

# Illinois SBDC for the Metro East at SIUE Assists in Launching Artstream Studio

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EDWARDSVILLE – The Artstream Studio, a creative, convenient, one-of-a-kind, mobile art studio and event venue, recently opened in November to provide unique art enrichment programs, after school activities, birthday parties and art parties to the St. Louis Metro area.

Owner Jennifer Beech has worked with the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Business Specialist Marti Wieland to fulfill her dream of inspiring creativity, art and imagination.

At The Artstream Studio, art is a way of life. Housed in a vintage 1968 Airstream mobile home, the mobile art space is a place to explore and play, delivering programs and events directly to the client's front door.

With a background woven between museum education and marketing, developing a mobile enrichment space has always been near and dear to Beech's heart. Her vision for The Artstream Studio focuses on discovering or fueling a skillset through the creative journey, as well as building a stronger community, collaborating creatively and encouraging children to maintain their sense of wonder. She is passionate about creating a space that gives children the freedom of choice through creativity, with the hope of offering an experience that will stamp the memories of her clients forever.

Since February 2018, Wieland and the SBDC have provided Beech assistance with business plan development, establishing networks, and ensuring she had the necessities to bring her concepts to life.

"Jennifer's business concept was always exciting," Wieland said. "She is answering a need, not only the individual need for a creative outlet, but also to fill the gap created by decreased arts funding in our school systems. Children will greatly benefit in many ways from The Artstream Studio experience."

"The Artstream Studio is not a typical business and did not have a typical business start-up," Beech said. "Because of its uniqueness, it often took extra legwork in order to find not only what was needed, but also the right provider to meet those needs. The SBDC had the resources to which I did not have direct access."

The Artstream Studio also competed in the SBDC's 2018 Metro East Start-Up Challenge, which Beech found to be an extremely valuable learning experience, providing her mentorship in a variety of fields and capacities.

"Overall, the SBDC has been a mentor, cheerleader and valuable resource pushing not only myself, but also the business forward since the concept phase," Beech said. "Every business is different, and The Artstream Studio surely didn't follow the general rules for how to open a mobile business. Marti and the SBDC were able to give me confidence in the unknown and confirmation that I was moving in the right direction."

The Artstream Studio's official grand opening will take place in spring 2020, adding pop-up art programs, weekly lessons and workshops to the already existent offerings.

For more information, contact The Artstream Studio at 618-791-2873 or [create@theartstreamstudio.com](mailto:create@theartstreamstudio.com). Visit [theartstreamstudio.com](http://theartstreamstudio.com), on Facebook, Instagram at [theartstreamstudio](https://www.instagram.com/theartstreamstudio) and LinkedIn at [the-artstream-studio](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-artstream-studio).

The Illinois SBDC for the Metro East assists start-up ventures like The Artstream Studio 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.

Photo: The Artstream Studio owner Jennifer Beech.