

**Marie Platowski-Beals**, is a Certified Business Analyst with the Yavapai College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) based on the Prescott Valley Campus. Recently relocating from Chicago, Marie has launched multiple businesses with continued success. In 2001, in the wake of 9-11, she transformed a 40,000 sq. ft. vacant office building into the largest privately-owned Executive Office Center in the U.S., boasting 169 private suites. Marie has a bachelor's degree in Legal Administration and a Paralegal Certificate, both from Loyola University. She specializes in business development, organization, conflict management, strategic planning, human resources, and team management. Marie is also bilingual in Spanish/English, certified in the LivePlan and Growth Wheel tools, and hosts a biweekly Coffee Chat on Facebook Live sharing business tips, trends, and updates relevant to area businesses. Reach Marie at [marie.platowski-beals@yc.edu](mailto:marie.platowski-beals@yc.edu) or 928-771-4819.

Add on: Marie lives in Prescott with her husband and two fluffy, little dogs that occasionally show up on a Zoom call. She enjoys hiking, bicycling, cooking, and entertaining.

**Karen Eads** rejoins the Yavapai College SBDC team as a Business Analyst bringing 30 years of operational and management experience. Karen has additional skills in business planning, customer service, process and project management, and accounting. Karen works with businesses in all stages, from start-up to expansion. She is a certified QuickBooks professional and a business planning and financial management resource. Contact Karen Eads: [karen.eads@yc.edu](mailto:karen.eads@yc.edu) or call 928-771-4808.

**Ruth Ellen Elinski** has lived in the Verde Valley since 2004 and is the Director and a Certified Business Analyst for the Yavapai College Small Business Development Center (SBDC). An entrepreneur, Ruth Ellen has launched multiple businesses and has educational training in accounting, management, budgeting, marketing, and manufacturing. She has additional experience as a non-profit director leading alongside a 20-member Board of Directors. She is a Fellow of the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership's Flinn Brown Leadership Academy, is a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, and has a degree in Public Affairs and Management from Indiana University. Ruth Ellen is most proudly the mom of two brilliant daughters.

**Fanny Zapata** is a Business Analyst at the Yavapai College Small Business Development Center (SBDC), stationed at the Verde Valley Campus. She completed her studies at Yavapai College, graduating as an Accounting Assistant and a Certified Phlebotomist. Before joining SBDC, Fanny accumulated almost eight years of experience in customer service and the medical field, where she became adept at communication and handling sensitive information. Originally from Casa Grande, Arizona, Fanny moved to the Yavapai County area in 2009 and has since established numerous professional and personal connections within the Verde Valley. She successfully graduated from the Verde Valley Leadership program in 2022 and is fluent in both Spanish and English. Fanny is passionate about advocating for Yavapai County and its natural beauty. Outside of work, Fanny enjoys spending time with her husband, Hector Zapata, and indulging in outdoor activities like hiking, biking, and camping. Looking ahead, she plans to further her education by pursuing a Bachelor's of Applied Science in Business in the coming years.

**John Manning** joined the SBDC team in April 2024 and has lived in Prescott Valley since 2016. John has 30 years of management experience in sales, customer service, and team building. The last 20 years he has been in the banking industry where he used his strong financial background in lending, bank operations, and financial forecasting, among other skills which assist business owners in accessing capital. He was FINRA licensed from 2015 to 2023. Certified in the STAR interviewing method, John also has extensive experience in hiring and building strong teams. John brings the SBDC a high level of professionalism and works to acquire, retain, and grow client relationships by creating a trusting environment and being responsive. John is married and is the proud father of two sons. Reach John at 928-776-2351 or [John.Manning@YC.Edu](mailto:John.Manning@YC.Edu)

**Becky Jones-Pierce** joined SBDC in April 2024 as the Program Assistant. Becky specializes in guiding higher education institutions, healthcare facilities, and holistic practices toward excellence in business administration. With a focus on effective communication, meticulous time management, and fostering teamwork, she provides support and training tailored to their needs. Her approach is characterized by positivity, organization, and a dedication to facilitating professional and personal growth. Becky also enjoys travelling with her family.