

From Mobile to Brick-and-Mortar: IDEA Lab Kids Brings In-Person STEAM Learning to Its North Carolina Location

Franchisee Jennifer Bellamine wasn't able to open a brick-and-mortar storefront for her IDEA Lab Kids location due to COVID-19.

HOUSTON, TX, USA, June 22, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jennifer Bellamine has been in

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corporate America for her entire career, with roles focused on operations, customer service and marketing, to name a few. She's always enjoyed the work she's done, but when she had her son, her family was in need of after-school care for him, and preferred something with an educational aspect to it.

That was when she discovered IDEA Lab Kids, an educational brand that allows kids ages four to 14 to

explore their love of science, technology, engineering, art and math. The idea of bringing the concept to her area of Wesley Chapel, North Carolina was appealing, as there was a huge gap in the community for such a thing.

“I wanted to fill the need for educational opportunities in after-school programs for the children in our community, not just for my own child,” she said. “I wanted to introduce children to concepts outside the school setting that would encourage their interest level and future aptitude for STEAM and tech-related programming.”

Of course, childcare and after-school programming was thrown into disarray during the COVID-19 pandemic and impacted the way in which Bellamine's IDEA Lab Kids location was able to interact with its students. She first opened in June 2020, offering virtual programming and mobile services where she traveled to students and offered a number of summer camps held at nearby community centers.

However, with many companies requiring employees to return to the office and parents in need of somewhere to send their children, Bellamine's long-term goal of opening a brick-and-mortar IDEA Lab Kids location is finally coming to fruition. She has rebranded her location as an in-person opportunity for the Wesley Chapel community at 5937 Weddington Road.

“We know how dedicated Jennifer is to serving the children of the Wesley Chapel community, and by opening a brick-and-mortar location in conjunction with her mobile services, she is providing an endless amount of opportunities for the community,” said Devina Bhojawni, president of IDEA Lab Kids. “The community really responded to our brand’s presence there, and we’re excited to see what the future holds for everyone involved.”

Why IDEA Lab Kids’ Multidisciplinary Curriculum Motivated Bellamine to Sign with the Brand

When Bellamine decided that she was going to solve the after-school programming problem in her community, she knew that she didn’t want to leave out the arts. “IDEA Lab Kids offered a robust program with great support for its franchisees,” said Bellamine. “I like the idea of incorporating the arts into STEM learning, because as an English major that works in technology, creativity is very important to me and I wanted other kids to feel the joy that comes with being able to express themselves creatively.”

She added that the multidisciplinary curriculum at IDEA Lab Kids was very appealing to her and knew that it was something that would resonate with her local community as well. “We may be doing a highly engineering project, but what we’ve created has also combined art along with the engineering,” she said. “It’s that approach that introduces children to something that wouldn’t have otherwise been discovered if we didn’t have art and science lessons mixed together.”

How Bellamine Plans to Build on Her Virtual Success to Grow the Brand in the Wesley Chapel Community

Although Bellamine didn’t get the traditional start in a physical location with IDEA Lab Kids, she made the most of it and created processes that allowed her to grow through virtual offerings until she was able to open a brick-and-mortar location.

“Making the pivot to continue with opening my franchise location virtually rather than waiting until the pandemic subsided helped me introduce the offerings of IDEA Lab Kids to the community,” she said. “I’ve seen a tremendous response to the programming we offer through social media and mom groups on Facebook, even throughout the pandemic. We have run successful summer camps and mobile after-school programs.”

While the past two years have been all about establishing the brand within the community and building its clientele, Bellamine said that now just feels like the right time to open her physical location and give children a place to go after school.

“The response we’ve received from the Wesley Chapel community only gives me optimism and hope about the future,” she said. “We have an active community, and we plan to continue offering mobile services as well as assisting local school districts in running their after-school programs.”

Ultimately, Bellamine wants to service the community that needs support and care while parents are working full-time. "It's a matter of necessity that parents are comfortable with where their children are and know that they are safe," she added.

She also wants to grow enough that she's able to reach underserved communities and would like to eventually have the ability to offer a scholarship in partnership with public schools. "The need is in public schools having more resources," said Bellamine. "I want to be a part of building the future and I feel like IDEA Lab Kids is the best way to do that."

Bellamine hopes to be open by mid to late-summer 2022. Registration for summer camps with Bellamine's IDEA Lab Kids location is open, with a special offer valid until July 1st.

The startup costs for an IDEA Lab Kids franchise range from \$163,000 to \$465,000. The franchise fee is \$35,500. To learn more about franchising with IDEA Lab Kids, visit <https://www.franchise.idealabkids.com>.

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