

UNIFIED GOALS PUBLISHED

THE BEST &
BRIGHTEST
INDUSTRY
EXPERTS
WEIGH IN

JESSICA
DALBY'S
VISION:
WE CAN
ALL SHINE
TOGETHER

ISSUE NO. 01 • AUGUST 2022
KANSAS CITY

UNIFIED GOALS
PUBLISHED
THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST IN:

ENTREPRENEURS
CREATIVES
MUSICIANS
FOOD

UNIFIEDGOALSPUBLISHED.COM

ELEVATE YOURSELF

Jessica Dalby
BRAND MEDIA



UNIFIED GOALS
PUBLISHED

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ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

Welcome to Unified Goals Published, a magazine created to share the best and brightest of each and every city. From creatives, to entrepreneurs, to musicians, and the best food, we've got you covered. With our mission, everyone can shine and grow together, because we share a goal: to unify our city in the love of what makes our city great. We strive to focus on those who are marginalized, on a smaller scale, or even brand new to their industry or expertise, because we all deserve a chance to shine.

You can find us, and our mission, below. We hope you enjoy learning each of our selectees' stories, just as much as we enjoyed getting to know them.

INSTAGRAM + FACEBOOK: @UNIFIEDGOALSPUBLISHED

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thistlebee

IMAGERY



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MARIÁ DE JESÚS

Tell us about you and your work!

I primarily work in the plaza area, but my art is available everywhere! I'm Kansas City's only intuitive pet portrait illustrator, and never imagined it would be that way! Animals were the one subject matter I always struggled with throughout my artistic career, but after receiving my first pet commission last year (shout out to the Belchers and their dog Zara!) I realized that what had once been difficult now came easily. When I shared the final product, it set off a word-of-mouth chain from people who had seen that portrait, and wanted to commission their own for their friends, family, and themselves.

How did you get started? What has caused bumps in the road?

I've been an artist all my life, but everything really started in the summer of 2021 when I began to quietly take on art commissions: an old client told her friend Kenna about my illustrating services. Kenna then commissioned a portrait of her beloved dog Zara, and then someone saw that drawing, and commissioned a piece of their dog Oso. Before I knew it I had a waiting list for people who wanted their pets illustrated in my style. While I still make personal work in the background, the majority of my work began to center around hyper realistic pet portraits. All of my life I have been a perfectionist, especially in my art, and I dreaded failing, but the more commissions that came in, the more I practiced, and the more I practiced the more I messed up, and the more I messed up, the better I got, and the better I got the more ambitious I felt. The work is far from done to get my name out there, but I'm definitely still riding that momentum and building relationships to open doors for myself. Right now my vision is to take part in as many pop-up events as possible, and I'm well on my way thanks to the Latino Arts Foundation and their constant push to help artists like me gain exposure.

The list of trials and tribulations is long, and most things were out of my control: poverty, moving to a whole different continent, being an ESL student, lack of familial support, anxiety, ADHD, domestic violence, and I could keep going, but I've managed to work around every single one. The truly biggest hurdle I've had to overcome (and will continue to overcome as long as I'm alive) is the power that my own mind gives to my inner critic. I don't think we're born with that inner critic and lack of faith though, and I actually believe we're born with everything we need to carry out our purpose. We aren't born self-conscious, or worried, or afraid of the future; we learn these things from those people around us during our most formative years. The more vital the person, the more their opinion mattered, and I have struggled my whole life to unlearn the negative beliefs that came from those vital people, the beliefs of "not good enough" and "not worthy".



MARIÁ DE JESÚS

Where do you hope to be in the future?

We live on a floating rock in a giant abyss of space, so I don't like to plan, I like to just do. I can say with certainty that presently I'm building connections and putting in the work to continue to bring people joy, emotion, and food for thought, through art.

Most intentionally I hope to use art as a way to give back to the community, like the kids at the Police Athletic League (P.A.L.) on North 5th Street, in KCK. On Wednesdays I am copilot to Mss. Vania Soto, one of the most amazing artists and avid community advocate, and together we teach kids about color theory, proportions, dimensions, and we only use primary colors, along with black and cream for shades and tints respectively. Before joining these 10+ year-old kids were mixing all their own colors, while I'm used to working from pre-made store-bought tubes; I can't begin to tell you how much I've learned from them, so whatever my art leads me to, they will be included in my considerations and successes.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

You can find me on Instagram at MDJArtStudio, where I have my service menu posted for pet portraits! There I'll also share locations for upcoming pop-up events, where you can catch me painting live! Although the creme de la creme of my work is pet portraiture, I don't want to limit the scope of my skills. I strive to remain open to all types of commission work, and that means that I take on different media that can take different levels of effort. Prices are always addressed during the estimate conversation, and I welcome all to send me an idea regarding making their visions come to life.

Anything else you'd like to share?

Even if this opportunity was the product of a "happy accident," every day will involve grinding, creating, and hard work: an abundance of hard work, however, should not be confused for suffering, or failure. It's my hope to share this message with the creatives of Kansas City, especially young kids, so that maybe their debut into the art world doesn't have to be result of an accident, but instead a direct product of believing in themselves.

My next event is the 2022 Latino Arts Festival on September 24th. The Latino Arts Foundation, spearheaded by Deanna Munoz, is a nonprofit organization created to bring forth the fiercely authentic voice of underrepresented artists. Learn more at: <https://www.lafkc.org/>

If you'd like to donate to P.A.L. to support our efforts in creating art with kids please check out our mission and consider donating: <https://www.palkck.com/support-us>



NICOLE BISSEY PHOTOGRAPHY

EBRIMA SISAY

Tell us about you & your work!

