

SBDC helps Edwardsville resident open beauty boutique

by Jo Ann DiMaggio May
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EDWARDSVILLE - Learning to embrace one's beauty – inside and out – is something Markia Ivy has believed in as long as she can remember. On Friday, Nov. 11, Ivy put her passion into action and opened Euphoric Beauty, a unique accessories and hair care product boutique in downtown Edwardsville, armed with expertise from the Illinois Metro East Small Business Development Center.

“I want people of all ethnicities and from all walks of life to experience euphoric beauty, a beauty that transcends them,” said Ivy, an Edwardsville native. “My goal is to create a store where anyone can tap into the beauty that lies within them. Euphoric Beauty will help them do just that.”

Ivy first contacted the SBDC two years ago when she began to put data and details to her goal of being a successful local entrepreneur. Shortly after that, former SBDC Director Patrick McKeehan began meeting with Ivy one-on-one, often on a weekly basis, to talk through next steps.

Within a few months, McKeehan brought SBDC graduate assistant Kaitlin Beasley into the conversations to add another valuable perspective. The three also recruited local banker Rob Pickerell, vice president of commercial lending at Midwest Regional Bank, for expertise in navigating through a 27-page application for a Small Business Association loan. Ivy successfully closed on her loan in October.

Ivy credits the SBDC at SIUE for steadily and faithfully supplying her with information, structure and support as she worked her way through the process of successfully opening her small business.

“I’m grateful to Patrick McKeehan and Kaitlin Beasley for the hours they spent with me over the past two years, and for guiding me through each step of the process so I was not overwhelmed by it,” said Ivy. “Patrick, Kaitlin and I were a phenomenal team. We became more like family than anything else. The same is true of Rob Pickerell.”

Perfecting the art of customer service from careers in healthcare and hospitality prepared Ivy for the relationship building she is doing through her new company. “Helping clients problem solve, serving them and earning their trust is essential,” she said. “I’m thankful for the professional experience I’ve gained that has led me to this point.”

Beasley said Ivy has been an excellent SBDC client because she works hard and has clear objectives.

“Markia’s personality and passion have driven her success,” Beasley said. “It has been extremely rewarding to see her vision unfold and to have witnessed the milestones along the way.”

Euphoric Beauty is located at 503 St. Louis St. in Edwardsville and is open from 10 a.m. -7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

For more information about Euphoric Beauty, call the shop at (618) 307-9838.

The [Illinois](#) SBDC at SIUE assists new businesses like Euphoric Beauty and existing businesses headquartered in the nine-county Metro East region of Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe and Randolph. It is a no-cost service to the community supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, and [Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#).

By aiding entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the Metro East by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining jobs and encouraging capital investment. It enhances the region’s economic interests by providing one-stop assistance to individuals by means of counseling, training, research and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses. When appropriate, the SBDC strives to affiliate its ties to the region to support the goals and objectives of both the [SIUE School of Business](#) and the University at large. To learn how the SBDC can help your small business, contact the Metro East SBDC at (618) 650-2929 or sbdcedw@gmail.com.