

# **Metro East SBDC Client Millpond Brewing & Incubator Pivots To Survive The Pandemic**

by Doug McIlhagga  
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EDWARDSVILLE – Millpond Brewing & Incubator owner Bryan Schubert, client of the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, has spent the past few months adapting his business

amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by transitioning from a brewery with a taproom and large outdoor beer garden, to selling 100 percent packaged beer via, cans and growler fills.

Following the Stay-at-Home directive from Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, Millpond Brewing & Incubator began the transition to curbside ordering and pick-up, allowing customers to call in or order online. Within 24 hours, Millpond was offering to-go 4-packs of 16-ounce cans, as well as growler fills.

“We were fortunate that our friends at Main & Mill Brewing Co. allowed us to borrow their Crowler seamer, and we were lucky to be able to obtain all of the materials to make the transition happen quickly,” Schubert shared. “We discussed testing canning our beer, and it seemed as though the universe had just pushed us in headfirst.”

Throughout the Millpond Brewing & Incubator’s COVID-19 journey, the SBDC and Business Specialist Marti Wieland assisted Schubert by offering continuous up-to-date information on relief and assistance, and connecting him to resources that helped make the necessary business transition possible.

“Having Marti and the SBDC as a reliable source, willing to help every step of the way was immensely valuable to us,” Schubert said. “It was great to have that help, considering we had to adapt the business to a completely new model overnight in the middle of a global pandemic – which was no easy task.”

“Bryan has kept a level head and been creative with his business model, both critical skills in a crisis,” Wieland said. “He could have closed his doors and worried for the past few months, but instead, he called his resources, thought through his options, and, in a short time, had his business up and running again, albeit in a different form. It hasn’t been easy, but he has done a great job keeping Millpond Brewing & Incubator operating.”

Despite the challenges, Schubert is extremely grateful that his business was capable of successfully adapting, and he is thankful for everyone who helped make it happen. Moving forward, Millpond Brewing & Incubator plans to continue utilizing their outdoor beer garden, while continuing to offer curbside to-go and growler fills. Additionally, they plan to release a portion of their beers on tap into cans as well, and to continue doing this once they can fully reopen.

Millpond Brewing & Incubator’s beer garden and curbside to-go hours are 3 p.m.-10 p.m. Tue.-Wed., noon-11 p.m. Thu.-Sat. and noon-7 p.m. Sundays

Contact Millpond Brewing at 618-476-9933 or [info@millpondbrewing.com](mailto:info@millpondbrewing.com). For more information, visit [millpondbrewing.com](http://millpondbrewing.com) and follow on Facebook and Instagram at [@millpondbrewing](https://www.facebook.com/millpondbrewing).

The Illinois SBDC for the Metro East assists start-up ventures like Millpond Brewing & Incubator 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.