

SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS

Small businesses and professional practices are the backbone of our community. Unlike big chains, they contribute to the character of our town, helping to make Bloomington the special place it is. Small businesses create good jobs and keep money circulating here rather than having it leave town for corporate headquarters in New York City, Atlanta, or elsewhere. And with small businesses, you know the owner, and he or she can get to know you. In this special advertorial section, we feature the stories of local businesses with fewer than two dozen employees. Each business is unique and making a contribution to the common good.

Photos by Martin Boling



Skin Aesthetics Medical Spa

Kathy Pafford, owner

Kathy Pafford, a licensed medical aesthetician and owner of Skin Aesthetics Medical Spa, believes being a small business owner lets her provide individual services that match her patients' desires. "I pride myself in trying to listen to what a patient wants and finding a conservative solution—financially and procedurally," Pafford says.

After working in Bloomington for 10 years, Pafford moved her office from Howe Street to 2801 N. Walnut, Suite 8, last year to facilitate the growth of her practice. "This is what I've done for the last 20 years, and I want to perfect my craft and take care of my patients," she says. "Ultimately, it's your face

and you have to be pleased with what you get. The patient's care is first and foremost."

Licensed as an advanced injector, Pafford does Botox, Dysport, and dermal-filler injections; laser hair and vein removal; microdermabrasion treatments; and chemical peels. She also carries a line of skin care products. "It's nice to help everyone, regardless of what decade they are in, slow down the aging process and get comfortable with where they are," she adds. "We can tweak as we go and soften, so it's not so hard for a person to deal with the aging process, which is tough." For more information, visit skin-aesthetics.net.



Kathy Pafford.
Photo by Richardson Studio



Amanda Forgas and Kelly Jennings.

Mirth

Amanda Forgas and Kelly Jennings, owners

Amanda Forgas and Kelly Jennings met among the fine fashions of Relish, where Forgas had worked for five years and Jennings was a loyal customer. When the owners of that store retired, Forgas and Jennings saw a vision for their futures—Mirth—which means joy and laughter and is what they hope customers will feel when they enter the shop in Fountain Square Mall.

They both were interested in carrying the torch for the clothing lines that the women of this community had fallen in love with, so a partnership was formed and Mirth was created. The collection ranges from casual, everyday pieces to contemporary business wear and special occasion dresses. "We try to offer something unique, but still wearable in the Bloomington community," Forgas says.

Being downtown is as important to Jennings and Forgas as providing unique clothing options for women. "A downtown without its retail would be lacking," Jennings says. "We want to make Bloomington stronger for visitors and for people who live here." That's why the women strive for Mirth to be a comfortable, welcoming experience for all. "We have customer service woven into our DNA," she says. "Being able to engage with the people of the community while surrounded by beautiful clothes is truly a dream come true." For information, visit mirthmarket.com.

CarminParker, P.C.

Lynn Keller and Daniel Cyr, associate attorneys

Sitting around a small conference table in the red-themed law offices of CarminParker, P.C., associate attorneys Lynn Keller and Daniel Cyr can't stop praising their bosses—Michael Carmin and Angela Parker.

"They're genuinely good people," says Keller, who grew up in Bloomington, went to California Western School of Law, and returned home with her husband, Shawn, to work in the prosecutor's office for seven years. "I got the opportunity to work at CarminParker and I jumped at the chance to do that because of the expertise of Angela and Mike. The opportunity to have them as mentors is invaluable. My number one goal is to learn as much as possible from them, and then put my own little spin on it." Keller adds that even though law isn't typically thought of as a creative profession, Carmin and Parker use creativity in their practice. "They find creative solutions to successfully resolve clients' problems," she says. "It's fun to think outside the box."

Cyr adds that the partners are especially efficient with time and have made thoughtful policy decisions for the firm. "They make all the right decisions," he says. Having worked internships in eight law offices prior to CarminParker, Cyr is confident that this is the perfect place for him. "I would send my friends here, and I don't know I can say that

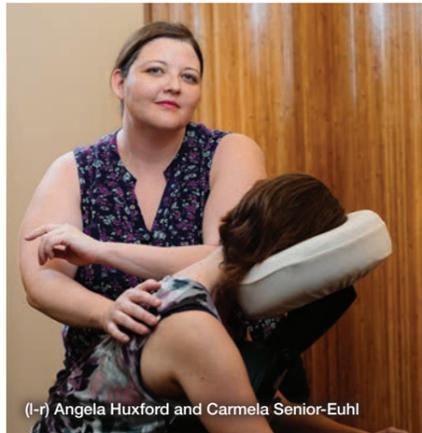
about anywhere else." Cyr came to Bloomington to attend the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University. After living in the area for six years and connecting with a church community, he and his wife, Audrey, decided to settle down in Ellettsville. "One of the things that's most exciting about being at this firm is we get a good view of Bloomington," he says, explaining that the community is a nice combination of big city with a small-town feel. "It's a good place to live and a really good place to work."