Currently, I'm on the KCMO side, and I'm building a mental health startup by using film and technology to make mental health services accessible for everyone. That's what I will be doing for a very long time. I decided to switch to mental health because I ended up seeing a therapist! I conquered my stutter, & identified all the trauma experienced and was educated on how to quickly identify and intervene mental health symptoms. Now I'm using my skills as a developer/advertiser to make sure more people are aware of mental health and that there's hope for healing!



How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

My story started in a small country in West Africa called Gambia. I grew up in a pretty big family. My grandpa had three wives and a lot of kids, meaning I have a lot of aunts and uncles, plus the compound was always busy and incredibly loud. My parents had 8 kids, and I'm the second child. Growing up, I spent a lot of time playing soccer. It was my passion and I was very good at it. My goal was to play for Manchester United in England.

I ended up not achieving this goal due to experiencing trauma that would shape my future. I watched a very close friend of mine drown in front of me. This experience messed me up. I was also molested which made the situation even worse! The stress of dealing with such heavy experiences manifested into a stutter! A stutter so bad that could barely speak. I decided to quit soccer due to the endless bullying by my coaches and teammates, and dealing with panic attacks knowing the person molesting me was part of the team's leadership. This was incredibly hard because I LOVE soccer and it was my dream to be a professional player one day. I spent my time in Gambia studying really hard to be able to leave one day and after graduating high-school, I had an opportunity to move to the U.S. and I did, believing it would solve all my problems.

What *exactly* do you do?

I've always been very techy! Even as a heck, I was the kid that would fix every electronic broken in the house. I would take apart radios and try to make cellphones with my friends. So it was only natural that I be in the tech space. Initially, I was studying accounting because that's what my parents wanted me to do but I was also freelancing as a developer making money building websites. I also loved the idea of working behind the scenes, not having to deal with people & being paid. So I went all in working in the tech & advertising space!



Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

My project is called Freedom Project Forum – an online video based educational platform focused on making mental health services accessible through film and technology. You can find me anything at @abrahamadvocates and my project at @officialfreedomprojectkc anywhere online.

Kechena Designs

PHOTOS EDGE: ERIN HERNANDEZ-REISNER



Tell us about you and your work!

I am a fashion designer that specializes in women's custom bespoke gowns. Though I'm able to sew other garments and ready-to-wear clothing, there's just something special about making a woman feel confident for her special occasion. Having been born in the rural Caribbean island of Haiti, I was raised on second hand clothing. We didn't always have the latest or the newest, but the times that we did were special. It brought on a feeling that I couldn't explain! In essence, I've been chasing that feeling and attempting to bottle it up in order to bless other people. Helping them to uplift their confidence from the inside out. I believe that what sets me apart from my competitors or other people in the fashion industry is that I want to "see" my customers. Sitting down and having consultations to get a good feel for what they're insecure about or what they're confident about when it comes to their body or way of dress. In making a woman feel "seen" not only boosts her confidence, but becomes a ripple effect for her to spread that same feeling on to the next person.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

Ever since the 8th grade, while attending Northeast High School, I knew that I wanted to become a fashion designer. Though I had no idea what that looked like or how I would get there, I just continued my education to follow that path. I received my Bachelors of Science degree in Clothing, Textile Science, & Merchandising at Missouri State University. I was invited for a closed interview for season 12 "Project Runway," started participating in numerous fashion runway shows in various cities, and has since partnered with Kansas City's very own, Gown Gallery. Two years ago, I accepted the position of becoming the new fashion instructor at Paseo Academy of Fine & Performing Arts here in Kansas City where I taught fashion design to the high school students. I've been an entrepreneur for about seven years now and I've had my share of trials and tribulations. Such as the time I was studying abroad in London when my professor notified me that my designs were "commercialized" and nothing special from the rest. Even with the pandemic forcing the world to shut down because a majority of us weren't deemed "essential" in our career paths, I started entrepreneurship from a place of lack: lack of knowledge/experience, resources, and support. Because of this, I learned early on how to adapt and pivot to remain afloat. These experiences have mentally prepared me for potential future hurdles. So I use this knowledge to try and position myself for future trials, leaving room for error and mistakes.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

In the future, my goal is to become a world renowned fashion designer. One who not only designs for the day-to-day woman, but also celebrities on the red carpet! I plan to use my gifts and talents to reach women and people all over the world. Having fashion houses everywhere and becoming a game changer in life! Not only that but I want to employ other people who have a serving heart similar to me. To educate those employees and other people interested in entrepreneurship or fashion that there's more to the industry than what the media portrays.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

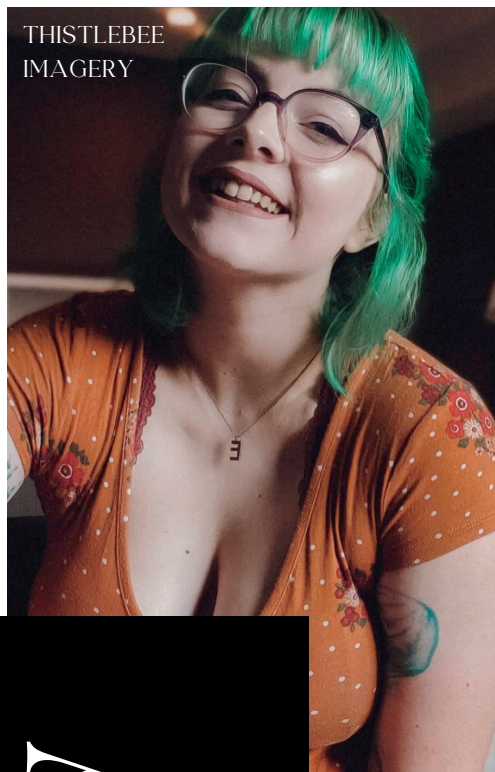
As previously mentioned, everything that I do is service based. It's hands on and personal to be able to hear out the needs and wants of my clientele and then gift them with a bespoke gown/garment that will enhance who they are. Potential investors or clients can expect an encounter. A personal experience where they're properly heard and seen. I'm currently working on the re-launch of my website which will soon be launched on my birthday! My website will be focused on teaching people interested in fashion or entrepreneurship how to become a successful designer/entrepreneur. However, I can be found on just about all social media platforms: Kechena Designs



STEVEN G
PHOTOGRAPHY

Tell us about you and your work!

