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President and CEO

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InnovateHER - 2016

Gateway Technical College and WWBIC Event

Cover Page

Name of Winner -

Kelly Deem

Name of Business -

Elsie Mae's Canning and Pies

Product -

Elsie Mae's practices traditional baking and canning using produce from local farms, including freshly baked pies, 100+ varieties of jam, freshly canned preserves and relishes, drink mixes (Bloody Mary, lemonade ...) and specialty potpies. They carry local meat, eggs, and fish. Elsie Mae's has also begun to sell products wholesale, and they do take special orders and requests. In addition to their product line and specialty orders, Elsie Mae's has also added an education component to the business, providing learning opportunities for families, children and adults of all ages.

Company Address, City and State -

5619 - 6th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53140

Phone Number -

(262) 914-9198

Email Address -

elsiemaecanning@gmail.com

Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/elsiemaes.canning>

Host Organization's Legal Name -

Gateway Technical College

Host's Address, City and State -

2320 Renaissance Boulevard
Sturtevant, WI 53177

Tax ID:

39-6002791

Contact Information:

Thalia Mendez (Changed from Kristin Niemiec)

(262) 898-7404

mendezt@gtc.edu

Concise, two sentence description of the product -

Elsie Mae's practices traditional baking and canning, using produce from local farms. After starting the business using local farmer's markets, Kelly Deem has now expanded to her second location in downtown Kenosha and has also begun a wholesale branch of the business.

Elsie Mae's Canning & Pies

Business Plan

Contact Information

Kelly Deem
elsiemaecanning@gmail.com
(262) 914-9198
5819 - 6th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53140

Elsie Mae's Cannery & Pies

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Elsie Mae's Cannery & Pies is a specialty shop in downtown Kenosha. Our mission is to preserve traditional style baking and canning as passed down to me by my grandma, Elsie Mae. In addition, our mission is to use local and seasonal ingredients. I opened Elsie Mae's in November 2012 with \$20,000 in startup expenses taken from my savings. From 2013 to 2014, we made our products available at five farmers markets, and relying on the word of mouth alone, we saw our sales triple. In 2015, we relocated into the historical Orpheum Theatre Building, located in the southern part of Kenosha's downtown. The Orpheum Theatre Building reflects the city's cultural and social history. This building was the first "movie palace" built in Kenosha. We were drawn to this location because our shop incorporates the current cultural and social movements of the time; buying local and supporting small family owned business. Our new location allows for increased production space that has increased our retail store revenue. For example, in 2014, we produced 537 pies for the Thanksgiving holiday, and in 2015, we produced just over 1,000 pies for the Thanksgiving holiday. We expect this growth even though the business was closed at the beginning of the year while we relocated the business and got the new location up and running. We also increased our presence at farmers markets from 5 to 18 and increased our wholesale accounts. We will be pursuing an additional license this year which will allow for the commercialization of pot pies and allow for more fulltime, year round employment opportunities.

II. PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I grew up in rural Ohio, where the whole family is involved in the food we eat, from planting to canning. We would start in early January deciding on our planting varieties and harvest schedule; it was this plan that would determine what we would have available to eat the following January. This upbringing is the true background of how our business got its start, from 42 jars of strawberry jam, and how our product line continues to expand.

My husband James, who I met at Northland College, was from this area, and in 2007, I took a position with the Lake County Health Department Lakes Management Unit (LCHD), as a water quality specialist. That summer I visited a local strawberry farm, and I picked strawberries. This of course led me to making strawberry jam. I was totally satisfied with my day's work, even though my husband didn't think we could eat 42 jars of strawberry jam. Being a transplant in the area, I didn't have any family or friends to trade with, so I tried our local farmers market. Since then, our 42 jars of jam have grown into a small shop that we opened in 2012. At the beginning of 2015, the growth of our business and demand for our products led us to another move to a larger location. We now make 120 different kinds of jams (10 kinds of strawberry). However, we are most known for our fruit pies and pot pies. In June 2014, I left my job at LCHD to run my shop full time. I currently have 8 employees from Lake and Kenosha County, seasonally we employ 14 full time employees (May through August). Our employees learn the basics of

traditional style baking and canning such as making pie dough from scratch and fresh fruit preserves. However, they also learn the value of farm raised meat and produce by observing best management practices on land and water resources that are observed directly from the farm. We form partnerships with our fruit, vegetable, and meat producers so we know what products we will have readily available the next season and can prepare our customers for seasonal changes. We host *Meet the Farmers* events at our shop and we visit the farms to learn directly about their practices. These events allow us to make a connection with the food we produce and then share that with our customers.