As Keller and Cyr reflect on their experiences, they have advice for other young professionals. "The work environment makes all the difference," Keller says. "It's a healthy environment here and that allows us to be healthy in our personal lives and to evolve as professionals. I'd push other people not to settle for anything less than that." Agreeing that a positive workplace is important, Cyr encourages young people to be curious. "Wherever you are, there are plenty of opportunities," he adds.

CarminParker represents clients in commercial and residential real estate; title and closing services; business law and consulting; and transactional, employment, and contract matters, as well as litigation and alternative dispute resolution. For information, visit carminparkerpc.com.



Daniel Cyr and Lynn Keller.



(l-r) Angela Huxford and Carmela Senior-Euhl

Bloomington Massage & Bodyworks

Angela Huxford and Carmela Senior-Euhl, co-owners

When Angela Huxford and Carmela Senior-Euhl bought Bloomington Massage & Bodyworks in 2017, they had a clear philosophy on how they wanted to run the business. “We value quality over quantity here,” says Senior-Euhl. “We schedule in a way that gives space to the clients and therapists.” Huxford adds, “There’s less rush, more intake, so the therapist hears the client’s concerns, without cutting hands-on time.”

Huxford and Senior-Euhl recently expanded their small space in Fountain Square Mall to add chair massage—for people who only have a few available minutes—plus an additional room for couples’ massage. “We’re adding in a smart way so we can continue to serve our clients as much as we can,” Huxford says, explaining that each decision is determined by how it will help people. “I think it keeps us focused and keeps our practice purposeful.”

Another way they help people is by giving back to the community, whether through discounts, partnerships with local organizations, or gift certificates donated to silent auctions for local causes that are important to them. “Our goal as a business is supporting a healthy community, with quality of care as a focus,” says Senior-Euhl. “It’s important to us that the community benefit from our business being in it.” For information, visit bloomingtonbodyworks.com or call 812-333-4917.

Ethos Cycling & Train

Tatiana Kolovou, owner

Group fitness instructor and Ethos Cycling & Train owner Tatiana Kolovou speaks intentionally throughout her evening class. “You’ve got this! Reach down, add some resistance, don’t make it easy!” She counts down the seconds. “First intermission. How are we doing? Listen to how your body feels.” Kolovou leads her cycling class in a workout that intermingles short segments of alternating intensity.

The movements are grounded in outdoor cycling rather than the franchised model of cycling with choreography. “Bloomington is home of *Breaking Away*,” says Kolovou, who is a runner, a triathlete, and a Schwinn master trainer. “We don’t dance on the bike. We are intentional with our training and authentic to the sport. Our instructors are nationally certified and understand cycling biomechanics and group motivation.”

Kolovou insists on a fun, positive environment, so Ethos Cycling & Train classes lack body shaming and mirrors—but not encouragement. “Take a few minutes to reflect on what you gave your body in the last 40 minutes,” she says during cool-down. “I want you to see yourself on a flat road, heading home, sweating, but proud. You did this for yourself.” Afterward, Kolovou explains, “We make exercise fun and rewarding. It shouldn’t feel like punishment. Fitness should be a positive experience for everyone who comes in here.” For information, visit ethoscycling.com.



Tatiana Kolovou.



Kyle Records.

Top Notch Mowing and Landscapes

Kyle Records, owner

Kyle Records, owner of Top Notch Mowing and Landscapes, started working in the green industry in Indianapolis when he was 15, and that grew an interest that sustained him while attending college. “I worked for a wonderful boss and learned much of what I know from him,” he says. “We did large paver patios and walkways and did landscape makeovers at some stunning properties.”

Returning to Bloomington to attend Indiana University, Records found his interest in the green industry had not waned. “I realized during my junior year that landscape and hardscape installation was what I was meant to do,” he explains. “I devoted myself full time to learning and doing everything I could to get better at my craft.”

Records started Top Notch during his senior year at IU and worked alone doing smaller projects and mowing lawns. “Almost 12 years later, we have six wonderful employees and take on projects of all shapes and sizes,” he says, adding that customer service is important so he handles all issues or questions that arise. “We have grown the business slowly and now have three different crews that handle different aspects of landscape work. We all live in Bloomington and care about the projects we do in our community.” For more information, visit topnotchmowing.com.



Jeanice Chastain.

Next Level Realty

Jeanice Chastain, Owner

Millican Realty Realtor

Jeanice Chastain, owner of Next Level Realty and a Millican Realty affiliate, knows that buying a home is an intimidating process. “My husband and I had five false starts before finally purchasing our first home,” she says. “We had no idea there were so many guidelines and out-of-pocket expenses.” As a real estate marketing coordinator, she had witnessed buyers who knew what they wanted in a house, but were ill prepared for the process of buying it.