I am a primarily short form free verse poet and writer. I spend my time writing about life, love, nature, mental health and parenthood, and truly love to allow the words to spill from my brain to the page (or sometimes my phone's notes app!) I occasionally write longer pieces for slams and open mics, that are often renowned, such as Home Sweet Home, How to Be Alone, Angry Woman, and Holding my Breath.



How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

My love for spoken word has always been hidden under the surface, but truly erupted around 2011, or my freshman year in high school. I was chosen to compete in an event called Poetry Out Loud, aka a national recitation contest for poetry written by acclaimed writers. I, of course, chose The Tyger by William Blake, Hope- Is the Thing with Feathers by Emily Dickinson, and The Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll. I did really well in that competition and continued falling in love with other poet's work- Until around 2017. I was visiting my very good friend Victoria, and I wrote what would be my first original poem, a different kind of newspaper, on a napkin in a Denny's in Shreveport, LA. Little did I know that, in five years, I would self-publish my very first collection, bare walls // clear mind, in January 2022, and then open for the amazing Rupi Kaur on her world tour at The Midland in May 2022. There have been so many difficult obstacles! Mostly my mental health, and childhood trauma. Both prevent me from seeing myself in a positive light, so I really struggle with reminding myself that I am AMAZING and deserve all of the good things! However, I'm also a mom, and he is always my priority, so sometimes events, writing, and editing take a backseat when he needs me the most.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Ideally, I'll keep writing- I would LOVE to offer some cool workshops for kids and teens to encourage writing and language skills for them as well. Perhaps soon!

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

My book, bare walls // clear mind can be found via my website: quincyrosewrites.com

All socials are @quincyrosewrites as well! I've also had a few requests for poem commissions, which I'm open to also!

Quincy
Rose



JOSETERRERO.COM

Jose Terrero
C H E F

CATERING · PRIVATE DINNERS

YANNI K BABII

Tell us about you and your work!

I'm a singer-song writer out of Kansas City Missouri who has been on the music scene for many years. In 2015, I dropped my first album CCG: Candy Coated Girl. After a 2 year sabbatical, I just released my latest EP WELCOME TO #YANNIVILLE VOL. 1. With the release of my single He Makes Me Feel, the feedback and support has me pumped, humbled, grateful and ready to beast the music scene as an artist and writer head on! As I always say: "WELCOME TO YANNIVILLE BABII!"

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

My love for music stems from being raised in the Arts. From the age of 5, music, theater and dance was an essential part of my upbringing, and when I entered middle school and had the option to learn an instrument, that's exactly what I did! Clarinet was my first choice, but along the way I picked up the skills to play multiple instruments. Inspired by the many genres of music as a writer, I decided to master the art of becoming a RnB artist whilst throwing in my rap skills from time to time! I made my first appearance on the scene in 2009, performing at open mics and showcases in my local area, which led to opportunities to open up for various industry artists who would come to Kansas City to perform. I have faced many hurdles and hardships along the way, both personally and in business. On the personal side, I was in a major wreck in 2016 following the birth of my son, stopping me from bouncing right back like my original plan was. It didn't stop me though, just prolonged the process. While I was healing up, I wrote constantly, and became more in tune with myself and my spirituality. On the business side, I've learned a lot about the politics of business, and how important it is to KNOW the business! KNOW YOUR WORTH! NEVER compromise your morals and standards for someone else! If that opportunity doesn't align to what and who you are, stand in that! What's for you will be for you! Yes, sometimes you have to compromise. But not when it comes to who you are at the core. That's the part I feel that artists forget! You can't forget the spark of your passion! Your inner self is the flame! That love for it is your spark!

Where do you hope to be in the future?

In the future I am going to be an award winning songwriter and RnB artist! I also plan on having my own production company, under my nonprofit YANNI K PRODUCTIONS, as well as my wellness and spiritual business, The Ascension Tribe LLC up and running! My future is what I create it to be, and mine will be AMAZING!



Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

You can find me on all social media and streaming platforms under Yanni K Babii!

