



Photo by Harford Community College

Rosella Waters - EllaRosesboutique LLC Small Business Success Story

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In 2018 Rosella Waters knew it was time to retire from a nearly 40-year career in the field of education, a profession to which she had dedicated her entire adult life.

Rosella's passion is business ownership and celebrating and promoting African American culture, heritage, and traditions. Her desire to expand Black-owned businesses in a community that traditionally lacked a diverse culture was questioned by many, but Rosella dreamed about what it would be like to visit a Black-owned restaurant, hotel, dance studio, movie theater, gift store or art gallery in her own hometown. Her dream inspired her to continue her journey and open a boutique, EllaRosesboutique: A Soulful Place to Shop. Located in Elkton, MD, the boutique merges Rosella's deep appreciation of the beauty in African American culture and infuses her background and career experience as an educator with her desire to fulfill her purpose of leaving a legacy of African American heritage for the next generation.

Getting Started

Rosella frequented her local library before the pandemic and viewed it as an educational resource for many things. As a patron of the Cecil County Public

Library, Rosella was somewhat familiar with Cecil County Business Partners and the resources they provide to aspiring entrepreneurs.

In June 2019, Rosella met with business librarian Ellie Yeatman to get an understanding of the groundwork on getting started. After exploring several of the research websites, Ellie recommended speaking to the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), a Cecil business path partner and Harford Community College partner.

Rosella knew she lacked business experience and found the act of starting a business quite intimidating; however, Maura Van Syckle, her SBDC business consultant, facilitated the process in a manner that fostered Rosella's confidence. Like Rosella, Maura understood that the best educators "meet students where they are."

Maura encouraged Rosella to tackle the most challenging aspects of launching her business and made sure that Rosella learned business jargon and tips on setting goals, reviewing and evaluating cash flow projections, networking, researching, market analysis, and completing exercises.

Rosella found Maura to be an exemplary consultant who was knowledgeable about the latest trends and resources. "Maura's support has been ongoing, and she stays with you each step of the way until you understand it. There is no doubt she aims to help her clients accomplish success in building and growing their business, and she works diligently to ensure that clients develop their business effectively from concept to reality."

Inspiration: More About Rosella Waters and Ellarosesboutique

Faith, family, and friends have inspired Rosella to establish Ella Rose's Boutique. Three of Rosella's favorite African American children's books are What If. . . by Samantha Berger, Hey Black Child by Useni Eugene Perkins, and My People by Langston Hughes. These inspiring books represent possibilities, promise and Black pride. Rosella is also inspired by the legacies of famous African American women such as the late Fannie Lou Hammer, Coretta Scott King, and the legendary Cecily Tyson to name a few. Her inspiration comes not only from African American women, but also from men and women from many other cultures as well. For more information, contact Rosella Waters at <https://ellarosesboutique.com/>

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