

Women in **BUSINESS**



*Angela
Kendall*

**Proud Owner of
Elite Employment
Services**



*Raegan
Hagerden*

**Proud Owner of
Assured Real Estate**



*Kori Marcy
Campbell*

**Proud Owner of
Marcy Funeral Home**



*Shari Lynn
Andramedan*

**Proud Owner of
Light Emporium**



*Lori
McLaughlin*

**Proud Owner of
Biscotti's Restaurant**



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*We salute our area's female business owners for their
great work and contributions to our community.*

Burt family happy they started business

BY WARREN DILLAWAY
warren@starbeacon.com

Jennifer Burt is happy she and her husband, Don, took a risk and opened a tree service to assist customers in Ashtabula County and beyond.

The business will soon have a new home in Orwell, but is presently run from Rome Township, where the couple live.

Burt said she and Don decided they were going to open a business four years ago, and did.

“We were at a place to start our own business and it has worked,” she said.

Burt said her education in biology at Kent State University has paid off in knowing about trees to a small degree, but the ability to organize from her education is more important.

“He does the trees and I do everything else,” Burt said. She said she was raised in Orwell, and her husband, in Chardon.

“Every day is different,” Burt said of life in the tree service business. She said dealing with customers, and different situations is part of the business.

In addition to working the books of the business, Burt also assists Don on jobs when needed.

Burt said sometimes she helps from the ground to make sure he is safe, and resolve other needs that may come up.

Without a business education, some of the day-to-day details of running a business were learned through friends.

“Kind of self-taught, and reach out to my friends that own their own businesses,” Burt said.

One of the most satisfying parts of the job is knowing what she and her husband have created together. She said it can be tense, but the opportunity to watch their business grow has been meaningful.

Burt said she has learned a lot from area chambers of commerce through seminars and other experiences, including hosting events herself.

When they started working together they made a commitment to go one year at a time, see what had been learned, then move on to the next year.

Burt said she suggests any women considering starting their own business to take the risk and do it. She did say having Don with her makes a big difference.

She said it is important to believe in yourself and to make your new reality.



WARREN DILLAWAY
| STAR BEACON

Jennifer Burt is the vice president of Don Burt’s Tree Service, having started the company with her husband in 2023.

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Daugherty runs business, involves herself in Conneaut community

CHRISTOPHER GILLETT

cgillett@starbeacon.com

CONNEAUT — Kristina Daugherty has operated Castaway's Pizza and Grill on Broad Street for over 13 years, while becoming a pillar of the community and serving on city boards.

Daugherty comes from a family of local business owners, with the restaurant having previously been operated by her aunt, she said.

"We have a long history of the family owning various businesses, but especially restaurants, like great aunts and uncles," Daugherty said.

Daugherty started her career in finance, but stumbled upon the opportunity to own the restaurant, which was then called Anthony's Pizza, she said.

"It's something I've always wanted to do and dabble, and took the plunge," Daugherty said.

The restaurant, re-branded to Castaway's, is open 4-9 p.m. Monday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday, noon-10 p.m. Saturday and noon-8 p.m. Sunday at 877 Broad St., she said.

Owning and operating a business has come with enough challenges to write bad novels, Daugherty said.

"Just when I think I've seen it all, I haven't seen it," she said.



Kristina Daugherty takes an order at Castaway's Pizza and Grill.

CHRISTOPHER GILLETT | STAR BEACON

Daugherty said she considers Biscotti's owner Lori McLaughlin a major role model for her journey in business.

"I think a lot of women might sometimes hesitate, because of home life and children, and the different various hurdles to maybe not open businesses and not pursue," she said. "I recommend that

you do. It all works out. You figure out how to do it."

That is not to say you can start a businesses and remain uninvolved in its day to day operations, Daugherty said.

"I'm not floating around," she said. "I'm either cooking, or serving, or some sort of aspect of this businesses."

The COVID-19 pandemic was probably one of the largest challenges the restaurant faced, especially because the business had to stop indoor dining, Daugherty said.

"We were able to survive just by doing carryout and delivery, which was wonderful," she said. "So, we never thought we'd ever see a

pandemic, and something that would shut down so much of our world."

Staffing is a common challenge for any business, Daugherty said.