SIXX THE DIRECTOR



DANIEL WELCH

**Tell us about you and your work!**

I am proud to say that I grew up in a small rural farming community by the name of Westphalia, Kansas where work ethic is engrained in you. My career started as wanting to play music for my friends and I to dance to, and I have taken on more and more responsibility over the years. I don't get stuck on titles, but I guess you could say I wear many hats. DJ, Promoter, Entertainment Director, Curator, Agent, Installer, I do what needs to be done, the best way I know how: by utilizing resources and working with the team that I have established.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

In my hometown, my grandma owned a Bar and Grill that had live bands and of course a jukebox, which I took over and drove everybody crazy. In college, I was a bartender and I have always been drawn to the nightlife since day one. So it's no surprise when I started playing with music, mixing music with fruity loops in college, and thereafter applied what I knew when I became friends with the DJs at the club I managed. DJ Archi & B-Stee showed me the proper ways and mechanics if you will of djing, I caught on pretty quick and practiced A LOT before the bar would open. This turned into me doing opening sets and when the DJs would arrive I would go back and bartend. My first residency was at the Legends at a place called Banana Joe's, I actually showed up to bartend. But the DJ didn't show up and guess who had their equipment, me. Things seem to just work out from there. A good friend of mine Shanna Adamic in 2009 asked me to play for Cerner's charitable foundation, which at the time was named First-Hand Foundation for their masquerade ball which really kicked off the corporate side of my career. I now have over 300+ corporate contracts, it's been fun to build every single year with each and every one of them to make their event better and better. You might see me playing at Children's Mercy Park for Sporting Kansas City, Kauffman Stadium for the Royals or a tailgate at Arrowhead for the Chiefs; all of which derive from continuing to work hard and grow with people. Early in my career, the biggest obstacles would have been being young and owners not taking me seriously. I had what I thought were great ideas, to really connect a partnership between dj and the owner. That would include a working relationship, and of course more profitable nights for everyone. Looking at my socials, you will see in the bio section "No Days Off" I took that approach from day 1. I never wanted to say no to anyone, and I really felt that was the correct way for me to be successful or lead to more success. So learning to say "No" was the hardest thing along this path. Someone once said, "behind every successful man is a strong woman," Ashley, my wife is strong but also successful as well. She owns/ operates her own Pharmacy, Auten Pharmacy, in Osawatomie, KS. We are both proud parents to our little human, Monroe.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

I have high hopes of continuing to grow my business in a way that benefits the team and the Kansas City market. Kansas City really is special as to how it embraces and supports live music and DJs, and it has really been an honor to be a part of that over the last decade.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

For events, inquire at djashtonmartin.com - every client has a different need, I really love curating and building an event with a client, and those numbers vary event to event depending on needs. Follow along on my instagram as well @djashtonmartin.



PATRICK BENDER

U-NEEK

Tell us about you and your work!

I'm a Kansas City native, mostly working in RnB and rap, but I work hard in music in general. I feel like I was put on this Earth to show the youth that they can be themselves, and still make it in this music game.



How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

Once upon a time in 1984, I was born in Kansas City to a strong woman named Jamesetta, who loved Music. We were dirt poor but music was always my escape. As a kid, I would stay up all night and teach myself how to play the piano by listening to songs on the radio. From there, I grew into writing my own music, and then got accepted into the performing arts school, the Paseo Academy. My life changed, and that is where I met some amazing people, who then gave myself, and some of my friends, the opportunity to open for Usher on his 8701 Tour. When Usher told me he loved the music we made, I knew I was on the right path. As an adult, I started out doing small shows for literally 3 people. But, we never gave up and we ended up doing over 150 shows in the first year. Even though I was working really hard, it was difficult for people to take me seriously, because I was not the typical rapper. I didn't want to just talk about money, cars, clothes, and drugs. I wanted to be a positive role model for the kids who felt out of place. Along the way I also struggled with alcohol addiction, but I am proud to say I am 6 years sober.



Where do you hope to be in the future?

One day, U-Neek and my music company, Hustle Hard Music, will be household names. I want to change the world one song at a time.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

They can visit Hustlehardmusic.com, and check out merch, my music, and so much more. My social media is all @uneek69 and I post regularly!

**Tell us about you and your work!**

I am an indie singer/songwriter based in Northland KC. Here and now, in 2022, I perform acoustic shows all over and teach vocal lessons as well. Why? Because music is the universal language that connects us all & it keeps me in a state of wonder, hope, passion & excitement. What sets me apart; I strive to share hope in what I do and share that with others.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

In a nutshell, I've been singing, performing, writing & playing music since I was in 2nd grade. Fast forward some years later, I've performed all across the US, opened up for Grammy winning artists, been on the radio, and recorded tons of original music. A lot of passion and hard work helped! I was in an abusive relationship for most of my 20s, with someone I worked with in the music scene. I realized I could still sing, write, play, perform & just live my life without this person, that I could go on & have learned so many lessons & come out stronger. I'm always trying to curb my indecisions and figure out which goals to go after next.

Jillian Riscoe

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Look, I really want to be a guest on the Kelly Clarkson show - I feel like we'd get along great. Just putting it out there.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

I offer live music performances, vocalist/musician for recordings, songwriting, voice acting, music lessons and more - prices are all dependent on client details and/or project based! You can find more details at jillianriscoe.com



NICOLE BISSEY PHOTOGRAPHY

**Mental health
& stress
struggles in
your business?**

Janeen Olmos
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**Let's
Talk.**

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Janeen@JaneenOlmos.com

f in

CHEF ALLEN PLEMMONS

Tell us about you and your work!

I have a lot of hats when it comes to cooking. I do in-home private dinners in the KC metro area, and what sets me apart is the attention to detail, pushing boundaries on plating, and having a fully customized menu for each event. With each menu being different, it allows me to push my creativity to another level. I also do pop up events with my side hustle called BD Doggs, where I'm serving up hot dogs with unique toppings, and flavor combos. It's a nice mash up with everything I do.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

I started cooking at 14 years old, and I have always strived to push myself to do bigger and bigger things so I went to culinary school, worked corporate jobs and just never felt satisfied. So, in 2018 I started my personal chef business on the side, where I started meal prepping and making fat bombs. One day, I networked with a business coach in Vegas, and one thing led to another and I was flying out to Vegas to cook for a very awesome group of people. Once the pandemic happened, it shut everything down, including my business, so I accepted a job offer in Sedalia, MO. It came with an apartment, and the opportunity to showcase my skills in a restaurant setting. It was great, and I had a blast, but once things started opening I moved to Kansas City. Now, I freelance for the Kansas City Chiefs and the KC Royals. Lately, I host pop-up events, as well as private dinners and meal prep.

