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*magazine*

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JENA MURPHY  
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entrepreneurial leap**



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# april

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## Celebrating impact

WISE WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER MARKS A MILESTONE YEAR

Submitted by WISE

As we approach our 20th anniversary in fall 2025, we want to express our deepest gratitude to the entrepreneurs, supporters, and partners who have been a vital part of WISE's journey. Your support has been the foundation of our growth, and we're excited to celebrate this milestone with you.

In 2024, WISE experienced growth - national and state recognition, new investments, and the continued resilience of women entrepreneurs in Central New York. We're proud to share these accomplishments and look forward to what's next.

### WISE receives a three-year grant from Empire State Development

We are thrilled to announce that WISE has been awarded a three-year grant from Empire State Development. This support will allow us to enhance services for entrepreneurs across the region at a time when demand is rising. We are grateful for this opportunity to continue offering resources and guidance to local businesses.



### WISE earns National Women's Business Center of Excellence designation

We are honored to share that WISE has been named a National Women's Business Center of Excellence by the Association of Women's Business Centers. This recognition is a testament to the high-impact programs and expert guidance we offer to help women entrepreneurs thrive.

### Celebrating our NYS Entrepreneur of the Year

This year, we honored and recognized Arteika Hunter, Managing Director and Founder of Clean & Glo Cleaning Services LLC, as the New York State EAC Entrepreneur of the Year. This recognition celebrates the strength, ingenuity, and determination of entrepreneurs like Arteika.



### Expanding rural impact through our partnership with The Hub

Thanks to a generous \$50,000 grant from the Central New York Community Foundation, WISE partnered with The Hub to serve women entrepreneurs in Madison County. This initiative provided workshops, networking, and technical assistance to 186 women, helping bridge gaps in access and support for rural communities.

### Women entrepreneurs driving CNY's economy

This year, we've continued advocating for women business owners through a Syracuse.com op-ed, emphasizing women entrepreneurs' essential role in Central New York's economy. The piece called for greater investment in women's business development and better access to capital and networks.



**SAVE THE DATE: The WISE Economic Impact Forum: Honoring 20 Years, Shaping Tomorrow for CNY Women Entrepreneurs | October 14, 2025.**

S Y R A C U S E  
**WOMAN**  
magazine

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# Entrepreneurship: Confessions from the other side

Iris Buczkowski  
Chief Executive Officer

I will never regret leaving corporate America. A few years ago I found myself at a crossroad where I needed to contemplate what my next move would be. I was recruited to stay under the umbrella or a "sure thing", otherwise known as the wire houses and broker/dealer world of the financial services industry, I was offered the opportunity to change course and work in the not-for-profit sector, but I ultimately landed on the platform of being the maker of my own destiny by becoming an entrepreneur and starting my own firm. Now, having gone through this experience for almost four years I can look back with both smiles and tears on the good times and the challenging ones. When you are growing it is exciting and the expansion of your business can be extremely rewarding, but starting on this journey six months before a major pandemic that caused the world to shut down was terrifying at times. The keys for success is something I have been learning along the way and here are a few tips that I believe are prudent for anyone considering this journey:

1. Discover your what and why before you dive in two feet first! No, I am not trying to be all up in my feelings and yes, I am dead serious. It is statistically proven that if you have a clear vision on what you want to do and why you want to spend your time, effort and energy doing it, the more likely you are going to be successful. Make sure whatever product or service you choose to do makes you feel good about going to work everyday. Money does make the world go around, but if you love what you do you will not feel like you are working.
2. Assemble a top-notch team to help you! Owning a business is a lot of work and it can even be more intense because of the multiple hats you wear while running your company, especially at the onset. The investment of time you commit upon establishing a company is substantial. Building a solid team both internally and externally is essential for success. Identify the software, marketing, operational supports, and other internal components you need to build a solid platform and never forget to include your attorney, accountant, and financial advisor. Your outside counsel will be critically important to you along the way.
3. Document your business and marketing plans. Create guidelines of how your business will operate and what you expect from the employees you hire. This has dual purpose. As an entrepreneur you will find many grant opportunities available to help you as you get started, but most require a myriad of paperwork to show that you have a structured and well thought out process of how you plan to operate. Additionally, having structure in place helps you in the recruitment process as you grow. Even if you are starting as a party of one, when you look to add to your team there is a powerful message when you can clearly define your mission, values, and your goals looking forward.

As you go through the start-up you will find excitement within all of the creativity that will encompass you. Owning a business can be the most rewarding experience you may have, but also need to consider what exit strategies may look whether they are voluntary or involuntary. What would happen to your company if you are gone or can no longer work? How have you protected this incredible asset you have built? When you are ready to retire what is your exit strategy? It doesn't matter if you are a sole proprietor or an entity with multiple owners or partners, the importance of

proper business succession planning is critical and often an area that entrepreneurs pass over when they are in the creative stages of building and launching their company. You want to make sure that you have business continuity if you cannot work for any reason. Life happens and all of the bad things that come along with it such as accidents, illness, or even death. Your business interests are important assets that provide a return to you and your family, and if something were to happen to you those interests you need to have continuity of operations or be able to monetized. Critical planning items to have in place include:

1. Have an adequate and updated buy/sell agreement in place for your company. If you have a multiple ownership structure this is essential in the event of a death or a disability. You will need the services of an attorney who specializes in business law to construct these agreements. If you are a sole proprietor, you may consider researching options on how to broker a sale of your company and discuss it with your attorney to incorporate it as part of your plan.
2. Fund your agreements once they completed. New businesses often don't have the cash flow to provide large payouts in the event of a death or replacement income in the event of a disability. Buy/sell agreements are often funded through insurance to cover these obligations. Work with your financial advisor and accountant to determine the most appropriate type and level of coverage that should be maintained over time.
3. Use key-person life insurance where appropriate if you are a sole owner or you have key employees who are essential to the continual operations of your business. Term insurance is often a good fit here as you can secure a large amount of coverage for very little cost.
4. Make sure to have your business formally valued on a routine basis. This is often one area that is overlooked because although you have financial statements prepared annually, that is not the same as what the fair market value of your company would be if it were to be sold. Many industries that have a niche product or service have to look for specialized providers to have this work completed. The valuations become a key part of your estate planning as well.
5. Identify potential succession candidates as you grow. Nobody wants to work forever and we definitely do not live forever. If you want to see your company survive beyond you, building a solid team that can step in to run your company over time is the first step to accomplishing that goal.

There are many rewards that come with being a business owner. The development of your product or service and the relationships you build along the way will be some of the most meaningful you will experience in your lifetime. For me, it was equally important to build a life that fit my goals for not only my work, but for my family and the quality of life I wanted to have. Being your own boss has its perks! It's all about balance and corporate America did not offer that to me while I was there. Striking an optimal work-life balance is the best part of being an entrepreneur, but being smart about how you implement and operate your vision is critical to long-term success. If you can put your head on the pillow at night knowing you are well organized, surrounded by the best team you can assemble, and you genuinely enjoy what you do every day, you can safely say you have made a great decision and are transitioning nicely to "the other side."



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# WBOC continues to elevate women

WBOC held its monthly gathering at the Bistro 1926 at Drumlins Country Club in early March. The organization will host its Spring Social on April 2 beginning at 4:30 p.m. at the same location. Syracuse Woman Magazine will be on hand to celebrate the launch of the Women In Business & Entrepreneurship edition. *Photos by Sarah Heppell Photography.*





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11-18

# Despite challenges, Purpose Farm endures

David Tyler



**A**fter a tough winter, Sandra Seabrook is looking forward to Purpose Farm getting back to its mission.

The farm, which was founded in 2009 and opened to its mission in 2012, mentors at-risk youth by pairing them with some of the many rescue animals on the property.