"Any business owner that tells you they don't have an issue with staffing is lying unfortunately," she said. "We all have issues. That is a challenge."

Inflation has also hit the restaurant, like it has impacted many other parts of the economy.

"With the recent gas hike, when gas was almost \$5 a gallon, you will see a trickle-down effect, where it will slow down," she said. "People don't have that ancillary money to go out to eat as

See Daugherty on 9

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Kori Marcy Campbell continues family legacy

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CONNEAUT—Kori Marcy Campbell takes great pride in carrying on the legacy that her great, great grandfather, Willard Marcy, started in 1868. Women at the helm of a funeral business is no longer the eyebrow-raiser it once was, said Kori Marcy Campbell, of Marcy Funeral Home in Conneaut.

Campbell, who worked alongside her father, Robert, starting in 2001, said people have embraced the growing presence of wom-

en in what once was a male-dominated profession."In fact, the number of women funeral directors increases each year," Campbell, a Conneaut native, had helped her father during calling hours, but didn't decide to devote herself to the business until she was a student in high school. "It wasn't until I was a junior or senior that I decided what I wanted to do," she said.

Marcy Funeral Home, may very well be Conneaut's oldest business. Campbell said she wanted to play an active role in the long-lived and respected business.

"As a fifth generation funeral director, I have quite a sense of pride in the level of care we offer to families," she said. Her brother, Kevin, is a funeral director in Acworth, Georgia. Further carrying on the family legacy.

Over the years, Marcy Funeral Home has expanded its services, including the opening of its Family Center opposite the funeral home on Harbor Street. The facility offers a place for family and friends to gather and is also popular with clubs, Campbell said.

The funeral business offers plenty of oppor-

tunity to do good in the community. I'm very involved in organizations and events throughout Ashtabula County. I think this helps people feel comfortable when they see a familiar face in their time of need," Campbell said. "It's fulfilling to be able to assist families in that time of their life," she said. "We can educate them on the options, including cremation, which is more popular, as it's become more accepted."



KORI MARCY CAMPBELL

Harbor Print important resource for local residents

CHRISTOPHER GILLET

cgillett@starbeacon.com

ASHTABULA — Lisa Haytcher opened Harbor Print Center in January 2022, almost five years ago.

“We got the lease in November (2021) and it took until January to get open, which I think is pretty fast,” she said.

Before opening Harbor Print, Haytcher worked for Office Max for 22 years, she said. When the Office Max Haytcher worked at closed, she bought all of the equipment, she said as a starting point.

“It’s been five years,” Haytcher said. “A lot of my equipment we’ve replaced as we’ve gone. We try to keep up on newer stuff.”

Haytcher said the most significant challenge to opening her businesses was finding an appropriate brick-and-mortar location.

“We were just renting a self-serve, what do you call it, storage unit,” she said. “It was bad.”

When Haytcher stumbled upon her current location, she knew it would be great, she said.

Harbor Print, located at 856 Lake Ave., is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Monday mornings tend to be the busiest time for Harbor Print, as Haytcher reads through emails and prepares orders, she said.

“We kind of start clearing out at 4 [p.m.] most days,” Haytcher said. “Lunch times get busy.”

Harbor Print offers several services, including copying, printing, blueprints, posters, banners, spiral-binding



Harbor Print Center owner Lisa Haytcher operates a copy machine at her business.

books and laminating, Haytcher said.

“We do a lot of work through emails,” she said. “People email us a lot of stuff.”

Haytcher said she can sometimes come in on Monday mornings to 25 to 30 emails requesting services.

Finding paper vendors was also a challenge when starting the business, Haytcher said.

“Back then, I had no clue,” she said. “Where do you get 24-inch paper? So,

you figure it out.”

Gas price increases led to an indirect rise in shipping costs for Harbor Print, Haytcher said.

“Then, I have to kind of pass that on,” she said.

The paper ordering can be an ordeal, but the customers make it all worth it, Haytcher said.

Each week also offers something new for what customers want, she said.

“So, there is never a dull moment,” Haytcher said.

Jennie Clutter, Lisa Hay-

Clutter said. “If something comes up that I can do, I do it. Otherwise, I schmooze with the customers.”

Haytcher said there are two employees at the print shop.

The several feet of snow from the 2024 Thanksgiving weekend snowstorm slowed down business, Haytcher said.