GREAT WHITE OAK MEDIA



Where do you hope to be in the future?

I hope to find the right building and area to someday open a venue, where I'll be able to host dinners that are reservation only, Thursday through Saturday. I would use the space Monday - Wednesday for meal prep as well.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

Pricing is varied on a client to client basis, and you can find more information and get in touch via chefallenplemmons.com as well as follow along on my socials, @chefallenplemmons on Facebook and @plemmonsallen on Instagram



SERVAES

BREWING COMPANY

Tell us about you and your work!

I brew beer in downtown Shawnee, KS. I come up with crazy and unusual flavor profiles to try to recreate in beers. Beyond that, I have the opportunity to reach people with my beer, whether it be to bring friends together or to advocate for a cause that I believe in.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

I started home brewing in 2012 after a friend introduced me to craft beer. I quickly became obsessed with it and wanted to learn all about the process. I bought a bunch of equipment and started brewing in my backyard. Over time, I tried to perfect certain recipes and I kept experimenting with others. I started taking my beers to festivals and tasting events around the area and started gaining a small following. That was sort of the beginning of everything for me. I started pursuing the idea of opening a brewery around 2017 and opened Servaes Brewing Company in April 2018. The biggest hurdle that I continue to face is the obvious truth that I am a gay woman. Those two identifying words help us to stand out, but they also polarize us from a lot of people. Most of our customers are super supportive of us and are eager to support women-owned and minority-owned businesses, but we definitely still get some people who do not feel the same way. The beer industry is definitely a male-dominated industry. While most of the brewers I know are supportive, many craft beer drinkers still are not super interested in drinking beer that is brewed by a female. It is a sad reality, but one that I continue to face.



LEAH WANKUM. SHAWNEE MISSION POST

Where do you hope to be in the future?

We are planning to double our size and capacity by expanding to the west space in our budding. I expect construction to begin on that before the end of this year. We are also planning to expand the taproom and brewing space as well as add a small patio to the back of the building.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

We are located at 10921 Johnson Dr, Shawnee, KS, and you can find more information as well on our website, brewedbyagirl.com and our social media accounts are: Facebook @servaesbrewingco and Instagram @servaesbrewco

Anything else you'd like to share?

We have around 16 of our own beers on tap at all times. Those beers vary in styles from pub ales, pilsners and witbiers to imperial stouts and sours. We do usually have more sours on tap than most anything else. We also sell house-made sodas. We always have root beer on tap, but we also have cans of a variety of different sodas. In addition, we keep two wines on tap at all times for people who aren't into beer. We really pride ourselves on having something for everyone.

BRIAN NELSON



JUNEBUG BAKERY

Tell us about you and your work!

I offer completely customized baked goods. I bake in Warrensburg, MO, but have clients all over the metro area. All flavors, type of goods (cupcakes, cookies, tarts, etc.), and allergy free attributes are decided by the customer. I love experimenting with flavors and pushing the limits of my skills to create the client's dream desserts, whatever they may be. I operate as both a baker and a cake decorator. I bake everything from scratch, to order, and am also very proud to be allergy-free friendly upon request! Being able to manipulate ingredients to create the same textures and flavors of normal sweets without key ingredients found in normal recipes has taken a lot of research, time and trial and error. I think everyone should be able to have a sweet treat, so I try to make my goods as accessible and diet-friendly as possible.



JUNEBUG BAKERY



THSTILEBEE IMAGERY

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

I had grown up in the kitchen with my mom, and had worked in a bakery since I started college. I had stopped baking after having my daughter and really missed it. One of my amazing friends encouraged me to start baking again and to open up my own bakery! Building a reputation from scratch, especially in a small town is extremely difficult. Word of mouth is EVERYTHING, so it has been really important that all of my orders go out perfectly. Rising costs of goods is also a hurdle, so managing costs is also something I have to be very aware of.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Sometime in the future I hope to be able to open my own physical storefront and even offer shipping on items such as cupcakes and cookies!

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

You can find us on Facebook @junebugbakery

Tell us about you and your work!

Sweet EMotion was started to be a non-dairy ice cream parlor as I was tired of being wrecked by normal dairy ice cream. I wanted to go with oat milk, because in my opinion, it's the closest alternative to dairy milk, and gives you that creaminess you love and most miss when switching to a dairy alternative. The farther we went, we noticed there weren't options for most people with dietary restrictions/allergies, and we wanted to not only put out a superior product, but be an option for them too. Getting to serve people ice cream after years of them never having options is honestly rad.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

Sweet EMotion started out of boredom in the heart of lockdown during Covid while my normal career was put on hold. What was posted on social media as a total random joke idea of a oat milk based EMO/pop punk themed parlor pretty quickly became a reality. Our first location started off in a former ticket booth/storage space at The Outland Complex in Springfield, MO as a walkup window [moving into our own space soon!] and we opened our KC location about a year later, after doing a few initial pop-ups in the market. All of our ice cream is vegan, most is gluten free, and out of 30+ toppings only 4 are currently not-vegan. We make all of our cookie dough, cookie pieces, brownie bites, cookies for sandwiches, and other products in house as we want to fully control what is going into our items and to also keep health/dietary restrictions in mind. Like any business, we are growing, and that becomes a bit of an issue financially. We also are working on relocating into a more centralized KC location to make it easier for customers to reach us. Everyone deserves Sweet Treats and we want to make it as easy as possible to get them.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Every business hopes to be all over and everywhere, but I like the exclusiveness of only being in a few spots. As far as the future goes, I'd like to have our own spaces in SGF/KC with more machines so we can do additional Flavas all the time. We hope to one day also have a mobile setup/truck so we can partner with music festivals and events that match our theme. We do a lot of collabs with bands when they come to town and it's honestly been a blast.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

Our Facebook page is Sweet EMotion KC and our Instagram/Twitter handles are @sweetemotion! You can visit us at 312 Armour Rd, North Kansas City, MO 64116 as well!