III. BUSINESS CONCEPT

We make a variety of canned goods including jams, relishes, salsas, whole fruit lemonades, and bloody Mary mixes. Our shop also provides fresh, seasonal, and local pies. Our goals are to increase production of our current line of pies and canned goods for wholesale opportunities and to increase our retail store revenue 100% by introducing more sources of local meat and wines made from local orchards. That is the plan 2-3 years down the road, but this year, we want to be able to obtain and retain wholesale accounts to maintain a steady revenue throughout the year. Almost half of our income at this time relies on the busy spring/summer seasons when the farmers markets are in full bloom. Since each farmer's market is a hit or miss, also depending on the day, an increase in wholesale accounts throughout the year would allow for a steadier stream of income, alleviating seasonal staffing by maintaining employment throughout the year.

Prior to our move, we had been approached by different wholesalers, but after doing a kitchen inspection, they decided to wait on giving us a deal until we had a bigger kitchen that would allow us to produce the quantity they were looking for. These inquiries prompted the initial search for our current larger space and for equipment. We have had a presence at the Kenosha Farmers market since 2009. In 2016, we will be participating in 20 farmers markets extending into Milwaukee and Chicago, and we've obtained 2 wholesale accounts. With these new opportunities, we will need to have more equipment to produce larger quantities of our product in the new kitchen space. In early 2015, we reached out to WWBIC to obtain Elsie Mae's first business loan in the amount of 25,000 for equipment in our new space. The funds came from two entities the Kenosha Community Development Block Grant and the Southeast Sustainable Food Fund. The requirements of these funding sources aligned with our business concept and helped to create a full-time equivalent job for a low-to-moderate income individual and the use of local produce to create our products. Our business currently has a State Food Processor Plant License, Certified Food Manager, Meat Distribution License, Kenosha County Very Small Potentially Hazardous License, Kenosha County Temporary Restaurant License, Racine County Temporary Restaurant License, and Lake County Illinois Temporary Restaurant License, and our plant is registered with FDA for acidified foods and holds an Acidified Foods Training Certificate. All of our employees also hold a food handlers certification.

IV. BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

The structure of Elsie Mae's is a Sole Proprietorship. I operate the store, take care of marketing, develop recipes, bake and manage all staff. My husband, James, joined us full time in October 2015 and is currently assisting with overall increase in shop demands with the move. In 2016, he will take the title of Market Manager where he will supervise 8 full time seasonal employees who will primarily attend farmers markets. Along with the market staff, I will maintain 6 full time seasonal shop staff that are responsible for product production and the daily operations of the shop. We require all our employees to submit a resume. A resume helps us narrow our applicants to people who are genuinely interested in working with us and who show us first hand their ability to communicate in a professional manner, using their own experiences. To date 67% of our staff have been female, the majority of our current staff is female (65%). Elsie Mae's is a first job incubator as we provide support and education to our staff (48% of our staff have no prior job experience and 76% are or started under the age of 18). Because we produce our own products that we sell at various markets throughout the week, we have the opportunity to provide our staff with a flexible work schedule. Currently 50% of the women that work at for us are also taking college classes. This is particularly useful as we have been able to adjust schedules of the two mothers we currently employ - one by offering an early weekday schedule to accommodate the care of her school age children and the other by changing her schedule from the markets to the shop, reducing the physical strain of lifting at markets during her pregnancy. We also look forward to working with another one of our employees as her schedule demands flexibility in being a single teenage mom and taking online college classes. Our shop can offer our employees with some young child care assistance, as the employees will be able to bring her child to the shop during shifts. I have done this with my son since his birth in 2012.

