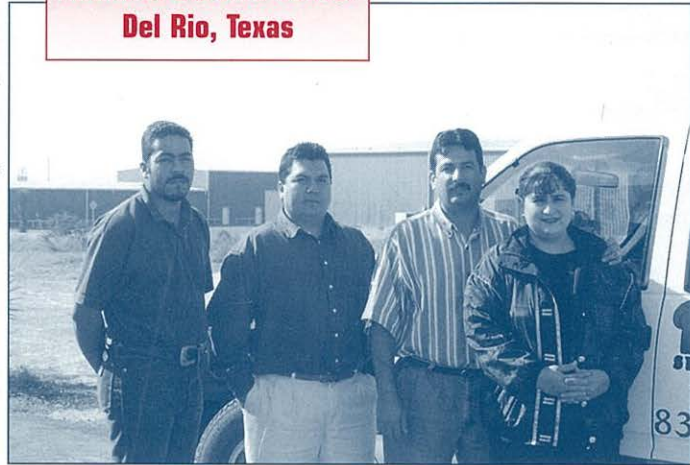




MIDDLE RIO GRANDE
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL SBDC

R.A.M.S. Service Center is owned and operated by Ramiro and Cecilia Barrera. The company was established in 1985 in their home in Del Rio, Texas. The company has since grown to a 1,700 square foot building. Specializing in sales, service, and repair of most types of office equipment, the company has been consistently serving Del Rio and surrounding communities. The Barreras became aware that their major customers, such as the Del Rio school district were slowly phasing out certain types of office equipment and computerizing. R.A.M.S. needed to enter the computer market or they would lose their major contracts. They needed additional capital to expand and capture this evolving market.

R.A.M.S. Service Center Del Rio, Texas



The Barreras had been a client of the Middle Rio Grande Development Council SBDC in Del Rio in the past and had worked with SBDC counselor Delia Ramirez. They approached her again for assistance in obtaining training for their new venture. Ramirez contacted the Smart Jobs program representative in San Antonio for help in preparing a Smart Jobs application, which would provide training for the Barreras. However, the Smart Jobs Fund, which is a state-run program, does not provide training for employers. The San Antonio Smart Jobs staff worked extensively with the Austin representatives and was able to obtain training for the Barreras by classifying the business as a micro business. Barrera would now be able to obtain training in computer repair for himself, and then train his employees.

The SBDC also assisted the Barreras in obtaining the Central Master Bidders List, classification as a Historical Underutilized Business vendor, and a Qualified Information Systems Vendor through the State Comptrollers Office. This enabled the Barreras to obtain some new contracts.

The SBDC counselor also prepared a loan proposal that was approved in December. Since then, Barrera has been able to train his present employees and hire two additional ones. Barrera states, "We have gained a great deal from you and for that, my wife, children and I are very grateful. I hope you can continue to help people such as myself because small business people like me need people like you. Again, thank you very much."