Anything else you'd like to share?

Whether it be a basic Flava or one of our featured ones, you can basically do anything you want with them. We offer our products in bowls/cones, as milkshakes, floats, Death Cups [mix of ice cream and Oddly Cold Brew], or by the pint. We also do special cookies, ice cream sandwiches, and a bunch of other fun stuff at the parlor.

SETH KEAN



SETH KEAN

SCOPE OF WORK

CURRENTLY DIRECTING
 TOURING STAGE PLAY:
 TRUE 2 MY RELIGION

PRODUCED, DIRECTED, & WROTE: INDIE FEATURE FILM:
 REVISITING THE HEART

PRODUCED, DIRECTED, & PLAYWRIGHT:
 WHEN DANCE MEETS MUSIC TOURING STAGE PLAY

DIRECTED & CASTED: PROOF OF CONCEPT:
 RESILIENT FEATURE & RESILIENT BELOW POVERTY SERIES

DIRECTOR OF INDIE FEATURE: HOME: A SOLDIER'S MIND IS ALWAYS AT WAR

CREATOR & FOUNDER OF DESTINED 2 DANCE AWARDS SHOW

DESTINED 2 DANCE AWARDS ENTERTAINMENT & PRODUCTIONS

CREATED & FOUNDED BY:
 ATHENA COSBY

ABOUT: Ms. Athena Cosby, owner of D2D Awards Entertainment & Talent Management with more than 20 years of experience in Dance. She created a dance awards show that recognizes and showcases dancers making an impact in their communities through dance. She has done this regionally in the USA and Internationally bringing communities together through the art of dance. She also has served as a performer, choreographer, director, playwright, screenwriter, vocalist, and actress. The D2DAwards Show is what started her journey and streamlined her dream into new platforms. Her work has been featured Red Cross, Nike and MAC Cosmetic commercials, She has directed the Proof of Concept for Resilient Feature Film/ Resilient Below Poverty Series; Trea Davenport Productions: Better Days Reality TV Show, Home (Film released on Amazon) just to name a few; and is the founder of the Destined 2 Dance Awards, Innertwine DanceFitness, and creator of Sweatfest Dance Fitness Series. She is currently screening her Indie Feature Film, Revisiting the Heart which is Directed, Produced & Written by Ms. Cosby. It brings her great joy to step back into theater and serve as a director for a timely piece, True 2 My Religion Written by: Salahuddin Mahdi and Executive Produced by: Inshirah Jihad. Once completed this year she will begin filming her upcoming dance reality show called: The Ultimate Unification of Dance Pilot in November 2022..

FROM CULTURAL & HIP HOP DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER TO FILM DIRECTOR, PLAYWRIGHT, & SCREENWRITER

CONTACT US FOR COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES, SPONSORSHIP, OR FILM MAKING NEEDS:

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W: WWW.D2DAWARDS.COM
E: D2DAWARDS@GMAIL.COM
MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES: MARKETING@D2DAWARDS.COM

@D2DAWARDS

Home/Office Organization

I will talk with you about your space, get pictures and create a service plan that works with your needs. We will customize a service that may include an assortment of storage containers, bins, labels, trash removal or hauling, donation drop-off, etc.

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Administrative support for your business! Experienced administrative assistant and I typically handle, scheduling appointments, typing/data entry, making phone calls, arranging travel, or organizing emails.

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LAUREN CONAWAY: INNOVATEHER KC

Tell us about you and your work!

I steward a fantastic community of leaders - women and folks of marginalized gender experience who operate in our community as sources of inspiration, ambition, and support. Our members come from diverse backgrounds and they all need help from time to time. We offer that help by means of our Five Pillars - social connection, professional development, mentorship, championship and resource sharing. Everything we do is designed to help our members learn, grow and evolve in their leadership journeys.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

I came up through male-dominated industries throughout most of my career and I had some truly great experiences - but I also had some really negative ones, and ones that felt crazy gendered. That's where my personal stake in all of this began - I never wanted another woman to feel as lonely, frustrated and angry as I did at certain points of my career. When I moved to Kansas City from Saint Louis, I started to connect with the entrepreneurial community here. I had always been an entrepreneur and I found that finding and volunteering with entrepreneurial support organizations around town was a really great way to meet people and get involved with this community I loved so much. From there, I went to work at the Kansas City Startup Foundation (now Startland), where I made the connections that allowed me to found InnovateHER. I was operating in this startup heavy space and I simply wanted to connect the awesome women working in it and everything grew from there. As with every social impact organization, we never have enough money, time, or resources. You have to do everything and do it well without a ton of help and there are days that feel like you're beating your head against a wall. Funding is always, always an issue. It's easy to sell something when you have a tangible product or a really well-defined service. But when you're talking about community building and the importance of connection, it's harder to put the benefit on paper. For instance, I know that a lot of commerce moves in and out of the IHKC community but I can't knock on the doors of every single member to find out how they benefited financially, what jobs they found, when and where they spent their money with a woman-owned business they wouldn't have otherwise known about. So conveying the need to stakeholders is easy but capturing the data is a bit harder. It pretty much consumes my life.



