

DabblersCreatives Pivots Passion into Small Business During COVID-19

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE - In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ruthann Redmon, client of the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and owner of Redmon Consulting, has launched DabblersCreatives, an online Etsy shop that sells handmade face masks.

Redmon has worked with the SBDC and Director Jo Ann DiMaggio May since January to grow both Redmon Consulting and DabblersCreatives, with a focus on marketing and networking.

“Jo Ann has helped me get connected and stay focused on the process and how to execute it,” Redmon shared. “She understands that I have both a business and creative side to my brain and has encouraged me to create a balance, helping me to see that I could use both through these ventures.”

“Ruthann is motivated and eager to try new strategies and tackle challenges as she grows her businesses. I am proud of her dedication and hard work. She has a great deal of knowledge and talent to share and I can’t wait to see her businesses flourish,” Di Maggio May said.

Redmon was motivated to begin making masks during the pandemic due to the sheer need for face coverings. As masks were becoming a necessity and requirement, she knew she could immediately put her creative side and sewing experience to good use.

Redmon launched DabblersCreatives as an Etsy shop in mid-April. To date, DabblersCreatives has created over 250 masks. Her shop features reusable face masks crafted in various fabrics and styles. Since opening, she has successfully continued selling masks through her shop and direct to customers all over the country. She has even done custom orders for businesses in the process of reopening, where employees are required to wear face coverings.

In addition to the launch of the shop, DabblersCreatives has also donated over 75 handmade face masks to healthcare workers in both Missouri and Alabama. A portion of shop proceeds goes toward the cost of making and donating additional face coverings for healthcare workers.

The most rewarding part of making the masks, Redmon shared, is knowing that her product is truly helping someone in this time of need.

Redmon is a third-generation farm owner in South Central Illinois and raises wooly sheep as a hobby. Looking to the future, Redmon plans to continue to grow DabblersCreatives by expanding it to include handcrafted art textiles, 100% natural wool products, home décor, paintings, jewelry, and of course, face masks for as long as they are needed.

DabblersCreatives can be found on Etsy. For more information, contact Ruthann Redmon at ruthann.redmon@gmail.com.

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