

JCBA Business of the Year Award brings attention to the hard work of Julie's Graphics

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEYVILLE - Julie Pohlman, the owner of Julie's Graphics in Jerseyville, received a huge surprise recently when she was awarded the Jersey County Business Association (JCBA) Business of the Year Award.

Julie's Graphics was honored with the award at the JCBA's Annual Dinner on Feb. 7, 2019, at Westlake Country Club. Julie and her team received the award in front of approximately 200 people, including her employees and family.

Julie Pohlman said the JCBA award was a huge honor.

"After 13 years in business it meant a lot to me," she said. "It makes you realize someone is paying attention to what you are doing. There are so many great businesses in Jerseyville that I have worked with over the years."

Julie said she became interested in graphic design as a teenager and went on to work for the local newspaper and a graphic design company for a few years. Following graduation from college, she bought a graphic design business previously located in Carrollton called Foiles Customs in August 2006. She moved the business to her parents' house in Jerseyville and ran the company for nearly two years from a small room at the family home. In September 2016 she purchased WeBE Ink and moved to her current location at the corner of Route 16 and Lincoln Street, across from the District 100 Unit Office.

JCBA Chair Stephanie Ash of 1st MidAmerica Credit Union had the privilege of giving Julie Pohlman her Business of the Year Award. She said, "I know that many small businesses will identify with Julie's story of starting small, working from their home, and growing their business through hard work and determination." Ash continued, "Julie and her staff work hard, provide great customer service, and are constantly giving back to our community. They are a great asset to have in Jersey County and are very deserving of this award."

Julie prides herself on her customer service in her shop, and also feels that this is what sets her business apart from her competitors, particularly those online. Julie also added, "I'm proud to be a female owned and operated a business here in Jersey County. I am the owner, and although it isn't by design, currently all of my employees are women. It makes for a great environment in which to work and do business."

The JCBA Business of the Year is chosen through both public participation and a vote by the JCBA Board of Directors. Director Beth Bear explained that nominations are taken from the public, and then these businesses are invited by the JCBA to return a formal submission, which is then scored by the JCBA Board. Bear explained, "JCBA Board members are asked to grade submissions against a pre-determined metric, which considers aspects of the business such as community involvement, years in business, and economic impact. If a Board member has any conflict of interest with a business that is nominated, we ask them to excuse him or herself from voting. It is a rigorous process, and we work hard to keep this qualitative assessment fair."

Julie's Graphics is a printing and graphic design company, located at 103 Lincoln Ave. in Jerseyville, Illinois.

The Jersey County Business Association is the Chamber of Commerce for Jersey County and has been since 1955. The JCBA is a coalition of approximately 250 area businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and individuals who pool their talents and resources to improve the local economic environment. They award one business with their Business of the Year award each year.

"I love Jerseyville and want to do as much as I can in the community," Julie said. "I was raised here and I feel super lucky to have a business here. I am a blessed, blessed woman in business. I have had a lot of people come in and congratulate me about winning the Business of the Year Award and the advertisement from it has been great. I am so appreciative of the award."