

## **Barbara Furry**

*Center of Excellence in Education • Chico, CA*



### ***CEE Keeps the Pulse of Continuing Medical Education***

Armed with nothing more than the meager beginnings of a business plan, Barbara Furry, RNC, MS CCRN, approached the Northeastern California Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Butte College with a vision: She had a fierce desire to offer ongoing medical education to physicians and nurses in the North Valley. Over a decade later, she has seen her dreams come true with the impressive success of her company, Center of Excellence in Education (CEE), which is headquartered in Chico, CA, with an outreach office in Redding, CA.

Opening CEE in 1997 with just one part-time employee — herself — Ms. Furry doubled her medical training courses and participants in less than a year. Today, CEE has over 60 contract employees and features three divisions: American Heart Association Training Center; Accredited Provider to the California Medical Association (CMA) and California Board of Registered Nursing; and Health Education Rural Outreach (HERO). HERO uses grants and other funding opportunities to provide low- or no-cost continuing education to underserved medical caregivers.

CEE is an accredited provider of AMA PRA Category 1 Credits through the California Medical Association/Institute of Medical Quality and offers California Board of Registered

Nursing and Pre-Hospital EMT-P Provider Continuing Education Credit. In addition, it offers first aid and CPR training to the general public and local businesses.

Ms. Furry credits SBDC at Butte College with helping her refine her initial business plan and identify start-up costs, as well as marketing, competitive analysis, and training needs. Her SBDC at Butte College business counselor also assisted her with developing contracts and nurturing her network of professional contacts. All of that hard work allowed CEE to grow from its initial home-based headquarters to four additional training sites and a commercial location.

Ms. Furry's path to success was fraught with many potential pitfalls, but SBDC at Butte College was at her side to lend a helping hand each step of the way. Ms. Furry's motto is "Each day brings a new challenge and a new opportunity for growth," and she lives that mantra daily as she enjoys the fruits of her labors: physicians and nurses improving their communities by receiving quality critical care education.