After passing her real estate licensing exam, she pursued and attained the Accredited Buyers Representative designation. Marketing herself as a buyers-only agent, she says, “I spend a lot of time with my clients explaining each step of the process and making sure they understand their options, which help them make better-informed decisions.” She adds that even her most seasoned homebuyers have expressed their gratitude to her for taking the time to explain what was happening within the process.

Chastain strongly believes in going the extra mile to help her clients. “I’m definitely not a 9-to-5 person,” she says. “I answer my phone evenings, weekends, and holidays. I work hard for everyone because, in the end, it’s about helping them realize their dream of owning a home.” Contact Chastain at jeanice@nextlevelrealty.com or 812-345-8622 for more information.

Inside Out Kitchen & Bath

David Carey, owner



David Carey.

David Carey’s business, Inside Out Kitchen & Bath, started from what he calls a business blind date. He had the idea of starting his own showroom, but it wasn’t until friends suggested he meet investors in the stone industry that his dream became a reality. “Their specialty is in stone countertops,” he says of the group of three investors. “I had never seen that side of it, and they had never seen the kitchen cabinet side.” They eventually became silent partners.

Carey’s interest in designing kitchens and bathrooms started when he left the Bloomington area and went to Kansas City, Missouri, for school. He began building houses and worked his way up from straight laborer to lead carpenter. But extreme temperatures and working on roofs wore on him. “I got into design because I was tired of falling off houses,” he says with a laugh.

Later, Carey was hired by a lumberyard and, when his managers realized he was computer literate, was taught to design kitchens. “I really fell in love with it,” he says. “There’s this constant ability to learn something new and expand your skills.” And after 70 hours of coursework and 20 hours of testing, Carey is in the final stages of becoming a Certified Kitchen and Bath Designer through the National Kitchen and Bath Association.

When first working with customers, Carey spends a lot of time learning about their lives and their likes. By doing so, he says he can better design the kitchen they want. For instance, he tells about empty-nesters who wanted their kitchen to include a costly double oven. By asking questions, he learned they wanted the ovens for family holiday dinners. “I showed them how getting a convection oven with a convection microwave above it would serve the same purpose, and they would get three more feet of counter space,” he says.

Carey encourages clients to send him their Pinterest boards or do Google image searches for any obvious trends that will narrow down their design preferences. To meet whatever wants they have, Carey has an off-site shop where cabinets can be custom built and where he can match the color of unique items—like the brushed leather of a baseball mitt—for kitchen finishes. “If a person sees something they like, we can get them in that direction,” he explains.

For more information, as well as trending tips and resources, Carey suggests visiting the store’s Facebook page, but to call ahead before dropping by the showroom because he does his own fieldwork. “It’s always best to send a message first,” he adds.



Picasso Moon Painting

Tim Murphy, owner

When Picasso Moon Painting's Tim Murphy started his business 16 years ago, it allowed him to provide for his family while being a stay-at-home dad. He didn't realize that he would find such satisfaction in transforming people's homes. "It's nothing I really chose," he says. "However, the pride and detail I put in my work and the transition I bring to people's homes—when people are really blown away by the quality of my work—is rewarding to me."

Murphy prides himself in clean lines, detailed finishes, quality materials, and a talent with color selection. He considers all of the elements of a room—furniture, tile, flooring, cabinetry, etc. "I want all the elements to coexist and still have their own individual personalities," he says, explaining that he knows a couple that had a painter who simply matched a color chip. They hated the room for 15 years. "Just coming home and being in a room where you're comfortable, that's the importance of color selection."

While Murphy didn't create that issue for the couple, he cleaned it up years later and has painted their entire home in different stages. "I treat every home like it's mine," Murphy says. "I can make a huge transition in someone's home, especially with their kitchen cabinets." For information, visit picassomoonpainting.com.

Bloomington Salt Cave

Laura Chaiken, owner

When Laura Chaiken and Chris Martin started visiting salt caves, the results were so beneficial they wanted to share it with their community. "Thousands of people around the world breathe and feel better with halotherapy," says Chaiken, owner of Bloomington Salt Cave, 115 N. Madison St. "We want to serve our community in helping people of all ages. It's a safe and effective anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, stress-free experience."

Chaiken explains that she and Martin put their dreams and skills together to create and build the pink Himalayan salt cave with four tons of salt using all-natural and environmentally friendly materials. A generator crushes pharmaceutical-grade sodium chloride into micron-sized particles that are breathed deep into the respiratory system, working as a "bronchial toothbrush" for the airways. "We live in a high pollen-count area," Chaiken says. "Many people suffer from asthma, allergies, and sinus congestion."

