

## Minority Owned Business Achieves Goals



“The SBDC has helped me to better streamline my capabilities and improve my day-to-day efficiency as a small business owner.”

- Carmen Scott Dawson,  
President of Advanz, LLC

**Name:** Mr. Carmen S. Dawson  
**Company:** Advanz, LLC  
**Address:** 1159 East Gore, Rd., Erie, PA  
16504

**County:** Erie County

**Website:** [www.advanz.biz](http://www.advanz.biz)

**Industry:** Consulting Services

**Year Founded:** 2005

**Consultant Name:** Adam Mook

**SBDC Assistance:** Business Plan  
Writing, Sales, Time Management, MBE  
Certification, Referrals

**Additional Partners:** SCORE, PA  
DCED

**Gannon University SBDC**  
**Debra Steiner, Director**  
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**Background:** Carmen Scott Dawson is a young entrepreneur who has already established himself as a leading advocate among the African-American community in Erie, PA. As a minority business owner and current resident of Erie, Carmen’s achievements throughout the community and involvement with local non-profit organizations geared toward identifying opportunities and improving the lives of adolescents have not gone unnoticed. Carmen received a Congressional Award for his commitment to the community and also is recipient of the YMCA Minority Achiever of the Year award. Carmen volunteers and sits on many boards with local non-profit organizations such as the Big Brothers, Big Sisters Program and the Enterprise Development Center of Erie County. He is the former Co-Director of the Operations for the Republican Diversity Committee and is also involved with Leadership Erie, and the PA Ambassadors. Carmen passionately participates in bipartisan politics and is presently involved with several state and local campaigns. Carmen has a BA, with a major in Communications. In October of 2005 he started his own Communication and Sales Consulting business named “ADVANZ, LLC”.

**Assistance Requested/Provided:** Carmen came to the SBDC in March of 2006 and was referred to an SBDC Business Consultant by Len Barbagallo of the local SCORE chapter in Erie. Carmen sought assistance from the SBDC in regard to business planning, strategic planning and time management. He was finding it difficult to balance his business meetings, sales meetings with clients, non-profit board meetings, political organization involvement, and still have time for his personal life and enjoyment. Basically, Carmen was having a hard time finding enough hours in a day. The Gannon SBDC Business Consultant initially assisted Carmen in identifying all of the activities that were directly related to his sales and communications consulting business, ADVANZ, LLC. The client agreed that these activities should come first and foremost as they directly related to his income as a business owner. This meant that Carmen would have to forgo some of his volunteer time and extracurricular activities in order to take a direct focus on his business.

The second aspect of the client’s concerns was in regard to finding a niche for his business. The SBDC business consultant identified that Carmen’s target market was too large and should be narrowed down to an audience which best identifies with the client’s top interests and strongest assets. Over the course of a few strategic planning face-to-face meetings, Carmen and the consultant worked toward putting a business plan together that tailored to current projects that the client was working on and upcoming opportunities on the horizon. The plan was written in a manner focusing on Carmen’s interests, capabilities and niche as a business owner resulting in a title change for the client from “Sales and Communications Consultant” to “Communications, Security and Minority Business Development Consultant”.

**Outcome/Impacts:** As a result of his new business approach and increased efficiency, the client has received a total of \$4,500 in sales from Feb. ’06 to June ’06 from organizations in Erie such as the United Way, Booker T. Washington Center, and Community Health Net. Carmen is working with PA DCED to complete his MBE certification.