

# SUCCESS STORY

## AIMM

Dr. Luis Estevez had ideas for two promising products based, in part, on nanotechnology research he performed while working at the University of Dayton Research Institute (UDRI). He needed to launch a company to turn his research into products, but he also needed help.

Although he has extensive experience and knowledge in scientific research, business planning and market research weren't his strengths.

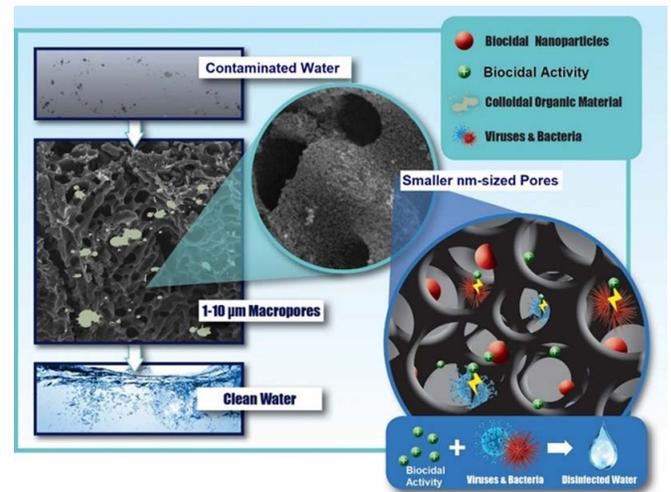
Still, he founded Advanced & Innovative Multifunctional Materials (AIMM) in June 2019 while still working full time at UDRI. His products could be revolutionary: N95 masks that are self-disinfecting and a process to turn contaminated water into drinking water. By 2021, he was able to make AIMM his full-time job and knew he needed assistance on the business side.

Fortunately, AIMM's chief operating officer, Erin Estevez, attended an online webinar hosted by the Miami University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and learned the SBDC could help with market research. Erin and Luis reached out to the SBDC and quickly got to work under the mentorship of Advisor David Riggs.

Luis and David worked extensively on a business plan, and the SBDC obtained marketing reports through SBDCNet, a research clearinghouse with funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The marketing information was exactly what AIMM needed to pitch its products, and the business plan proved helpful for organizing AIMM as a company.

With a newly formulated plan and mission, AIMM set out to obtain grants it needed to get the business off the ground.

***"SBDC and (Entrepreneurs' Center) member Kim Petro has helped AIMM tremendously with webinars and one-on-one help with assistance on various bookkeeping information, methods, and strategies," Erin said.***



With the SBDC's business mentorship, Luis crafted a competitive pitch for AIMM's first source of funding: the MedTech Launch Fund. The fund awarded AIMM \$75,000 in February 2021 to further the commercialization of the self-disinfecting N95 mask. AIMM was awarded two Air Force STTR Phase I contracts, based on its water-filter technology, both at \$50,000 each.

AIMM's newfound source of capital helped fund prototype development and testing. This allowed AIMM to prove the viability of its products. It also meant AIMM could pay third-party vendors and salaries for employees carrying out Phase I of the study.

Both the partnership with the SBDC and the grants allowed AIMM to grow and enhance its study on water treatment technology, giving it the opportunity to apply for a Phase II study. This study could result in a budget of more than \$750,000 to create a commercially viable prototype, and AIMM looks forward to developing its products further.

**For more information on AIMM visit [aimmlabs.com](http://aimmlabs.com).**