If it's anything, Purpose Farm is a calling for Seabrook. In 2008, she went on a mission trip and visited a number of orphanages. When she also saw a horse farm, it sparked an idea for the mother of four that she could purchase a farm and build a space where at-risk children could come, be mentored and learn responsibility in a safe location.

They were living in East Syracuse and had no experience with animals but the Seabrooks took the leap and sold their home, their camp and all their furniture and purchased the farm in Baldwinsville. Seabrook was herself an at-risk child, and having found success and family, she wanted to make a difference in the lives of other kids in need.

The first child to come to the farm was a young boy who was living at Elmcrest Children's Center. His work on the farm made a difference. "He loved it so much ... even in winter," Seabrook said. "He used to beg to stay here."

The second child to come was a 6-year-old girl who had suffered from traumatic abuse. Seabrook still keeps in contact with the girl, who recently graduated from high school.

For several years, the farm was very successfully fulfilling its mission. The menagerie of rescued animals had grown and although funding was always a challenge, Purpose Farm offered programs like Goat Yoga and other events that would help with the costs. Several area agencies were working with the farm, and between referrals from agencies and word of mouth, many children were coming and being supported and mentored in the pastoral riverside environment.

That all changed in February 2021, when a fire broke out in the farm's barn, killing 20 animals and destroying both the barn and about \$5,000 of hay.

Video footage showed that a hawk had gotten into the barn to prey on the smaller birds, and a peacock named Pete had tried to stave off the attack by chasing the hawk out. Tragically, the hawk knocked the lamp off as he flew away, which started the fire.

Pete and his fellow birds along with a couple of pigs and most of Purpose Farm's goats were killed in the fire. Farm favorite Chris P. Bacon, a pig, suffered third-degree burns on the left side of his body. He was sent to the Cornell University Hospital for Animals to undergo surgery but passed away a few days later.

Many of the larger animals including horses, alpacas, donkeys and the farm's camel were outside during the blaze and unharmed, and the dogs, three pigs and many smaller exotic animals were safe inside the Seabrook home. But still, the loss of the animals and the barn were a devastating blow.

The 125 x 120-foot barn had featured a riding arena, kitchen, half a basketball court where goat yoga was held and stalls for the animals, but according to Seabrook, the insurance company had written it up as a vacant pole barn and refused to pay the full value of the claim.

“We still have not fully recovered,” Seabrook said. “It’s just made it that much harder.

Fundraisers have helped, and construction has begun on a much smaller barn, but funding ran out before it was finished so Purpose Farm can’t complete the work until another funding stream is realized.

With no barn on the property, much of the work to run the farm and care for the animals is done entirely outdoors, which makes getting volunteers to help out a real challenge. Seabrook has a perpetual call out for volunteers – but that plea comes with a message: farm work can be challenging and requires commitment. It’s not for the faint of heart.

She does have a handful of regular volunteers who come to the farm to feed and care for the animals and manage some of the other labor that is required to keep the farm operating, but since the fire, there are no more group tours or goat yoga sessions which introduced potential volunteers to the farm and its mission.

Seabrook herself cares for the 20 or so animals that live within the home, and said it takes three to four hours each morning and again each evening to do all the cleaning and feeding required for the indoor animals. The few volunteers she has largely take care of the animals that live outdoors.

“They all love coming here, those that are committed to coming here,” she said.

Since the fire, Purpose Farm is no longer able to bring in new rescue animals, although Seabrook has made exceptions for a pair of rabbits that were set free on the north side of Syracuse and a goat that had been abandoned in the woods. The calls keep coming, but with funding and volunteers in short supply, she needs to hold the line. She’s committed to caring for the many animals that are already there “for the rest of their lives,” she said.

With the youngest of her four children now having started her own life in California, Seabrook will do all the mentoring of children herself when that program begins again in July. Seabrook said she is looking forward to having four sessions with children each week from July through November. Each session is about an hour and a half, and the children are taught to support the farm by feeding and cleaning up

after the animals, taking on responsibility and handling tasks with a purpose.

Life on the farm is different and more difficult than it was before the fire, but Seabrook is determined to keep Purpose Farm’s mission alive.

“I get up and I just keep going every day,” she said. “God called us to do this.” SWM

*To learn more about Purpose Farm, volunteer opportunities, or to donate, visit [purposefarm.org](http://purposefarm.org).*



# Bridal bliss at Calloca

All the newest bridal fashions were on display at Calloca Winery Estate in Fair Haven. A variety of wedding industry vendors were on hand for the event, which was highlighted by a fashion show by Bliss Bridal on the runway. *Photos by Kyle D. Meddaugh, onePhoto Photography, Fair Haven*



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# Paige's Butterfly Run looks to the future

Alyssa Dearborn

For nearly three decades, Paige's Butterfly Run has been bringing the Central New York community together in the name of remembering Paige Yeomans Arnold—who was only six years old when she was diagnosed with leukemia—while raising money to support pediatric cancer patients. The run itself brings thousands of participants to Downtown Syracuse. It is one of Syracuse's most well-known 5ks and has been an integral asset to helping fight pediatric cancer in the area.

After many years of work, Paige's Butterfly Run is ready for a new chapter in leadership. Jennifer Hunley, who has worked with the organization since 2022, has taken on the role of Paige's Butterfly Run's new Executive Director.

"I was at Assumption Church and Ministries for 12 years," she said when asked about her journey in the nonprofit world. "I knew it was time to make a change. And when I was looking, I knew that it would have to be something meaningful. So when I saw the opportunity to help children with cancer, I thought, 'Oh God, how could I not!' I went for it, and here we are!"

Jennifer learned a lot about pediatric cancer in her years working with the organization. Most importantly, she learned about how strong families are, how caring committees can be, and how determined children can be when facing the unimaginable.

"Here we have a family who has taken the unimaginable and has just been a tremendous service to this area for the past three decades," she said about the Arnold family, "I cannot imagine losing a child and they really had turned this into something incredible. For the past 30 years, they have walked with families from their time of diagnosis to survivorship. They've just been a tremendous service to families in need."

"Before I came into the childhood cancer world, I really had no idea how much is affected by this disease," she continued. "It's not just the patients, it's siblings, the parents, and families who are traumatized forever. There's just major injustices. Unfortunately, pediatric cancer research is not lucrative for big pharm. So, there's a huge [gap] in research... It really relies on foundations, non-profit organizations like ours, and, unfortunately, families who have been through similar situations to really move things forward in that area."

Since 1997, Paige's Butterfly Run has raised over \$5 million for childhood cancer services. Much of this money has gone to research, support programs, and to the Dr. William J. Waters Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital. The efforts of the organization's fundraising, Jennifer explains, is backed by the hope of increasing survivorship.

"When the children do survive, which is the outcome we all want, they're still very much affected by the treatments they received because they're just so toxic. So survivors are often left with deficiencies such as fertility stuff, dental stuff, mental health stuff. These are all things that I had no idea the depth of how awfully this affects the patients, families, communities as a whole. When a kiddo passes, it's obviously the family, but also the teachers, community members. Kids their age who are left to grapple with life and some things that, as adults, we have a hard time understanding."

Jennifer and the new board of directors want to continue the organization's legacy, but they also hope to expand Paige's Butterfly Run's reach in the future. She says that she foresees many exciting changes for the organization on the horizon, but she also says that she cannot speak about these exciting plans yet.

"Here's the thing," she replied when asked about the future, "when you have a non-profit organization that has been around, it's natural to go through where we've been, where we are now, and what we want to look like.