Where do you hope to be in the future?

I want to grow a really strong team of experts, people who believe in our mission. I want to pay them well and empower them to try new things and learn and fail, all in service to this community of badassess we have brought together. I want to start addressing some of the deep, systemic issues marginalized leaders face, mostly related to access - putting more of the things leaders need, things like significant capital, affordable, empathetic healthcare, and economical, safe childcare. We've gotten some interest in starting InnovateHER chapters elsewhere so of course, that lives in the dream too. My goals for this organization are my goals for the world we live in - empathy, choice and agency, equal access to opportunity. Some days, that all feels so huge as to be overwhelming. Other days it feels like it's just within our reach and if we keep going, we'll get there tomorrow at noon.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

We have a lot of different ways to avail you of the InnovateHER community. We have an enhanced membership program that we're working on and at \$10 or \$20, it's really affordable. That helps keep the wheels turning on our end. You can also join our Plexpod Westport Commons and work out of our gorgeous space there for \$50/month. We have donation links at innovateherkc.com. We have merchandise available and occasionally charge a nominal fee for our programs. We'd also LOVE to see more folks join our 5,500+ free virtual community on Facebook and like, share, subscribe on our social channels. We love seeing folks at our monthly meetups and events.

Socials: @innovateherKC web: innovateherkc.com

SEGURA MARKETING



THISTLEBEE IMAGERY

Tell us about you and your work!

As the founder of LaunchCrate Publishing, my job is to ensure that we're creating ripples of change with each initiative and touchpoint of programming. We offer publishing services to those who are interested in self-publishing their work. Anything related to creating a book (writing, layout, cover design, editing, etc.) we can either coach you through or create in-house. Additionally, for those who are interested in the more traditional publishing path, we select a handful of manuscripts to publish each year.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

In 2012, the non-profit I had the honor of serving went through a reorganization. That's not a word that sparks joy in most people, and it was definitely true in this instance. We navigated through a stressful spring and summer full of change, where they reassured staff that everyone would have a seat on the bus. This, unfortunately, was not the case, and I knew in my gut I'd come to the end of my time there, and so I decided to take a leap of faith, without knowing where I'd land. It was this leap of faith that sparked my publishing journey. In that time I picked up quilting, (didn't see that one coming at all!) and I wrote, illustrated and eventually published my first picture book. After some extensive research on the publishing industry, I decided to use an online service to help with book distribution. My book was supposed to have a \$5 profit margin for each copy sold. Of that \$5, I received 14 cents - per copy. If they flipped me a quarter for each copy sold, I would've had to give them change in return. Definitely not the type of service I expected based on what I'd read about the company before making my decision. Almost 5 years later, I found myself taking another leap of faith as I set out to create ripples of change within the publishing industry, one author and one title at a time.

Cynthia Fails

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Crystal ball, this may sound crazy, but I hope to have created a model that allows authors to grow in ways that put me out of business. I started this work to flip the publishing industry on end. I'd love to see authors creating powerful titles that inspire readers and publishing innovative books in ways that allow them to be fairly compensated for the work they pour into it.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

For more details on the work we're doing and services we offer, check out LaunchCrate.com. We don't post as much, but we're also @LaunchCrate on most social media sites. To follow my adventures, check out CLFails.com or @clfails on Instagram and Twitter, @authorclfails on Facebook and TikTok.

Anything else you'd like to share?

LaunchCrate offers 1:1 coaching packages that vary in price depending on the needs of the author. Through these sessions, authors will be guided through the publishing process; understanding copyright, ISBN information, author branding, etc. Idea to Editor, our flagship MasterCourse, is currently underpriced based on similar services I've seen offered to writers. It offers 8 LIVE classes (one per week), intimate peer support, an overview of how to navigate through the publishing process, and 1:1 coaching with me.

THISTLEBEE IMAGERY



Bliss Books & Wine



Tell us about you and your work!

Bliss Books & Wine is an independently owned bookstore in midtown KC for wine enthusiasts and book lovers. We promote the reading culture by encouraging curious readers, endorsing local arts, spotlighting local authors and artists, and connecting the great pastimes of social drinking and introverted reading. We exist to build a community gathering place and to create experiences by bridging the gap between books and wine.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

Bliss Books & Wine was conceptualized out of pure frustration and the desire to decompress in a relaxing environment. After much thought, I quickly found that no place existed for me to go to unwind, read a book, and enjoy a glass of wine if I wanted to. Men have their bars and cigar lounges that they can frequent but I had yet to discover a place for me: a wife and a working mother of two, who needed just an hour or so of silence, sipping and relaxation. After pondering for several months, I landed on taking charge, authoring my own story, and creating my very own happy place. I (naturally) called up my big sister, La'Nae, with my idea, to which La'Nae said sounded like bliss. Thus, Bliss Books & Wine was born! Our entrepreneurial journey has been an interesting road; winding, a little bumpy and a few roadblocks tossed in for good measure. But it's been an interesting and adventurous ride. As a brand-new company, we were just finding our footing in the community when the pandemic hit and the world came to a screeching halt. This part of our story is not unique, as everyone had to change course and find ways to stay afloat. We took those moments to look at the landscape before us, both the terrifying struggle of charting a new path in very chaotic territory and the exciting opportunity to be creative and expand our offerings. We moved our entire operation online, revamped our website, opened our online store, offered audiobooks and eBooks, and began hosting virtual paint & sips, writing workshops, and author events.

What do you offer?

