

## Disobedient Spirits

*If a law is unjust, a man is not only right to disobey it; he is obligated to do so.*

*Thomas Jefferson*



**“The SBDC was a constructive partner in the long exciting journey to opening this micro distillery.”**

**Bob Begg & Bob Sechrist**

**Client Business:** Disobedient Spirits

**Address:** 30 South Main Street  
Homer City, PA 15748  
(724) 915-8124

**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/DisobedientSpirits](http://www.facebook.com/DisobedientSpirits)

**Website:** [www.disobedientspirits.com/](http://www.disobedientspirits.com/)

**Industry:** Micro distillery

**Year Founded:** 2014

**SBDC Assistance:** Business plan/branding consultation

**Additional Partners:** Indiana 1<sup>st</sup> Bank, Indiana County Revolving Loan Fund, IUP Communications Media Dept.

**Indiana University of PA SBDC**

**Tony Palamone**, Director  
108 Eberly College of Business  
Indiana University of PA  
Indiana, PA 15701  
(724) 357-7915  
[iup-sbdc@iup.edu](mailto:iup-sbdc@iup.edu)



### Background

Robert Begg and Robert Sechrist had long distinguished careers as professors at Indiana University of PA (IUP), but as they approached retirement they wanted to pursue some of their other interests. Sechrist had substantial experience as an analyst in the wine industry where he has been honored as a Certified Specialist in Wine Postnominal. Begg had a chemistry degree from Yale, but had taught in a different subject area. When Pennsylvania legalized micro distilleries they began thinking about applying their backgrounds to this new opportunity.

### The Assistance

In what proved to be the shortest part of the journey the SBDC assisted them in writing their initial business plan through which they were able to raise the funds they need to get established. Additionally, the SBDC assisted by helping them think about branding and making them aware of assistance available through the Communications Media Department at IUP. The partners came up with a great brand name “Disobedient Spirits”, which reflects Western Pennsylvania’s Whiskey rebellion and the idea of objecting to injustice. Students from Communications Media and the SBDC met with a principal and helped come up with graphics to present the brand effectively.

### Results

The Principals purchased an abandoned grocery store and renovated it into a first rate facility.

The principals navigated the long process of establishing the necessary licenses to open a micro distillery and have had a number of the formulations they established for distilled spirits approved for sale.

Opened their facility on December 15, 2014 with a private reception at which over several hundred people celebrated their achievement

They have already signed up 9 local bars and are making inroads further afield and have every confidence that they will be able to grow their distribution.

They have developed a line of flavored vodkas and brandies as well as their premium blue corn vodka.

They have 8 employees.