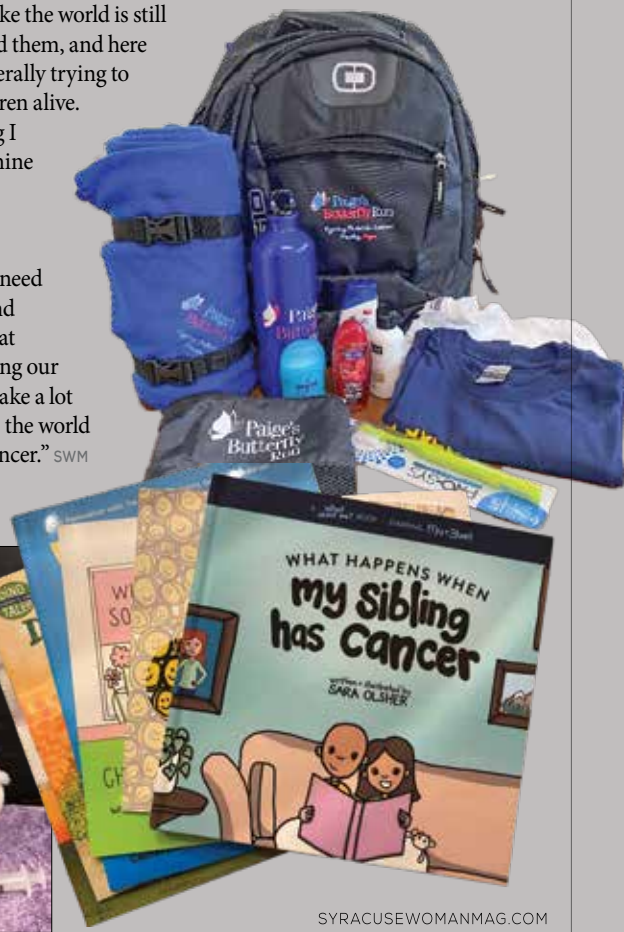
And that's exactly what we've done these past few years. We've brought new board members on and really feel good about our team and where we're headed. I will say, with the goal of all this in mind, not only sustain what we have been doing, but also grow, scoop up more of the local childhood cancer community, give them a voice and let them know they're being supported. [We want] to really grow our presence so more and more people understand what these families are dealing with."

Although there is still much to do on the front of childhood cancer, Jennifer and Paige's Butterfly Run are hopeful for the future. In the past year, the organization raised \$247,500, which helped fund research, a support endowment, comfort kits, family assistance, bereavement, survivor wellness and more. Breakthroughs resulting in increased cure rates also make Jennifer hopeful about the work that she is doing.

"I would love to see us grow [our endowment] along with the community to grow our impact," she said when asked about her hopes for the future. "When I say we help them from diagnosis through survivorship, there's so many touchpoints along the way. One of them, the largest, is financial assistance... So my hope is to build an endowment that is happening perpetually, whether our organization is around or not. That would be fantastic."

"It is an honor to walk with these families during this difficult time," Jennifer emphasized, "So many of them feel alone, feel like the world is still going on around them, and here they are, still literally trying to keep their children alive.

So the one thing I really want to shine through is that families in our community are suffering. They need our support. And I really think that together, elevating our voice, we can make a lot more happen in the world of childhood cancer." *SWM*





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Hope for Heather - GYN - Ovarian Cancer

**Celebrates Laura Serway & Linda Whalen!**



**Laura Serway**

Laura Serway is the recipient of the Ann Marie Bick Model Citizen Award. Laura is the heart and soul of Central New York, lending her heart to so many charities and important events, Hope for Heather is grateful for

her ongoing support and love she has given us over the years and feel that she is a MODEL CITIZEN - thank you Laura! We look forward to honoring you.



**Linda Whalen**

Linda Whalen is the recipient of the Sarah Evans Spirit of Volunteering Award. Linda is a 5-time cancer survivor and warrior. Each year, her dedication to the Teal Ribbon Run and Walk raises thousands of dollars for Hope for Heather. She volunteers and also provides raffle and

silent auction items for the fashion show and keeps her eye out for any opportunity to share Hope for Heather's mission. We are so grateful to Linda and her generous heart!

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# ANNA KINNEY



Photography by Alice G. Patterson

# Anna With Intention

Alyssa Dearborn

Anna Kinney is a natural entrepreneur. She owns a property care business with her husband and has had several entrepreneurial endeavors over the years. But Anna With Intention, a personal brand that she has been building since 2020, is her true passion.

"It's been slowly building in the background and it's really where my true passion lies." Anna said when asked about the start of her business, "It's a personal brand that's a very intimate kind of work that I do. I'm reframing claiming a niche, and that's been cool work that I've been doing. I started that business because I had found some deep, profound healing—physical, spiritual, emotional—through a couple different modalities that I got trained in and wanted to share that healing with others."

Her entrepreneurial spirit can be seen in the range of services she offers with Anna With Intention. She has incorporated one-on-one sessions, group workshops, public events and even a podcast into her business. But Anna primarily specializes in offering Human Design chart readings, a type of service in which Anna will help clients recognize patterns and unique energies in their individual charts. Most people know their star sign, and many people even know their moon signs and rising signs. But Human Design charting, as Anna explains, details more patterns than just the signs of the zodiac.

"It's really cool!" Anna said, "Human Design consists of five modalities, including astrology. We use your birth date and time and locations like you would to look up your astrology information.

There are planetary placements that are found in the chart.

There's also the Hindu Chakra system, it also has the 64 hexagrams that pretty much [shows] where the planetary placements are. So it's a little more refined than, like, a sign in astrology. For example, I'm a Leo sun. But within Leo, you have 29 degrees in astrology. Well, 29 degrees, that's a lot of different variation you can get in the energy of Leo.

In Human Design, Leo is broken down into several different hexagrams we call gates. Each of these hexagrams have six degrees. So, you can pin point on the exact day you were born and what that really defined, precise, energetic flavor is within the sign of Leo."

"Initially, people often come into my world through a Human Design reading," she continued, "The deeper work is looking at your chart, where you have experienced different conditioning that have caused you to feel strayed away from who you truly are...

We can go through piece by piece. The chart is, like, your baseline frequencies. It's what you're born with. And then life happens and more things can be piled on top of you. The way you're raised, the way you go through the education system, the culture you're raised in. We often find ourselves somewhere in life asking, 'who am I really?' So the chart kind of helps bring back that baseline to see who you really are."

A client may feel directionless or as if they no longer know themselves. But Anna not only helps people with her skills of decoding the client's Human Design chart. She also uses her unique gift of being able to connect with others to help people refind their way. When people work with Anna, some benefit from finding validation, experiencing less anxiety, and regaining self compassion.

Why do people reach out to Anna With Intention? "A lot of the time, what it comes down to is not knowing how to regulate their emotional space, not knowing how to own the parts of themselves that they've been ashamed of because of their conditioning," she said. "They've been told to be smaller, be quieter, be nicer, all the things that we get conditioned to feel through toxic patriarchy and late stage capitalism. All these things may not be in our best interest [or] not energetically aligned... It's all about empowering women, helping them own the parts of themselves that they knew were right... You know, when you do this work, you start to have more compassion for yourself, which leads you to have more compassion for others."

As much as Anna has helped others through her work, she has also received support and encouragement from the WBOC.

The organization, as Anna explains, has provided opportunities for its members to create professional connections as well as build an encouraging community of women.

"It's been an incredible community and resource." Anna said when asked about the organization, "I've been an entrepreneur in some way for the last 20 years. I run a business, I've been a nanny, I've done all these things that I've kind of done by myself. And to go where there's a whole bunch of other women at all different phases of success and development in their businesses, it's just a supportive community. I don't see myself not being a part of it. I don't ever see myself ever not being an entrepreneur... As an entrepreneur, I support local businesses, especially local women-owned businesses. So, the WBOC's great. That's my first resource when I'm looking for a service for anything."