“We only live three blocks from here, so I mean, we finally made it after a couple of days,” she said.

Haytcher said she finally made it in after digging the snow out of her driveway, but customers did not know they were open.

“We didn’t have any customers,” she said. “So, all I kept seeing was people going to the tanning salon in three feet of snow.”

Haytcher advised other aspiring local business owners to try and find a mentor, or look to local resources, such as NEO Fund, she said.

“Doing some research beforehand helps as well,” she said.

Haytcher also lets a local paint group host classes there on Saturdays, she said.

“It’s just something fun to do, while we’ve got the space,” she said.

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Ashtabula native Jodi Campagne manages Riverbend Hotel

BY WARREN DILLAWAY
warren@starbeacon.com

ASHTABULA — A decades-long commitment to the hospitality industry has been rewarded as Jodi Campagne is excited to go to work every day to serve as manager of the Riverbend Hotel.

“It’s been exciting. The events here have been elevated,” said Campagne, who has been on the job for about a year, using her varied experience in the hotel industry to work out challenges at the hotel, which provides riverfront views from many of its rooms.

She said the hotel is focusing on special events, including a recently-completed bridal expo. There have also been art displays, major community celebrations, and family gatherings with people from all over the region, or even the country.

Campagne is involved in those events trying to make sure it is special for all.

The hotel has a variety of architectural awards, and has become a stopping point for travelers, area visitors, and a growing number of events.

She said the administration and staff are committed to making the hotel experience special.

Campagne said she enjoys the unique experience of managing a hotel, but it is not easy.

“Every day is different. I can’t imagine not having organizational challenges,” she said of helping a staff of 25



WARREN DILLAWAY | STAR BEACON

Jodi Campagne is the manager of the Riverbend Hotel in Ashtabula.

full and part-time employees do their jobs.

She said there are a variety of positions, including front desk operators, chefs and many others. Campagne said it is important for her to be extra engaged in the hotel, and she feels extremely honored to manage a hotel in her hometown.

Campagne said she has worked outside the area, but has come home to Ashtabula.

One of the challenges is making sure the staff is enjoying their jobs as much as possible. Campagne tries to encourage employees when they do something well.

“I make it fun Sometimes we just do something to make the staff laugh,” she said.

Campagne said trying to provide the best work/life balance is essential.

“My day starts really early ... It is a 24-7 job,” she said of

her work that usually starts around 8 a.m. and includes trade shows, entertainment and special events.

“I enjoy this job,” she said with a large smile.

A partner to help make that challenging job work on a day-to-day basis is important, as well.

“I have the most amazing husband,” Campagne said. “He has supported me in everything I’ve done.”

Campagne said her children are all grown, and she has more of a free rein to handle the hours the positions demands.

She said she is also happy, as an Ashtabula native, to be a part of something so special in the Harbor. Campagne said the public is noticing, as well.

“I can not tell you how many people say how proud they are that this [hotel] is in Ashtabula,” Campagne said.

Assured Real Estate Thrives While Serving the Community Through Changing Times

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JEFFERSON — With over 30 years of experience in the real estate industry, Raegan Hagerdon has built a career rooted in knowledge, dedication, and a passion for helping others.

She began her journey working with a small brokerage before moving on to a national franchise. Over time, she developed a vision of bringing everything she had learned together—creating a business that truly serves both clients and agents at the highest level.

That vision became a reality in 2017 when she founded Assured Real Estate, an independent brokerage based in Jefferson.

Since then, the industry has evolved significantly—especially with the rise of social media and digital marketing. Today, virtual tours and online home searches have become the norm, allowing buyers to explore properties from anywhere.

“We have to move with the times and embrace the social media boom to best serve our buyers and sellers,” Hagerdon said.

To meet those demands, Assured Real Estate has invested in professional photography services, including video, drone footage, and virtual tours—tools that are now highly sought after.

“It’s something clients expect today,” she said. “We want to provide the best possible experience for both buyers and sellers.”

The brokerage has experienced impressive growth in recent years. Assured Real Estate now has more than 25 agents, has expanded with a second office in Andover, and serves as the primary broker for Lake Erie Shores Luxury Motor Coach Resort in Geneva-on-the-Lake.