Our offerings include our secondhand gems (used books), new releases, audiobooks, eBooks, Bliss merchandise and wine accessories. We also host book drives, writing workshops, monthly book club discussions, book challenges and spotlight events for up-and-coming authors. In keeping with our connection to the community, we partner with several local wineries to provide fun book and wine pairings, as well as teaming with various organizations for literary conferences.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

We are looking forward to the grand opening of our flagship storefront in midtown Kansas City later this summer/early fall. Once settled, we have plans to open our second location in Northern Virginia. We have also been contacted by several entrepreneurs interested in franchise opportunities.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

You can find out more information about us on our website, blissbooksandwine.com, and visit our socials as well! Facebook + Twitter: @BlissBooksWine Instagram: @bliss_books_wine_kc



FETCH KC

Tell us about you and your work!

We wanted to combine all the things we love: Political and Pop culture products, well made gifts and scents, paper goods, vintage, and well curated spaces. We wanted to create a whole store and lifestyle experience: a safe space where everyone feels heard and welcome.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

We (Stephanie and Patrick) have been best friends since 2008 when we both worked retail. I worked on the corporate side for a large fast fashion company, and she was the store manager at a stationery and gift store. We both were really ready for a change, and one night in 2016 we were like, "what if we put our backgrounds together and created a store unlike any other in KC?!"



Since this was right after the 2016 election we knew we couldn't be quiet about our beliefs and our stance. We set out to look for makers all over the country who came from all backgrounds – focusing especially on small brands and makers who gave back to organizations we believed in. Then, we quit our jobs and decided to "make Fetch happen!" Nothing is smooth sailing when you own your own business, but we really work so well together as a team. We have both also gone through some really hard personal obstacles in the last 4 (almost 5) years and I am so grateful to have the partnership that we do. Like so many small businesses, nothing has tested us harder than the last year and a half with the pandemic. When one of us is anxious or overwhelmed, the other is calm and supportive and we have always made a promise to look at ourselves as a business and what we can improve on.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

Hopefully in a place where we can give even more back to the community, like we did during the pandemic, when our "PRO Black/Brown/Choice/Trans/Weed/Hoe" sign became it a meme and then onto a Drag Race Queen's Twitter and was retweeted and shared over 100k times! We have since been able to make that phrase into TShirts, posters and totebags, and a custom banner, which has been pretty amazing to see that kind of support from all over the country, and a few orders outside of the US. We also donated over \$7000 to the ACLU from the sales of those shirts, which felt pretty amazing as such a small business. As well this past month with reversal of Roe V Wade and upcoming Kansas amendment we created vote NO yard signs in support of pro choice, and have raised around \$2500 in less than a month for Planned Parenthood of the Great Plains. Thanks to our customers wanting to give back! We are also looking forward to seeing an expansion of more retail and housing in the West Bottoms in the coming years, which we are stoked about being apart of!

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

You can visit us at 1101 Mulberry St, Kansas City, MO 64101, fetchkcmo.com, or our socials @fetchkcmo

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LANCE BLAQOUT DEAN

DEVON DUBREE

Tell us about you and your work!

I create music first and foremost, but I also build business models that allow musicians to turn their passions into a viable career for themselves. I do this because there's so much talent in the world, but not enough people know the mechanics of how to make it work for them! What sets me apart is that I'm absolutely hooked on conducting business while still being a music lover.

How did you get started? Any bumps in the road?

So, I began producing music in 2012. It was a hobby, but something I dreamt of doing as a career. Throughout high school I learned how to produce electronic music and DJ, and it became a form of expression - little did I know, it was a gateway to what would become my entire livelihood. Loving this form of expression and the people that are drawn to it, I toured the country for several years as a producer and that would later reveal my love for conducting business, but within the music industry. I've grown a love for not only creating music, but also helping aspiring musicians grow their musical projects into something prosperous. This led to me ultimately working with my business partners to build Prysm Talent Agency, a company that represents over 100 musical acts across the nation! Music is my life, business is my fuel, and bridging the gap between the two is my main goal.

The oppositions that musicians face always sound similar, whether it's "you have a one-in-a-million chance to make it, do something else", "go to college and learn something that'll pay you a good salary" or anything of that nature. The first thing I did was not listen to those voices saying it wasn't possible, I went out and met people who knew more than I did and absorbed knowledge from them. It's free college! In all seriousness, growing a business centered around music has its challenges. There are tons of unique scenarios that come up and require different approaches, nothing is ever the same twice. Every problem that comes our way is nothing like the one prior and usually there isn't much notice, a lot of things happen on the fly. This is ironic, considering musicians' event calendars are typically booked months in advance but we always have to be ready for whatever comes next. The biggest hurdle we face is the unknown, and we can't ever jump over it.

Where do you hope to be in the future?

I hope to continue growing Prysm Talent Agency with my partners, and simultaneously help teach the next wave of musicians how to be their absolute best.

Where can interested folks find more information, follow along your journey, and get your services/pricing?

For my music, check out @BlaqqoutDubstep on all social media. For my music production business, check out prysmtalentagency.com





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THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to learn the stories of the amazing people in these pages, for supporting our mission, and for making an effort to support local entrepreneurs, creatives, and musicians. Your support means the world to us here at Unified Goals, and we can't wait to show you what's next! Be sure to visit our website to nominate our next city + selectees, and to sign up for emails to stay in the loop for our next issue- arriving in December 2022!



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A woman with vibrant red hair and blonde highlights, wearing round glasses and a green short-sleeved dress with a button-down front and a tied waist. She is smiling and standing in front of a brick wall. Her left hand is near her face, and her right hand is in her pocket. She has a tattoo on her right forearm and a small tattoo on her left wrist.

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