If you are interested in learning more about Anna's work or Human Design reading, visit her website at [www.annawithintention.love](http://www.annawithintention.love) or her Linktree at [www.linktr.ee/annawithintention](http://www.linktr.ee/annawithintention). SWM



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# STACEY COOK & JENA MURPHY

## The Cosmetic Queens

BEST FRIENDS  
TAKE THE  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
LEAP TOGETHER

David Tyler

There are plenty of pithy quotes about friends going into business together, and most of them advise the reader against it. But for Stacey Cook and Jena Murphy – the Cosmetic Queens – their close friendship was a major factor in their decision to take a leap of faith and go into practice together, and it is the driving force behind their growth that will soon lead to a new location in downtown Syracuse.

Stacey is a board certified physician assistant and Jena is a board certified nurse practitioner. Both earned their degrees at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Together, they make up The Cosmetic Queens, a medical esthetic practice focusing on anti-aging, wellness, and cosmetic dermatology and injectables.

Beginning in 2013, Jena was providing medical esthetic services as a nurse practitioner, a role in which she honed her skills in surgery, dermatology, suturing and cosmetic injectables. Stacey was introduced to the world of medical esthetics when she was working as a surgical physician's assistant at St. Joseph's Hospital and then went on to work for a plastic surgeon and med spa.

*Continued on page 24*



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

**Cosmetic Queens** FROM PAGE 23

The two were introduced to one another at a conference, where Jena's attentive note taking caught Stacey's eye. Following that conference, Stacey began the Upstate New York Injectors group, where people in the medical esthetic industry could come together and discuss safety, procedures and trends in injectables. Jena was one of the few to attend, and the two hit it off.

"It was a match made in heaven," Stacey said. Quickly, both Stacey and Jena began to describe themselves as "besties," and began working together. It wasn't long before the pair began to discuss the possibility of starting their own practice together and how they would do things differently if they were out on their own.

Their vision was to create a safe environment where people could share their insecurities without judgment and where they could provide cost-effective and honest treatment plans for their patients. But it was a leap of faith. They both had a wealth of knowledge about the services they would offer, but neither had business experience.

"It's a daunting thing to put a large sum of money, effort and time into something that you don't know is going to succeed or not," Stacey said. "We were medical providers and needed to figure out all the different hats such as inventory, marketing, staffing, billing, budgeting, innovative technology, etc."

So Stacey dug in and began to learn. She took a course with the WISE Women's Business Center, joined the Profound Mastermind Group, began networking with as many successful entrepreneurs as she could find nationwide and read multiple books on business management. They were also blessed to find supervising physician Dr. Esther Lubinga, who supported Stacey and Jena as they prepared plans for the new practice and still serves in that role today.

With the confidence that they could not only provide exceptional service, but also maintain a successful business, they took the leap and the Cosmetic Queens became reality. Since that date in April 2023 when the practice opened at 55 S. First Street in Fulton, the practice has taken off.

"We grew even more confidence when our patients started to find us," Stacey said. "This was a humbling experience. We really thought about how much we touched people's lives and how our attention for detail allowed patients to trust us over other providers they've had in the past."

Both attribute their friendship and how well they play off each other to the practice's success. In addition to the medical services she provides, Stacey maintains her role in business management while Jena concentrates specifically on patient care. Both take pride in their willingness to constantly learn and strive to enhance their skills.

Stacey also credited the support of her parents (nicknamed TriLift Tom & Ultra Pulse Patty by the patients) who have consistently aided the practice in a plethora of ways including setup and execution of the business. Patty works at the front desk "and most of the time people are asking about her and the cosmetic pup Dahlia before they ask about Jena and I," Stacey said.

"We feed off each other and patients know that we are stronger together and that they are going to get the very best care and treatments due to collaboration," Stacey said. "Jena and I have strengths and weaknesses that complement each other."

They also attribute their shared philosophy of "patients over profits" as being a key factor in their growth. Being in practice on their own, they have the ability to create a patient-centric culture, giving them control over what protocols and treatment plans are best, not for the bottom line, but for the patient. It also allowed them to spend as much time with each patient as necessary, and it made it possible for them to collaborate with companies and suppliers that shared that value.

"We have the reputation of being not only competent but compassionate providers," Stacey said. "We retain patients by building trust and loyalty – never "selling" them on things they don't need, saying no if necessary and giving them all their options – even if it means not at our practice."

"We also care about them as people and sprinkle a little fun into the visits," she added.

Jena recalls how that patient-centric philosophy paid off in a life-saving way with one of their patients. One day, she was helping Stacey with a patient and noticed an "ominous looking" mole on the patient's arm. The patient said it had been biopsied in the past with negative results, but Jena and Stacey were concerned and agreed that the lesion should be re-biopsied.

"The lesion came back as melanoma, which saved this patient's life," Jena said. "We could have just said 'ok, just be sure to follow up with routine skin checks' and moved onto our next patients, but that's not our style. This patient is forever appreciative of us for caring."

Launching the practice also allowed them to take back control of their own lives. Jena, a mother of two, loves the newfound opportunity to manage her own schedule.

"It gave me more control on my life too, allowing me the ability to make my schedule the way I want in order to be more involved with school activities and something as little as getting my kids off the bus," she said.

One of the greatest gifts Stacey and Jena provide for their clients is confidence.

"There are many people that suffer from things that make them not confident in their own skin and it is a true blessing to be able to help and give back to these patients," Jena said. "We are extremely lucky and find it rewarding to be able to give back to the loyal patients that have supported, cheered for and encouraged us to keep going."

For both Stacey and Jena, giving back to the larger community is also part of the Cosmetic Queens' mission. Stacey has a long history of volunteerism with community service organizations including We Rise Above the Streets, Make-A-Wish, McMahan Ryan Child Advocacy, Special Olympics and other organizations. That work has rubbed off on Jena, and the two have worked together on volunteer missions including building beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace and raising funds for Vera House, David's Refuge and St. Jude's.

"Giving back is a critical part of our business philosophy because we have always had the passion to support those need, but now we can give back in different ways using our clinical skills, time and heart."—Stacey Cook



Now the two have launched a foundation for the purpose of funding medical esthetic services for people who require these services because of trauma or illness. Among the people they've helped are a woman who was hit by a drunk driver, Bell's Palsy patients, dog bite victims, cancer patients with external radiation injuries and domestic violence victims. The foundation is funded by asking other patients to round up their bills and seeking either financial contributions or free products from the suppliers the Cosmetic Queens work with.

"Giving back is a critical part of our business philosophy because we have always had the passion to support those need, but now we can give back in different ways using our clinical skills, time and heart," Stacey said. "Being able to provide the work we love to do and give back to people who have facial imperfections as a result of something they had no control over is a true privilege."

*Continued on page 26*



**Cosmetic Queens** FROM PAGE 25

So what's next for The Cosmetic Queens?

By summer, they plan to release their plans for a new location to chase their entrepreneurial aspirations in a thriving downtown Syracuse neighborhood where they will build out a new 2,500 square foot facility. The new location will be in collaboration with local business owners and will include new and expanded staff as well as convenient free parking for patients.

That leap of faith to start a new business is never an easy one, but Stacey and Jena agree that launching their own practice was an incredible, life changing decision both for themselves and for their patients.


Stacey advises prospective entrepreneurs to build a network of professionals to provide advice and problem solve, hire only people

who align with your values and morals, put a strong legal and accounting team in place, and then take the leap.