The Andover office, located at 320 E. Main Street and managed by associate broker April Howard, opened in the summer of 2025 and serves clients across both Ohio and Pennsylvania.

“We’re excited for our grand opening on Memorial Day weekend and look forward to a busy tourist season,” Hagerdon said.

Much of this success reflects the growth happening throughout the county itself.

“Tourism is booming,” she said. “We’ve become a destination, and we’re seeing increased demand for properties, especially those used



for short-term rentals like Airbnbs.”

At its core, Assured Real Estate remains a family-driven business. Raegan’s husband Bryan, along with her son Brandon and daughter-in-law Emily, are all licensed and actively involved.

Brandon and Emily, in particular, have played a key role in elevating the company’s social media presence.

“They’ve really helped bridge the gap between generations,” Raegan said.

Despite the growth and expansion, the company’s commitment to its roots remains strong.

“My husband and I were born and raised here,” she said. “We are deeply invested in this community and look forward to serving it for many years to come.”

Bryan shares that same passion.

“Being active in the community—whether it’s coaching or supporting local events—has always been important to us,” he said.

That commitment is reflected in everything Assured Real Estate does, from helping clients buy and sell homes to supporting local schools, teams, and organizations.

For those looking to make a move, Hagerdon offers a simple message:

“We want to help you find a home in the hometown you love.”

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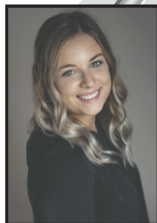
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Shari Lynn has spent the past 35 years deeply rooted in the field of Metaphysics, dedicating her life to exploring the nature of consciousness, energy, and spiritual evolution. As the owner of a spiritual jewelry store, The Light Emporium where she offers rare and high-vibrational stones and minerals such as Moldavite and Sentient Quartz Crystals that support healing, activation, and transformation.

Shari holds a deep passion for assisting others on their path to health, self-discovery, and living in alignment with the Truth of who they are. Having studied with numerous masters in the fields of self-help, quantum mechanics, and energetic healing, she has synthesized her knowledge into powerful healing technologies.

She is the creator of the **Pleiadean Cosmic Healing Discs**—Full Spectrum Healing Tools that work with Light and Frequency to assist in releasing emotional, sexual, and past-life trauma. These tools have reached the hands of healers and starseeds across the United States, as Shari has traveled the country sharing her work, knowledge, and inspiration at many of the nation's largest spiritual and holistic expos.

Through her lectures, jewelry, and healing tools, Shari continues to uplift and empower those who are awakening to their true essence and soul purpose.

"It is wonderful to be back at the top of the hill on Bridge Street in the Historic Ashtabula Harbor!" says **Shari Lynn**, who, along with her fiancé, **Reiki Master Dino Mauri**, opened **The Light Emporium** in January 2023. "After the COVID pandemic, we felt it was essential to bring a spiritual safe haven to our community."

Peace and Light define the atmosphere of *The Light Emporium*. "We assist others in discovering the healer within," says Shari.



"We offer ongoing Reiki classes, workshops with inspired alternative healers, and sessions with some of the most respected readers in the business."

Some may remember **The Silver Branch**, which was located on Bridge Street from May 2004 until late 2013. "I am more grounded and centered at this point in my life," Shari reflects, "reinforcing my deep desire to help humanity cope in this exciting, *got-to-get-spiritual-and-healthy* time."

The Light Emporium's Facebook page maintains an active presence, featuring pop-up shop vendor events, spiritual classes, and meditation circles. **Psychic Fairs** are held on the **last Saturday of every month**, offering the community a chance to connect, explore, and grow together. Offering **unique and inspired gifts** you won't find anywhere else in town, **The Light Emporium** is the perfect place to shop for the holidays, birthdays, or simply just because you care. We are open Wednesday thru Friday 11-5 and Saturday 11-6, now through the end of the year.

Daugherty

CONTINUED FROM 3

[frequently].”

Gas prices also have indirect effects on food delivery, trash pickup and similar transportation needs for the restaurant, Daugherty said.

“We’re all feeling the crunch, so it all trickles down hill,” she said.

Like the pandemic, the 2024 Thanksgiving weekend snowstorm was a unique and unexpected event for the restaurant, Daugherty said.

“We were one of the few businesses that remained open during that,” she said.

Many of the restaurant’s employees had four-wheel drive vehicles, so delivery could keep rolling, Daugherty said.

