



Aviston earns a new auto body shop with SBDC assistance

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AVISTON - Aviston, Illinois is an area that is growing in development and will be gaining a new locally owned business in the New Year. Aviston Auto Body Shop owner Ryan Voss decided to pursue his dream of opening his own shop with the help of his wife, Melinda, and the Illinois Metro East Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. They broke ground on Friday, Sept. 8, 2017, and plan to open in January 2018.

Everything has been going according to plan for the Voss family through the journey of starting their business. Despite the weather being one of their main challenges, as well as making sure they had all the necessary paperwork turned in to start making this dream a reality, construction has been moving forward at a steady pace.

Voss has been working for a family-owned auto body shop for the past 18 years. However, something was still missing, the dream of owning his own shop. His dedication to working on cars and putting his skill to use on unique projects will help launch the start-up. He has gained an enormous amount of knowledge and experience these last 18 years and hopes to continue to learn more from this new endeavor.

Aviston Auto Body's mission is that there is nothing they cannot do, no job too big or too small. Voss has restored old cars, tractors and even tricycles to ensure families take home their invaluable possessions and family heirlooms. When it comes to owning a small business, owners like the Voss's differentiate themselves by making every customer experience special, no matter what the situation is.

According to Melinda, their experience with the Metro East SBDC and Director Jo Ann Di Maggio May has been amazing. "Anytime we had a question, even after hours, Jo Ann was there for us," Melinda said. "We could not have done this without her. She was always checking on us and asking if there was anything she could do."

May has been working with the Voss's since March 2017, and will continue to offer her expertise and resources for their promising future. The SBDC provided expertise on business plan review, networking, bookkeeping and other options to potentially lower operating costs.

“Melinda and Ryan are a pleasure to work with,” May said. “They are extremely motivated and hard working. I cannot wait to see what their future holds and look forward to assisting them as their business grows.”

Aviston Auto Body Shop is located at 830 Steel Bridge Street in Aviston. For more information, contact [618-444-7278](tel:618-444-7278).

The Metro East Illinois SBDC assists start-up ventures, such as Aviston Auto Body Shop, as well as existing businesses headquartered in the nine-county region of Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe and Randolph. It is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and [SIUE](#) as a service to Illinois small businesses.

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 new jobs and encouraging new 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 about the SBDC, contact the [IL SBDC for the Metro East at SIUE](#) at [\(618\) 650-2929](tel:618-650-2929).