



Louisiana Small Business Development Center

For Immediate Release

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LSBDC Helps Photographer Shoot for Success



(Lake Charles) As a mother of three, Laura Kelley of Sulphur, LA. was searching for a career which offered her flexibility and financial security. Laura loved photography since she picked up a camera as high school yearbook photographer. But she never envisioned making photography a full-time career, until fate shoved her in that direction. Laura was working full-time as a bookkeeper, when her boss informed her that her job would soon be gone.

“I was always nervous about taking the final leap of faith and opening my own photography studio. But Donna Little with the LSBDC at McNeese was very supportive. When you first start a business, you feel lost. There are a lot of roads to take, some end with roadblocks. It was great to have someone like Donna to help guide you along the right paths.”

LSBDC at McNeese helped Laura put together a plan for selling more photos, listing potential customers, sales opportunities, and advertising and marketing vehicles. They also focused on how Kelley could increase profitability by spending less time editing digital photos and up-selling her customers to more profitable packages. With Little’s encouragement, Kelley joined the Professional Photographers Association to add value to her work by showing her professionalism. LSBDC also helped Laura obtain a SBA loan to buy new photography equipment.

In two years, Laura Kelley Photography with a studio in Lake Charles has taken off. Her annual sales jumped more than eight-fold since she first started her business in 2004. Laura focuses on bridal photography, and uses her website www.laurakelleyphotography.com to showcase her work. An average wedding package costs about \$4,000.

“I’m not very good with words – that’s why I take pictures! But working with Donna Little at the LSBDC at McNeese was a good move in developing my business. I felt that I had a knowledgeable advisor waiting to help me. I wanted to focus on growing my business into a full-time serious occupation, and my discussions with the LSBDC helped me reach my goals,” said Laura.



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