"Alongside halotherapy, we offer guided meditations, restorative yoga, foot reflexology, gong baths, and other events that change every month," she continues. They also have a buy-four-get-five special and will rent out the entire cave. Making sessions affordable is important. "It's a chance to unwind and relax in a negative ion-rich environment that encourages that," Martin says. "This is something we see helping people and making their lives a little better." Schedule an appointment at bloomingtonsaltcave.com.



The Tailored Fit

Margaret Fette, owner

For the 18 years she's been in business—and even before that—Margaret Fette, owner of The Tailored Fit, estimates she has done 10 to 15 fittings a day, offering customers creative solutions to their clothing problems. "I have an eye and an expertise for alterations after 30 years of doing it," she says. "I do it all the time. If a piece has an unusual hem, I look at how we can accommodate that, and not just cut it off and lose this pretty trim."

While tailors are often self-taught, Fette was couture trained by a teacher highly skilled in technique. Fette gained experience by working within the tailoring industry in men's stores, in costuming on Broadway, and through operating her own business. "I learned on a hand-work level and being very detailed, not speedy, but being correct and getting things precise," she says. "I can do most fittings pretty quickly. Sometimes it takes longer to change clothes than for me to do the actual fitting."

Fette has assembled a talented staff, large enough to timely tackle alteration projects of all sizes, from simply sewing on buttons to altering complex wedding dresses. "We have a very skilled staff of people who really care about what they do," she says. For more information, visit thetailoredfit.com.

Millican Realty Property Stars

Kelly Jones, Realtor
owner

With 10 years in real estate, Realtor Kelly Jones has opened her own company—Property Stars—after being approached earlier this year by a former employer who respected her quality of work. He asked her to take over all of his property management, so she opened Property Stars while continuing to build her real estate business. "I enjoy providing a high level of customer service," she says. "I love seeing people get excited about their first off-campus property, and it's the same when people purchase a home." Jones is currently managing 50 single-family homes that are all driven toward college rentals. She says she loves the energy, diversity, and passion that Indiana University brings to Bloomington.

Jones is also a top producer for Millican Realty and produces great results for her investors, clients, and tenants. She believes everyone deserves a quality real estate experience and will go above and beyond for each of her clients.

Property Stars is located at 114 N. Madison St., where Jones repurposed an old bank drive-through as her office. She plans to give that property a "facelift with flair," she says. "We provide five-star service—you can bank on it!" For more information on quality rentals, management service, investments, or buying and selling, call 812-606-6939 or visit propertystars.com.



UNVEILED

Samantha McGranahan, owner

When Samantha McGranahan opened UNVEILED, a boudoir photography studio, she wanted to focus on helping women love their bodies and feel more in control of their lives. Soon after launching five years ago, she realized the women she was photographing all had similar concerns that were prevalent in their lives, and she wanted to do more to empower them. "I am inspired by the clients we see every day," she says. "Although they all have very different lives, similar themes run through all of them. They feel insecure about their relationships and their money and children, but they get a transformational perspective on how they look."

McGranahan hosted her first empowerment event last year in Terre Haute, Indiana, with about 200 women attending. With the positive responses and requests for more, she knew she had tapped into an area that women needed. "There are other ways you can empower women than just by how they look," she says, explaining that her events include activities like writing love letters to oneself and self-reflection scavenger hunts. "It's about flipping how people talk internally."

Her biggest event yet—SPARK Weekend—was held in late July, and McGranahan expects it to be an annual event. "We're already making bigger plans for next year," she says. For more information, visit unveiled-photo.com/spark.

Master Rental

Caitlin Czupka, sales and customer service representative

With more than four decades in Bloomington, Master Rental continues to provide a positive experience for its customers and the community. "We are under new ownership, but our value as Master Rental and our items and our customer service hasn't changed," says Caitlin Czupka, sales and customer service representative. "That's still what we strive for."

The locally owned and operated business is a full-service equipment, hand tool, and tent/event rental store that provides equipment to contractors, businesses, and do-it-yourselfers for projects of all sizes, whether it's a construction job, a home-and-garden project, or a party. Czupka says, "Our core objective is to ensure our rental assets are maintained for productivity and reliability, and updated frequently to ensure we are offering current technology for our customers."

To enhance the customer experience, Master Rental crews do free site visits and consultations to evaluate the best locations for tents, inflatable bounce houses, and other party equipment. This includes computer-aided design renderings to optimize the event space and terrain. "We help customers see and visualize, because some people are visual people and want to see what will fit in the space they have available," she says. "That extra customer service, with no additional fee, is something we take pride in." For information, visit the store at 2002 W. 3rd St.

