business," said Lillian.



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