“Our key advice for healthcare professionals specifically considering entrepreneurship: Do it,” Stacey said.

And for The Cosmetic Queens, whose business was founded on a deep friendship, the entrepreneurship experience has been all the more satisfying.

“When Stacey came into my life, the injectable dream team commenced and to be quite honest, so did my love for our work,” Jena said. “With her by my side, I feel like we can conquer any challenge.” *SWM*



“When Stacey came into my life, the injectable dream team commenced and to be quite honest, so did my love for our work. With her by my side, I feel like we can conquer any challenge.”—Jena Murphy

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# Yalonda Bey

TRANSFORMING LIVES  
THROUGH CULINARY EDUCATION

Chef Eric Rose





In the heart of Syracuse, there is a force of nature shaping young lives through the art of cooking. That force is Yalonda Bey, the dedicated leader of the culinary program at the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central (ITC). More than just a teacher, Bey is a mentor, role model, and advocate for her students, guiding them not only in the kitchen but also in life. Her unwavering belief in their potential, coupled with her deep well of knowledge and passion for culinary arts, has changed the trajectory of countless students who walk through her doors.

For Bey, the culinary program is about much more than mastering recipes — it's about building confidence, instilling discipline, and teaching resilience. Many of the students she works with come from diverse and often challenging backgrounds, but inside her kitchen, they find a space filled with encouragement, structure, and love. Bey understands that before her students can master a dish, they must first master believing in themselves. She nurtures their growth, helps them take constructive criticism with grace, and pushes them to strive for excellence in every endeavor.

I recently had the privilege of proctoring ITC's State Culinary Exam final, something I have done for years. This role has given me a front-row seat to witness Bey's impact firsthand. Watching her students in action — working with precision, applying techniques with confidence, and displaying a sense of pride in their craft — never ceases to amaze me. It is a testament to her ability to cultivate not just skillful chefs, but determined and capable individuals ready to take on any challenge.

The exam itself is rigorous, designed to test students on critical culinary techniques under timed conditions. From fabricating a whole chicken to crafting a flawless yeast dough, these young chefs are evaluated on essential skills that mirror real-world restaurant expectations. They must showcase *mise en place* [a French culinary term meaning "everything in its place,"], time management, professionalism, and adaptability—all while producing high-quality dishes under pressure. Their ability to execute each task speaks volumes about their growth and dedication to the craft.

Bey's leadership has also contributed to a growing trend: the rise of women in culinary arts. Historically, professional kitchens have been male-dominated, but that is changing, and ITC's program is playing a role in this shift. More young women are stepping into culinary programs, honing their skills, and envisioning futures in the industry. Bey, as a female leader, serves as an inspiration, demonstrating that success in the culinary world is about talent, dedication, and heart — not gender. Her influence ensures that all students, regardless of background or gender, feel empowered to chase their dreams.

Since 2014, Bey has dedicated herself to making the ITC culinary program a launching pad for success. Her expertise in curriculum development, hands-on training, and student engagement has solidified ITC's reputation as a top-tier culinary program. She teaches with a perfect blend of discipline and compassion, demanding excellence while providing unwavering support. Her students don't just learn how to cook — they learn how to handle feedback, work under pressure, and believe in their own capabilities.

Ultimately, the ITC culinary program is not just about food. It's about transformation. Under Yalonda Bey's guidance, students leave with more than culinary skills; they leave with confidence, resilience, and a foundation for a successful future. As I continue to proctor these exams and watch her work her magic year after year, I am reminded that her greatest recipe is not one found in a cookbook — it is the way she shapes lives, one student at a time. *SWM*

## Two of the recipes from the State Exam

### SAUTÉED CHICKEN BREAST WITH LEMON CAPER SAUCE

*Yield: 2 Servings*

#### INGREDIENTS

Chicken breast, boneless, skin-on or off  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 Tbsp oil  
3 Tbsp butter  
¼ cup flour  
2 Tbsp lemon juice  
¼ cup chicken stock  
2 Tbsp capers, rinsed  
1 Tbsp fresh parsley, minced

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Season chicken breasts on both sides with salt and pepper.
2. Dredge the chicken breasts in flour, coating both sides well, shake off excess.



*Continued on page 30*

**Yolanda Bey** FROM PAGE 29



3. Heat the oil 1 tbsp. of the butter in sauté pan over medium heat.
4. Add the chicken breasts to the pan skin-side down and cook until golden, about 3 to 4 minutes, without turning the breasts.
5. Turn breasts over, cook to an internal temperature of 165°F.
6. Remove from pan and transfer to plate. Keep warm.
7. Immediately deglaze pan with lemon juice and chicken stock.
8. Add capers and bring to a simmer, scraping fond from the bottom of the pan.
9. Check for seasoning and return chicken to pan. Simmer for another 2 to 3 minutes or until liquid is reduced by half.
10. Remove chicken to serving dish.
11. Add remaining butter to sauce and whisk vigorously. Add parsley.
12. Pour sauce over chicken, garnish and serve.

**BREAD PUDDING**

*Yield: 10 oz./Serving Size: 5 oz./# of Servings: 2*

**INGREDIENTS**

- Butter for ramekins as needed
- 2 Tbsp granulated sugar
- French bread, cut into ½ to 1 inch pieces (fill two ramekins)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ¼ tsp vanilla
- ⅛ tsp cinnamon

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Butter two 4 to 6 oz ramekins and coat with sugar and cinnamon mixture.
3. Whisk milk, eggs, vanilla, and remaining cinnamon and sugar together.
4. Fill ramekins with custard/ bread mixture. Soak for up to an hour in ramekins. *(You may also place these ingredients in large bowl to soak for an hour, then transfer to ramekins.)*
5. Place ramekins in a water bath and bake for 25-30 minutes or until the internal temperature of the custard reaches 160°F. The custard is set when it is firm but still jiggles when tapped.



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# JENNELL THURN



# The power of refocusing through change

Janelle Davis

Jennell Thurn's entrepreneurial journey is one of resilience and determination. The entrepreneurial path of Treasure Lilly Boutique's owner in Cicero has been filled with unexpected turns that have shaped Jennell Thurn into the savvy business owner she is today.

"Even when you think you've got it all together, it just takes one thing to derail you," Thurn reflects. "But it doesn't mean it's over. You just have to refocus."

Her entrepreneurial journey began unexpectedly during maternity leave from National Grid. Home with a newborn and seeking connection to the outside world, she discovered online shopping. "Before I knew it, all these packages were coming to the door," she laughs. This sparked an idea that would change the trajectory of her life.

Starting with an MLM clothing company, Thurn quickly realized she wanted more control. "Why am I paying the middleman?" she wondered. In a bold move, she tracked down the factory producing the clothing and proposed creating her own line. By 2018, Treasure Lilly was born — operating from her basement with a six-foot ceiling and five children running around.

"My daughter, who was 13 at the time, took photos of everything I was trying to post, and my husband would come downstairs to help me ship packages," she recalls. "It literally took over our house."

The business grew rapidly. By 2019, she was incorporated with employees, and during the pandemic — when many small businesses struggled — Treasure Lilly thrived. Thurn discovered something unexpected: beyond selling clothing, she was creating community.

"I went live twice a day on social media, very much QVC-style," she explains. "During the pandemic, there were people who were totally isolated. They didn't have family living with them. They were alone, and I became their person."

What began as a way to avoid returning to corporate life revealed itself as something more profound. "I realized I was put here for a bigger reason. It wasn't about the clothes; it was about giving people an outlet and interacting with them."

But life had other plans. As Thurn built a dream house for her family in 2021, unexpected personal obstacles emerged.