Bobbi Duczak organizes all of my paperwork for the business and assists in the bookkeeping. Rick Flocker does the taxes for the business as well as my personal taxes.

V. THE MARKETING PLAN

Our current form of marketing has relied heavily on word of mouth and social media by way of our Facebook page; we post every Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the moment. We also hold our monthly *Meet the Farmer* day at our shop which allows clients to see and hear how we get our produce and creates foot traffic in our store. We also hold activities for children throughout the year in our shop. Some examples are heirloom seed planting, making pine cone bird feeders, and cutie pie baking. Last year we incorporated pie tastings during major holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter and had a turnout of 100 people for each event, except for Thanksgiving where we had 200, and this year we have added additional pie tasting events and locations in Chicago and Milwaukee to meet demands. We will also be holding a *Pot Pies and Brews* day on February 13, 2016 and are working on matching our pot pies with a complimentary beer from one of our local brewers.

a. Filling a Need in the Community

Historically, the increase in farmers markets has given us the ability to bring our product directly to the consumer. Too many times our shoppers come in looking for labels like "organic, grass-fed, non GMO, local, etc." and may not necessarily understand the meaning behind the labels. Our shop fills a need in the market place by creating an environment that provides fresh healthy foods in an inviting atmosphere. Our shop has an open kitchen that allows for consumers to ask questions about where our ingredients come from, how we make our products and creates quality conversation by helping our customers become smart shoppers. We also provide additional training through cooking and canning demonstrations at Gateway (during Earth day), Snap On, and Taste of Wisconsin. This helps to build the confidence in mothers who are interested in home canning for their families.

VI. THE FINANCIAL PLAN

Elsie Mae's has been able to support itself in the nearly 3 years that it has been open; all bills, payroll, supplies, and equipment are paid from the business revenue. In order to increase our production, we needed to invest in the equipment listed in our production plan. Traditionally we have just saved profits, but due to the time it takes to save up for the equipment, it has caused us to lose sales and potential wholesale accounts in the past. Prior to our equipment loan, we had purchased several key items including a 40 quart kettle, a two door reach in cooler, commercial dishwasher, and a double stack convection oven. Using the \$25,000.00 loan we were able to increase our production with addition of a 10x10x14 foot freezer and two flat cooktops. To date, the increased production allowed us to make another key purchase. In October, we purchased a 20 quart mixer, and in November, we purchased an 8x6x4 foot walk in cooler. The increase in production had the most notable impact in our employee earnings. In all of 2014, our employee wages totaled \$20,648.10, and in our first quarter after reopening at our new location, the wages totaled \$44,533.43. We are currently in the processes of obtaining a state meat processing license then will follow up with a USDA meat processing plant license that will allow us to commercialize and wholesale our meat pot pies. We anticipate a 20% increase in market sales through the early market season and a 40% increase in market sales in the late season. This will also increase employment opportunities for current seasonal staff.