“I think we only saw one dine-in customer, and that was like a neighbor,” she said.

Restaurant supplies were stuck in Pennsylvania, so Daugherty and her husband went over to grab the items themselves, she said.

“We have faced many challenges, but we have found a way to overcome them for sure,” Daugherty said.

Following the several feet of snow, Daugherty turned the restaurant into a pantry for people stuck at home without supplies, she said.

Daugherty said she considers community involvement to be a central part of operating her business.

“Being a mom and being a business owner, I wanted to show my children, it’s not about just



WARREN DILLAWAY | STAR BEACON

More than 70 businesses and organizations in Conneaut participated in the Castaway’s Community Candy Crawl Saturday. The event is organized by Castaway’s owner Kristina Daugherty.

owning a business and [at times] you have to give back,” she said.

Through her business, Daugherty hosts multiple holiday events in Conneaut, which are some of the most popular activities for children across the city.

She organizes the an-

nual Halloween Candy Crawl, which sees participation from several local venues, and an annual Easter egg hunt, that has grown to become very popular.

On top of that, Castaway’s participates in city festivals and parades and

hosts 20 days of giving in December, Daugherty said.

That event promotes local shopping during the holiday season, she said.

Daugherty serves as the Conneaut Visitors Bureau board president, and the Conneaut Port Authority

board secretary, she said.

Through that, she has further become involved in the local community, helping the CPA as it plans future projects, and representing the CVB at events, like a tourism conference at the Lodge at Geneva-on-the-Lake

last year.

Daugherty won the Conneaut Area Chamber of Commerce’s 2025 Citizen of the Year Award, which she said was a wonderful surprise.

“I didn’t even know I was nominated,” she said.

Some small business ideas for women and how to get started

BY KATHERINE SANDERS

Intuit QuickBooks

Starting a business is one of the best ways to build financial independence and work on your own terms. The challenge isn't a lack of options. There are plenty of strong small business ideas out there. The challenge is figuring out which one fits your life. Your skills, interests, budget, and the time you can give all shape what will work. So do your income goals, where you want to work, and whether customers will pay for what you offer.

With October being National Women's Small Business Month, Intuit QuickBooks shares some small business ideas for women and offers tips on how to get started.

How to choose the right business idea for you

Before committing to an

idea, work through these questions honestly:

- What skills do I have? Think about your professional background, hobbies, and everyday strengths.

- What do I enjoy doing? Businesses that align with your genuine interests are easier to sustain.

- How much time can I dedicate? A few hours per week calls for a different model than full-time availability.

- What's my starting budget? Some ideas need very little upfront. Others require a big investment.

- What income do I need—and when? Some businesses generate revenue quickly. Others take months to build.

- Who are my customers? Knowing your audience helps you validate the idea before investing too much time or money.

No idea on this list is

reserved for a particular type of person. Focus on what fits your life and your goals. For example, if your schedule is unpredictable, look for small business ideas for stay-at-home moms and others who need maximum flexibility.

Small business ideas for women by category

The list below spans six categories, from lower-cost services to product and food businesses that need more setup. Startup costs are shown as low, moderate, or high because actual costs vary by location, supplies, and the size you start with.

Service-based ideas

Service businesses often cost little to start because you sell your time and skills instead of inventory.

House cleaning: Offer residential or commercial cleaning services, either solo or by building a small team over time.

Pet sitting/dog walking:

Care for pets in clients' homes or your own, either as a solo operation or through platforms like Rover.

Personal assistant/virtual assistant: Support busy entrepreneurs or executives by managing email, scheduling, research, and administrative tasks remotely.

Childcare/nanny services: Provide in-home or home-based childcare, keeping in mind that licensing requirements vary by state.

Tutoring: Offer one-on-one or small-group instruction in academic subjects, test prep, music, or a skill you've mastered.

Event planning: Coordinate weddings, corporate events, or private parties, managing vendors, logistics, and timelines on behalf of clients.

Creative and handmade ideas

If you make or design things, you can turn that talent into a business you sell

online or at local markets.

Handmade goods (Etsy): Sell original crafts, jewelry, candles, or art through Etsy or your own website.

Photography: Build a business around weddings, family portraits, branding shoots, or product photography.

