Mission: Business

Gulf War veteran says state and federal programs fueled his company for expansion

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Executive's Desk

How the SBA helps vets **PAGE 3**

By Donna Redman
For the Journal

Businessman Douglas Craft is reaping the benefits of both national and state efforts to support this country's veterans.

Craft owns Crystal Clear Maintenance Inc., a 50-employee company that specializes in providing janitorial and landscape services for commercial office buildings, medical buildings, factories, stores, schools, government offices — large projects. Craft, who originally hails from Louisiana, played in the Canadian Football League and for a short stint with the Seattle Seahawks. He served in the Army during the Gulf War. (His father served in Vietnam and his brother also served in the military.)

A friend invited him to visit Angel Fire in northern New Mexico, and he decided to stay. He moved to Taos and opened his business there nine years ago. Later, he opened another office in Lawton, Okla., and a little more than a year ago, he opened an office in Albuquerque.

Once settled in Albuquerque, he visited the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services to see if there were benefits available that he could use for his business.

"I didn't know anything about

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Maria Del Carmen Marquez of Crystal Clear Maintenance cleans up the Albuquerque Emergency Communications Center coffee room.

DEAN HANSON/JOURNAL

Douglas Craft, a service-disabled veteran and owner of Crystal Clear Maintenance Inc., is a poster person of sorts for the services available in New Mexico to assist veterans in business.