

# California Small Business Development Centers

SUCCESS STORY # 934

*Small Business  
Success  
Is Our Business*

## Paragon Uniforms: Oakland Uniform Company Beats the Recession

### Paragon Uniforms

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### BACKGROUND

Paragon Uniforms Inc. is a full service uniform company with a sterling track record of over 25 years of service.

Paragon has won the State of NJ governor's award for Excellence and Growth, and the Federal Minority Business Development Award.

### CHALLENGES

In Fall 2008 Paragon felt the impact of the national economic downturn. Marilyn contacted SBDC Director Rick Ohlrich and sought his help developing a plan for Paragon's future. Rick assigned Business Advisor Paula Groves to the task of valuing Paragon and taking a look at its financial position.

### ACTIONS

A seasoned professional in business and venture capital, Paula provided direction to Marilyn and guided the company into and through the realization of its financial position. The net result was an understanding of its financial condition, an organized approach to achieving market share and tools to track success. Paragon has employed those tools

and reenergized its sales efforts with the direct result of three new customers in the first half of 2009.

### RESULTS

In 2009, Paragon successfully bid as a prime contractor and received the award of a contract with the State of California Department of Public Health. In addition, Paragon has partnered with a well known regional laundry as a sub-contractor to provide services in Alameda County.



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"WE AT PARAGON ARE EMBRACING THOSE ELEMENTS THAT SUSTAIN US DURING THESE CHALLENGING TIMES. AS A BUSINESS OWNER AND PART OF A COMMUNITY OF SMALL BUSINESSES I AM ATTENTIVE TO HOW CRITICAL OUR CUSTOMER AND VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS ARE TO PARAGON'S ABILITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF 2009. WE ENCOURAGE AND PRACTICE RECYCLING OF PAPER AND WASTE, GREENING BY INCREASING OUR PRODUCT LINE TO INCLUDE 'ORGANIC' FABRICS. TO THOSE AGENCIES AND COMPANIES THAT HAVE BEEN CUSTOMERS FOR DECADES TO OUR NEW CUSTOMERS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS!"



(SBDC Photo/  
Tue Nam Ton)