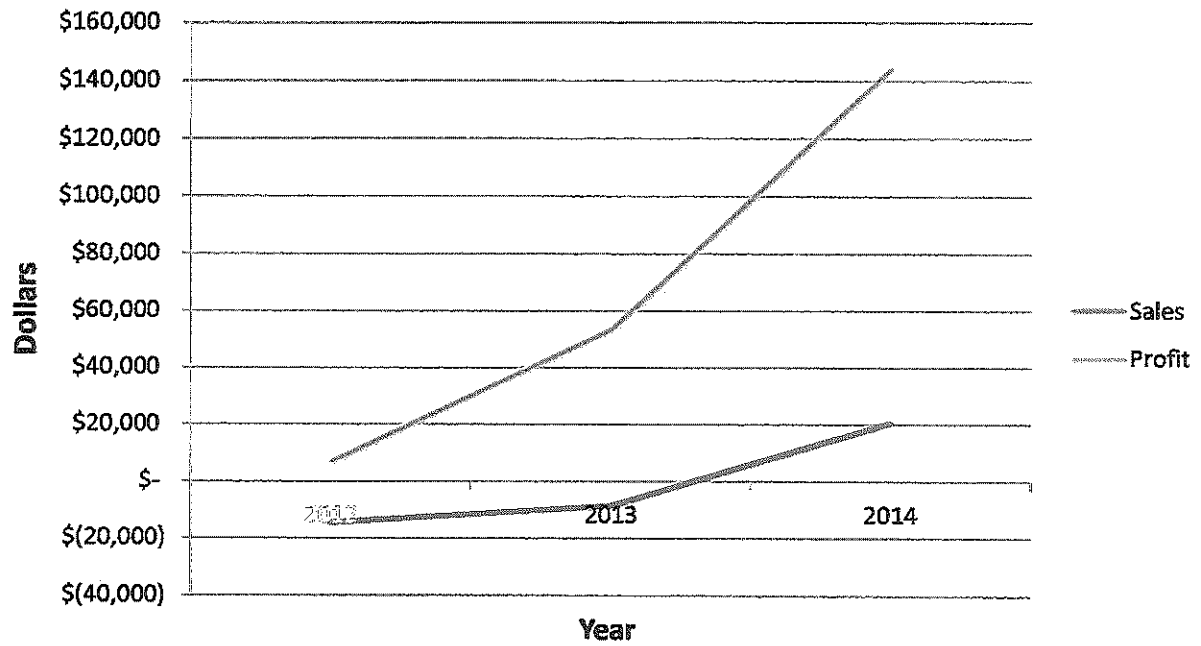
I have added graphs to demonstrate our financials for the past 3 years. In 2015, the shop has been open for only 6 months to date. This is due to our relocation of the business. Even given that, in those 6 months, our gross sales are currently at \$130,710.78.

Also, please note on the graphs that we will always show a net loss in July. July is the month that we purchase local produce for pies (year round) and for canning. We do the majority of our canning in July, even though the majority of our sales for canned goods are in December.

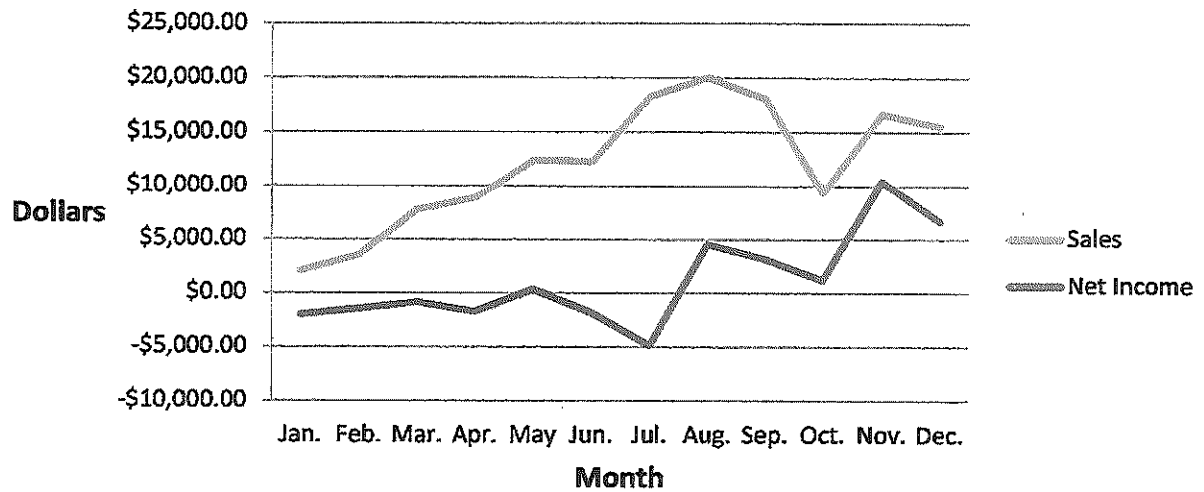
Please see attached financial graphs.