"Life gave us a huge curveball," she says quietly.

As Thurn focused on being "mom first" during this challenging time, her business began to falter. She encountered unexpected issues with business management at her store. Her staff of seven dwindled to four as she struggled to keep the business afloat.

By August 2023, Thurn made the painful decision to close Treasure Lilly's doors. "I sold every last piece of that store, every fixture off the wall, everything," she says.

The response from customers was immediate and overwhelming. "The amount of emails, phone calls, and people who reached out to remind me that I was part of their daily life was insane," she says.

Rather than abandoning her business entirely, Thurn returned to her roots — operating online from her basement.

"I said I would never own another storefront. It was too devastating for me, the loss I had to catch up on."

Yet fate intervened when she visited a popcorn shop in Cicero. The property manager, mistaking her for an employee of the shop, mentioned a vacant space next door. When Thurn explained her situation, he made an offer she couldn't refuse: rent \$1,000 less per month than her previous location.

"It was the right place at the right time," she says. Now, Treasure Lilly welcomes 30-50 customers daily, and Thurn has paid off six credit cards since reopening.

The boutique continues to offer its signature "buttery soft leggings" — the first item Thurn privately labeled — alongside Judy Blue jeans, Inis fragrances from Ireland, and various local products including treats from the Chocolate Pizza Company and specialty jams.

Her commitment to authentic connection remains central to her business philosophy. "I've decided to be real and open with my life. Not everything is sunshine and rainbows," she says. "People can't relate to that. They relate to real-life struggles and how you can go from point A to point B."

This authenticity extends to her personal journey. Thurn realized she wasn't taking care of herself. With health concerns mounting, she committed to wellness and transformed her lifestyle.

"I've inspired other women to make better choices, to take care of themselves first before they can take care of others," she says.

Despite her success, Thurn remains cautious about expansion. While the space next to her current location is vacant and the demographics promising, she won't open additional locations.

"To run a small business, you have to be hands-on," she explains. "A second location wouldn't work because I couldn't be there daily. If you're not hands-on, things aren't going to be run the way you feel they need to be."

She also mentors aspiring entrepreneurs and supports small businesses by carrying their accessories and jewelry. "I want them to know that I believe in them like they believed in me."

As she prepares for a Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremony later that day, Thurn reflects on the most important lesson she's learned: "When you're struggling, it's time to refocus, time to go back to basics. Once I went back to basics and trimmed all the fat from my expenses, I found I'm profiting the same amount."

For Jennell Thurn, entrepreneurship isn't just about selling products — it's about creating connection, weathering life's seasons with grace and rising from the ashes stronger than before. *SWM*



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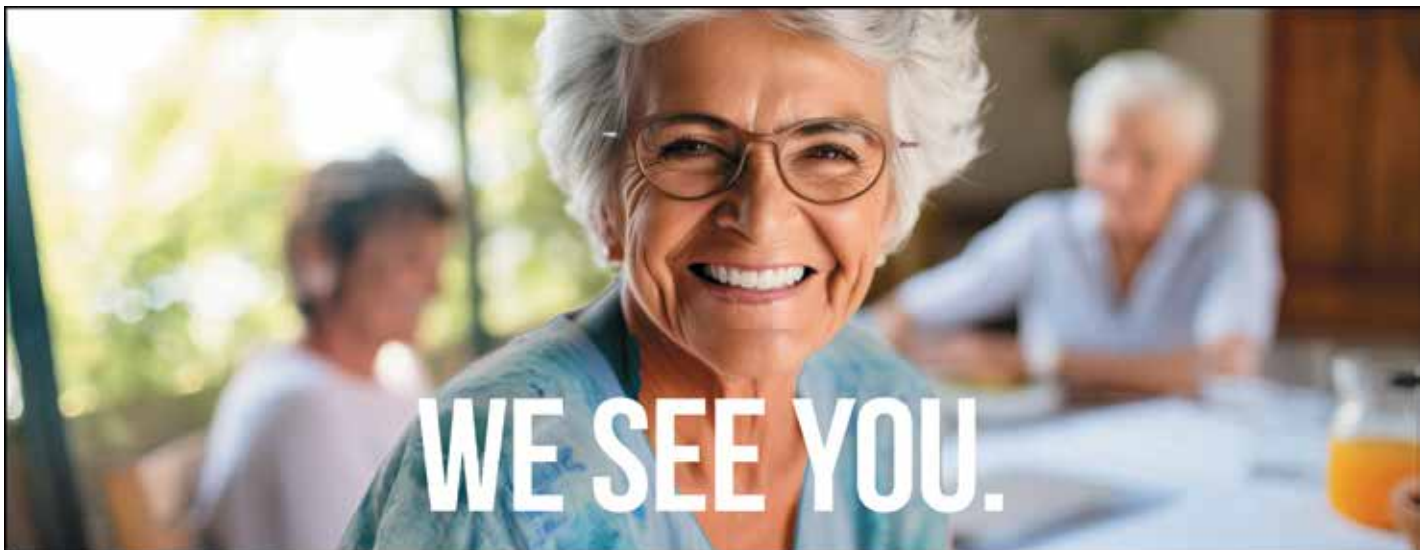



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# GWEN CROSSETT



# From childhood dream to thriving business

Janelle Davis

When fifth-grader Gwen Crossett removed a splinter from her friend's hand with tweezers, something clicked. "I was like, 'Oh my God, I love this,'" she remembers. That same year, she completed a comprehensive first aid course, further cementing her interest in healthcare. Despite this early passion, Crossett's path to founding one of Central New York's most respected home care agencies would wind through unexpected terrain.

Now celebrating its eighth anniversary, ConstantCare 24/7 reflects Crossett's lifelong desire to help others, combined with the business expertise and healthcare knowledge developed throughout her multifaceted career.

## Finding her way back to a childhood dream

"I always wanted to be a nurse," Crossett explains, though she was initially discouraged from pursuing this path. Instead, Crossett first pursued business education, then social work. But the nursing dream persisted. In her early thirties, as a mother of two small children, she finally took the plunge.

"It was probably the top three things I've done in my life," she reflects. "My husband is my first really good choice, my children, and then my nursing career."

Already equipped with a bachelor's degree in human services, Crossett worked briefly in that sector before obtaining her nursing degree. Her first nursing position was on Crouse Hospital's oncology floor — not a planned choice, but one that proved unexpectedly fulfilling.

"I found that the patient population was very appreciative. They were really grateful, humble" she said of cancer patients. This experience provided her early exposure to end-of-life care, an area initially foreign to her but one she ultimately found rewarding.

## Building experience and vision

For 13 years, Crossett worked at Loretto, where she gained crucial home care experience through the PACE program. She credits a supportive boss who both mentored her and provided flexibility for raising her children without micromanagement.

When advancement at Loretto would have meant moving into administration, Crossett faced a crossroads. "I was all about getting things done," she explains. "And when you work for a not-for-profit sector of healthcare, that can be a challenge."

Eight years ago, she left Loretto to start her own company, drawing on both her nursing expertise and social work background.

## A holistic approach to home care

ConstantCare 24/7 offers three primary services: companion care, skilled care through their licensed agency (which they manage through Integrity Home Care), and a New York State licensed caregiver registry that allows families to directly employ caregivers referred by ConstantCare.

Companion care specifically provides at-home support services focusing on oversight, supervision, and redirection. This includes helping clients with daily activities while ensuring their safety and comfort through attentive monitoring and gentle guidance when needed.

This comprehensive approach means "there's not anybody that we cannot take care of in their own home," Crossett says, whether clients need tube feedings, diabetes management, or specialized dementia care.

