



SBDC for the Metro East Celebrates Queen Beedz Second Anniversary

by Megan Weiser
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EDWARDSVILLE - Queen Beedz, a client of the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville since

2017, celebrated its second anniversary on July 1, much to the delight of owner Susan Hackney.

Hackney started her jewelry business as a hobby, with the simple intention of making bracelets to fit her wrists - she never dreamed it would flourish and grow as it has over the past two years. This success has filled her with happiness and excitement as she looks forward to the future.

Over the last year, Hackney has continued to grow and expand through different craft fairs and maker's markets, as well as working with Restoration Alley in Ellisville, Mo, where her jewelry is available for sale. Additionally, she has started selling her jewelry through her own Etsy shop, which she started in April 2019.

Hackney feels extremely grateful for the consistent support she has received from the SBDC and Director Jo Ann Di Maggio May throughout her entrepreneurial endeavor.

"Jo Ann has been such a mentor to me. She has always advised me in the best way and has put me in touch with the people I need to talk to in order to solve any problems I may have. The SBDC has helped me in so many ways, from learning record keeping through Quickbooks, to launching my Instagram and setting up my Etsy shop," Hackney said.

"Susan works hard and is eager to learn. I enjoy seeing all her success and am glad the events and networking we discuss are paying off. I can't wait to see what the future holds for Queen Beedz," Di Maggio May said.

Hackney hopes to secure studio space for her work by early 2020. She also plans to expand her Etsy shop by adding new products, and is open to expanding into another boutique that aligns with her values and jewelry style.

Hackney plans to continue to find new vendors and learn new techniques, as she hopes to evolve her style of jewelry to provide a range from casual to fancy.

Queen Beedz can be contacted at 618-877-3341. For more information, visit Facebook @QueenBeedz, Instagram @queenbeedzdesigns, or Etsy [etsy.com/shop/QueenBeedzDesigns](https://www.etsy.com/shop/QueenBeedzDesigns). Visit Restoration Alley DIY Studio & Handmade Market at [restorationallydiy.com](https://www.restorationallydiy.com) or on Facebook.

The Illinois SBDC for the Metro East assists start-up ventures like Queen Beedz 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.

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Photo: Queen Beedz owner Susan Hackney.