Graphic design: Create logos, marketing materials, social media graphics, and brand identities for businesses of all sizes.

Custom clothing/alterations: Offer made-to-measure garments, alterations, or embroidery services for individuals or small brands.

Online and digital ideas

Online business ideas for women have expanded significantly. Many require minimal overhead and can grow entirely through digital channels.

Freelance writing/copywriting: Write blog posts, website copy, email campaigns, or product descriptions for businesses that need a skilled wordsmith.

Social media management: Handle content creation, scheduling, and community engagement for brands that don't have time to manage their own accounts.

Online course creation: Package your knowledge into a structured course and sell it through platforms like Teachable, Kajabi, or Udemy.

Dropshipping: Sell products through your own online store without holding inventory. Your supplier ships directly to the customer.

Affiliate marketing/blogging: Publish content in a niche you know well and earn commissions by recommending products or services through affiliate links.

Retail and product ideas

Product-based businesses can operate online, in person, or both, giving you flexibility in how you reach customers.

Resale/thrift flipping: Source secondhand items and resell them for profit on platforms like Poshmark, eBay, or Facebook Marketplace.

Subscription box: Curate a themed box of products and ship it to subscribers monthly, building recurring revenue over time.

Print-on-demand products: Design custom T-shirts, mugs, or tote bags and sell them through platforms that print and ship each order.

Boutique (online or in-person): Launch a clothing or lifestyle store, online for lower startup costs, or brick-and-mortar if your market supports it. Food and hospitality ideas Food businesses require attention to licensing and local health regulations, but they can be deeply rewarding for those who love to cook or host.

Home baking/custom cakes: Create baked goods for special events or sell through farmers' markets and online orders. Licensing requirements vary by state under cottage food laws.

Personal chef: Prepare meals in clients' homes on a recurring or event basis, catering to dietary needs and preferences.

Meal prep service: Batch-cook weekly meals for busy individuals or families, delivering them ready to heat and eat.

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Angela Kendall's Work Starts Close to Home

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Nearly 50,000 placements and relationships with 40 local partners tell part of the story behind Elite Employment Center, the Ashtabula County workforce company Angela Kendall founded in 2010. The business has grown into a multimillion-dollar operation serving employers and job seekers across Northeast Ohio.

Elite's work reaches beyond matching candidates with open positions. The addition of Elite Transit helps address transportation barriers that can keep people from getting to work, giving employees more access to jobs and helping employer partners meet their staffing needs. Four vans now run across all three shifts, picking teammates up at home and bringing them to work. Kendall has built that work alongside a team that includes Mary Beardsley, Robin Thomas, Shayla Harrison, Durquita Maldonado, Jessica Sheppard, Jenny Estrada and Sarah Minadeo.

"When I started Elite, I wanted to help people find work and help local employers find the people they needed. Nearly 50,000 placements later, I'm proud of how much we've grown, but I never want us to lose sight of what those numbers represent: people, families, and relationships with over 40 local partners who trust us. We've also learned that helping someone get a job can mean looking beyond the job itself. If transportation is the barrier, we must ask what we can do to remove it. That's why adding Elite Transit mattered to us," Kendall said.

Community investment is another central part of Kendall's work. She founded The Kendall Foundation in 2020, and the organization has donated nearly \$650,000 through direct assistance, scholarships, and charitable initiatives. Her daughter Alyssa is deeply involved in carrying that mission forward.



She helps shape and run major fundraising events, including Giving on the Green and Deck the Halls, and reviews requests for assistance so the Foundation can respond to needs close to home. Her hands-on commitment helps turn the Foundation's purpose into meaningful support for people and families in the community.

Kendall is also the inventor and founder of Compatti, a patented modular food-storage system named in honor of her late mother, Patti. The containers connect to create different configurations for meals and everyday use. Compatti received the 2025 ASD Market Week Las Vegas Innovation of the Year Award, launched nationally in 2026 and led to an invitation for Kendall to present the brand on QVC.

Together, Kendall's ventures connect business growth with community service. She credits the small hometown community that has supported her at every turn. "I'm so grateful for my small hometown community. They've supported me through every venture and every new chapter of my journey, and I carry that support with me in everything I build. Giving back is one way I can honor it," Kendall said.

A TEAM CONNECTED BY PURPOSE