The company also provides consulting services for families unsure about next steps for aging loved ones. "We'll come in and meet with the family, do an evaluation, and then give them choices," she explains. These recommendations might include ConstantCare's services or other options like assisted living placement.

"Not everybody can stay home, nor is it always a good idea," Crossett acknowledges, demonstrating her commitment to client wellbeing over business interests.

## Wisdom from the journey

When asked what she's learned transitioning from healthcare provider to business owner, Crossett shares. "You can't please everybody. Not everybody's going to be happy with your decisions, whether that's your employees or your customers."

She speaks candidly about the challenges: "You have to make some really hard decisions that affect people's lives—when to let people go, when to fire people, when not to promote somebody, when to hold somebody accountable."

Throughout this journey, Crossett has relied on coaches and mentors. "I can't say that I got here all by myself. I figured everything out," she acknowledges. Her husband has been particularly crucial to her success. "My husband has been very encouraging since day one"

## Looking Ahead

While ConstantCare has grown every year since its founding, Crossett isn't focused on further expansion herself. "I think that'll be left for the next CEO or president," she says, noting that the business is very scalable and that bringing her son into the company provides a potential succession path.

For women aspiring to start their own businesses, Crossett offers straightforward advice: "Never stop dreaming. But if you dream, you need to have a plan. You can't just hope and dream."

What's most striking about Crossett's entrepreneurial journey is that it began with purpose rather than profit. "I didn't start this business for money. I started it because I wanted some satisfaction. I've always been a helper since I was a little girl, so I just continued that. That's where I think my success came from — it wasn't about the money, it was really about the mission."

From removing splinters as a child to building a company that helps seniors age with dignity at home, Gwen Crossett's journey demonstrates the power of following one's inner voice — even when others discourage it, even when the path isn't straight, and even when success requires personal sacrifice along the way. *SWM*



# SARAH SIMIELE





# The Curd Nerd launches a new restaurant in Eastwood

David Tyler

From early in her childhood, Sarah Simiele knew she was going to be a surgeon. Her studies at Binghamton University all revolved the intensive pre-med training she would need to attend medical school. She was majoring in cellular molecular biology. She had done rotations at area hospitals and observed numerous surgeries.

But that all changed when she fell in love – with cheese.

To blow off some steam, she and some of her college friends founded the Binghamton Cheese Club, a new venture at which they hosted events to learn and teach all about various types of cheese, what they paired well with and how they were made. By the time she was a senior, upwards of 100 Binghamton students would show up for their events.

At the time, she was “overworking” in labs on a very complex degree and realized that her background in science translated perfectly to a knowledge of cheese. So when she graduated, the Queens native moved back home and was quickly hired by a local cheese shop in Brooklyn.

For Sarah, the job was the perfect balance - it gave her the opportunity to learn and teach about cheese. There was the social and community aspect of working in a small retail business. There was the focus on the science behind the flavors and the opportunity to educate people on why certain cheeses taste the way they do.

“I loved it,” she said. “I was like ‘Yup, this is what I’m going to do.’” In December of 2019, her husband Matt, an electrical engineer, got a job offer in Syracuse, and the two made plans for Matt to move to Syracuse while Sarah would go to Europe with a friend for a year, do some traveling and then get a job either on a farm or at a cheese business.

“We had this whole trip planned. Everything was booked. We bought our house. And then March happened,” Sarah said of the beginning of the Covid pandemic. The cheese monger and her husband moved into their new home in Syracuse in April of 2020, just as the world was shutting down. There would be no trip to Europe and she was suddenly in a place where specialty cheese shops are in short supply.

For a year, she pitched specialty grocery shops on plans to help them build out a cheese program at their stores. She worked at Wegmans in their cheese department. She kept the dream of making her living in the cheese business alive. And then Matt had a brain-child – they would open their own cheese shop.

“I was like, that’s crazy. Absolutely not. You’re out of your mind ... first of all, we have no savings. Second of all, I can’t run a shop,” she recalled. But eventually Matt convinced her that she could do it, and the idea of The Curd Nerd was born.

Sarah credits her landlord, Steven Skinner, for believing in her as well.

“He is crazy in the sense that he took a gamble on us, because we showed up in his office [and said] we have no money, we have no background in business management, I just really love cheese and I’m really good at what I do,” she said. “He was willing to take a chance ... Not every landlord would look at our backgrounds and be like, ‘yeah, here you go.’”

A few months later, in the spring of 2022, The Curd Nerd officially opened at 2800 James Street in the heart of Eastwood. The response, Sarah said, was unexpected.

“That first month, we saw more customers than I thought we’d ever see,” she said. Some of it was curiosity – people coming in just to see what this new cheese shop is about. But many were genuinely thankful to have a store with specifically curated selections that can’t be found anywhere else in Syracuse.

Sarah spends a lot of her time traveling to food shows and researching products online to determine what makes it onto the shelves or into the cheese case. Whatever she carries has to be “the best version of whatever it is,” she said. Although there’s a nice selection of New York State products in the store, many local products that are readily available at grocery stores won’t be found at the Curd Nerd. Although cheese makes up about 60 percent of the store’s sales, there’s also a selection of hard-to-find jams and chips and sauces, locally sourced seasonal produce and local meats. It’s a formula that works and has led to significant growth.

After three months of handling the shop on her own with some help from Matt, they hired their first employee. The store now has four full-time employees and also brings on seasonal help to handle surges around the holidays.

And now, the self-proclaimed Curd Nerd is taking her next leap of faith. This month, Sarah and Matt will open The Wedge, a full-service bar/café, in the space next to the shop. Her vision is for something that Eastwood lacks – a community-based bar/restaurant with seating for about 40. The menu will be based on the products available at the shop, and Sarah hopes it inspires people to elevate their own cooking by using high quality, unique ingredients.

For now, The Wedge will be open for dinners and Sunday brunch. She envisions it as a place where people from the neighborhood can walk over for a bite and cocktail in the evening. There is some seating at the bar, some smaller tables, and a large community table that seats 12. Initially, the restaurant will start with a soft opening around April 1, with hopes to ramp up to their full schedule by Easter weekend.

“We have a general manager, a bar manager and a chef right now for the space, and we’re going to open with a pretty tight, small crew, and kind of let the space tell us what it needs,” Sarah said. She’s in the process of hiring a dishwasher, four servers and a couple more bartenders and cooks. The staff will be “smaller than most restaurants, but bigger than the Curd Nerd team and way bigger than when we opened the Curd Nerd.”

In a little over three years, Sarah has gone from being the sole employee of her fledgling specialty shop to an entrepreneur with two businesses and more than a dozen employees. And it’s all based on her driving passion – for cheese. *SWM*



## MPH announces two key leadership appointments



Pat Bentley Hoke

Manlius Pebble Hill School has announced the appointment of Patricia Bentley Hoke as the new head of Middle and Upper Schools and Audrey Yeager as the new dean of academics, beginning July 2025.

Pat has been an integral part of the MPH community since 1993, serving in various leadership roles, including assistant head of Middle and Upper Schools, director of student life, and English Department Chair. In addition,

she has coached varsity girls soccer since 1995, leading the team to multiple championships and earning the distinction as League Coach of the Year six times. In this new role, she will oversee the academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs for Grades 6-12, ensuring alignment with the school's mission and core values while promoting a cohesive, inclusive community.

"Pat's deep commitment to our school and her steady leadership make her the ideal person to guide our Middle and Upper Schools into the future," said Head of School Jim Foley. "Her ability to foster meaningful relationships and her passion for student success will continue to enhance the vibrant learning environment we strive to provide."

She received her bachelor of arts in literature from Williams College and is presently enrolled in the FORGE Program for school leaders at Columbia Teachers College.



Audrey Yeager

In her new role as dean of academics, Audrey will lead the design, articulation, and evolution of the school's academic program and curriculum. She will ensure that teaching and learning practices align with the school's mission and core values. Collaborating closely with division heads, department chairs, and other school leaders, she will foster innovative pedagogy, support faculty growth through coaching and professional development, and oversee key academic operations

such as curriculum development, assessment practices, and master scheduling. Prior to this role, Audrey served as coordinator of teaching & learning at Manlius Pebble Hill School, where she played a central role in strengthening faculty development and instructional practices.

"Audrey's expertise in curriculum development and her commitment to faculty mentorship make her an invaluable asset to our academic leadership," said Foley. "Her vision for innovative and research-based teaching strategies will help shape an exceptional learning experience for our students. With her leadership, we will continue to evolve our academic program to inspire and challenge each student to reach their full potential."

Audrey received her bachelor of science degree in biological and chemical sciences from Wells College and a master of science degree in secondary science education from Syracuse University.

## Joins Crouse Medical Practice



Amy Russell, PA-C

Crouse Medical Practice – Camillus Primary Care has welcomed Amy Russell, PA-C, to the practice.

Amy received her bachelor of science in biology from Siena College and her master's degree from LeMoyne College. She was born in Marietta, GA, but has lived in Syracuse since age 9. She enjoys time with her family and is currently welcoming new patients.

CMP offers primary care and specialty care out of 19 locations throughout Central New

York. In addition to primary care, clinical services offered through CMP include general surgery; cardiology; OB/GYN; endocrinology; pulmonology; neurosurgery; neurovascular; diabetes care; stroke care; bariatric; maternal fetal medicine; plastic surgery.

## Joins Solvay Bank's Liverpool branch



Sarah Shoults

Solvay Bank, the oldest community bank established in Onondaga County, is pleased to announce the addition of Sarah Shoults to its team as head teller of its Liverpool branch. Sarah brings a wealth of experience in banking, having worked at other financial institutions where she most recently served as head teller.

Before her banking career, Sarah gained valuable experience in customer service and logistics roles.

She is excited to build upon her previous experience and is looking forward to continued success with Solvay Bank.

## Named senior VP at Centerstate CEO



Nora Spillane has been appointed Centerstate CEO's new senior vice president of inclusive growth, joining the organization's Corporate Leadership Team.

Since joining Centerstate CEO nearly six years ago, Nora's work has included the coordination of internal efforts during the Micron site selection process, supporting TTM's most recent expansion in Central New York, coordinating the development of the CenterState Growth + Equity Fund, and collaborating with the city on a master plan for

the 40-acre former Syracuse Development Center site on the Near Westside. She also serves as a member of the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council supporting critical projects within our region.

Her deep expertise and clear and consistent commitment to fostering inclusive growth make her exceptionally well-positioned to step into this role for the organization in this moment, according to Centerstate CEO President & CEO Robert Simpson. "As we look ahead, I have full confidence that she will provide thoughtful leadership as we continue to push our impact forward through major initiatives such as the ON-RAMP workforce development center, the expansion of the new Innovation Hub (formerly The Tech Garden) and the development of a robust semiconductor supply chain that includes both new partners as well as local businesses that are looking to take advantage of this once in a generation opportunity to grow and expand their business."

## St. Joseph's Health welcomes Dr. Megan Matott



Megan Matott, DO

St. Joseph's Health recently welcomed Megan Matott, DO, back to St. Joseph's Health Hospital where she will practice palliative medicine.

Dr. Matott received her bachelor of science in biology from Nazareth College in Rochester, where she graduated summa cum laude. She earned her doctor of osteopathic medicine from West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine and completed her Family Medicine Residency Training at St. Joseph's Health Hospital. She worked in

primary care for two years, prior to completing her fellowship training in hospice and palliative medicine at Rochester General Hospital. Megan is particularly interested in symptom management at the end of life and providing supportive environments for patients and families during these transitional periods.

"I feel a true calling to care for those with serious illnesses. I am honored and humbled every day to help improve quality of life for this population," she said. "I am thrilled to be able to continue my career in a place where I already feel at home with an incredible team of colleagues."

In her spare time, Megan as a self-proclaimed "health nut," is an athlete, lifter, dancer, cyclist, roller skater, and low carb diet enthusiast. Dichotomously though, she also runs a small custom cake business in her spare time. She loves all things outdoorsy, home renovations, DIY projects and reading an abundance of fiction novels.

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## April 2 WBOC Spring Social and SWM Launch Party

**What:** A casual and fun networking event with WBOC and WISE celebrating the launch of *Syracuse Woman Magazine's* April Women in Business edition. Cash bar and light fare included.

**Where:** Drumlins Bistro  
800 Nottingham Rd, Syracuse, NY 13224

**When:** 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.



## April 5 Playoffs for Pups

**What:** Join for hockey, food trucks, and a silent auction featuring signed hockey gear. All benefits HumaneCNY.

**Where:** Midstate Athletic Community Center Twin Rinks  
5575 Meltzer Ct #1, Cicero, NY 13039

**When:** 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



## A Bridgerton Ball

**What:** Lady Whistledown and the Syracuse Orchestra invite you to an evening of music inspired by *Bridgerton*. Costumes encouraged!

**Where:** Inspiration Hall  
709 James St, Syracuse, NY 13203

**When:** 7 p.m.

**Info:** Tickets available on [www.syracuseorchestra.org](http://www.syracuseorchestra.org)



## April 12 International Taste Festival 5K and 10K

**What:** Run in a 5K or 10K race. Participants receive a free ticket to the International Taste Festival. Presented by Willow Running.

**Where:** NYS Fairgrounds  
581 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse

**Info:** Register at [www.runsignup.com](http://www.runsignup.com)



## April 23-May 11 Sense and Sensibility

**What:** Based on the novel by Jane Austen, the Dashwood sisters navigate romance and a search for stability in 18th century England. The play is a joyous love letter to one of literature's classic stories.

**Where:** The Syracuse Stage  
820 E Genesee St, Syracuse, NY 13210

**Info:** Tickets available at [www.syracusestage.org/sense](http://www.syracusestage.org/sense)



## April 24 Everson Ceramics Social

**What:** Join for the museum's signature fundraising event and celebrate art and culture of Central New York. Featuring food, drink, and a ceramics silent auction.

**Where:** The Everson Museum of Art  
401 Harrison St, Syracuse, NY 13202

**When:** 6 p.m.

**Info:** \$150 for general admission. \$250 for patron ticket.  
[www.everson.org/event/ceramics-social](http://www.everson.org/event/ceramics-social)



## April 25 Syracuse Poster Project's 2025 Poster Unveiling

**What:** Gather with artists, poets, and others in the Central New York arts community to celebrate public art. Enjoy food, drink, music, and a gallery displaying the new posters.

**Where:** City Hall Commons  
201 E Washington St Syracuse, NY 13202

**When:** 6 to 8 p.m.

**Info:** [www.posterproject.org](http://www.posterproject.org)



## April 25 & 26 Earth Day Litter Cleanup

**What:** Individuals or teams can sign up to help clean up Onondaga County!

**Where:** Pick any safe, public place within the county to beautify.

**Info:** Free. Register at [www.OCRRA.org/events](http://www.OCRRA.org/events)



## April 26 Pink Pony Club Chappell Roan Night

**What:** It's a femininomenon! Join for a themed dance party featuring dance hits and fun.

**Where:** The Song and Dance  
115 E Jefferson St, Syracuse, NY 13202

**When:** 9 p.m.

**Info:** 18+. Tickets available at [www.thesonganddance.com](http://www.thesonganddance.com)



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