VII. ACTION PLAN (attached)

Historical Sales & Profits



2014 Sales Per Month



Elsie Mae's

Action Plan 2016



2016 Development

- Increase Retail Store Revenue
- Increase Marketing
- Increase Wholesale Accounts
- Increase Production

2016-2019 objectives

- 2019 my mom takes over artisan bread development
- By 2019 pot pies in Whole Foods
- By 2019 drink mixes in liquor stores
- *By 2017 anchor store in indoor market Kenosha
- Develop CSA with partnering farms
- 2017 two days off a week

Increase Retail Store Revenue*

Action Item	Completion Date	✓	Responsibility	Cost	Additional Permits
Increase non-perishable products	04/01/16		kd	none	no
Gluten Free Baking Mixes, Oatmeal, BBQ, Spaghetti, 2 new bloodies, salsa					
Increase frozen meat products	04/01/16		kd	Display freezer	Yes
Beef, Bison, Lamb, Chicken, quiche, pot pies (at markets/wholesale)					
Increase perishable products	04/01/16		kd	Equipment/salary	No
Artisan Breads, Scones, Croissants, quick breads					
Event schedule	04/01/16		kd	printing	No
Liquor license	01/30/16		jf	\$200-30000	Yes
Sell Local orchards wines, and have a bloody mary bar					
Increased non-seasonal production	03/01/16		Kd/staff	Salaries/eq upment	No
Must stock up on bloodies and non-local jam and salsa production					
Introduce cheese/butter/milk	04/01/16		Kd/staff	none	No
*Glas family soft spread 11/15					
Golden Ages 04/16					
Sassy Cow Dairy 4/16					
by 1/1/16					

Increase Marketing

Action Item	Date	✓	Responsibility	Cost	
Facebook Postings Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday	ongoing		NB	no	
Meet the Farmer Monthly	05/01/16		JF	no	
Tastings				Printing	
Thanksgiving Pie Tastings Nov 7, 8, 14, 15,					
Christmas Pie Tasting Dec 12					
Easter Pie Tasting March 28					
Pie Day	03/14/16		kd		
Pot Pies and Brews Feb 13	12/10/15		Kd	500-1000	Billboard/radio?
Prelabeled Ready to drink Souvenir fruit lemonade jars	05/01/16		Designer		
Update Labels with folk design	03/01/16		Designer		
Stamps	03/01/16		kd		
Pie Boxes wooden	10/1/16		Designer/jf		
Custom bags/boxes	05/01/16		Lettering machine		
Reusable Bags	05/01/16		Lettering machine		
Webpage	05/01/16		Designer		
Shirts	05/01/16		Lettering machine		

Increase Wholesale Accounts

Action Item	Date	✓	Responsibility	Product	Additional Permits
Common Grounds	05/01/15		kd	Pies/scones	No
Woodmans	05/01/15		Kd/km	Bloody mary /drink mixes	No
Rushing Waters	05/01/15		kd	Bloody mary/Jam	No
Boathouse	05/01/15		Kd/km	Fresh trout	No?
Mangia	05/01/15		Kd/km	Fresh trout	No
Hobnob	05/01/15		Kd/km	Fresh trout	No
Tenutas	05/01/15		Kd/km	Bloody mary/drink mixes	No
Hobnob	05/01/15		Kd/km	Fresh trout	No
Mars Cheese Castle	05/01/15		Kd/jf	pies	no
Outpost	05/01/15		Kd/jf	Pot pies	yes
Corporate Thanksgiving Pies (ie Uline, Riley, Jockey, Johnson, Care)	05/01/15		nr	pies	no
Rogers Park Social	07/01/16		Kd	Bloody Mary/ lemonades	No
Large Family Farms (Jerry Smiths pumpkin farm, Brighton Woods orchard)	02/01/16		kd	pies	no
Hotel Pie Party Packages / Kenosha Area Tourism	02/01/16		Kd	pies	no



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Letter of Support for Elsie Mae's - InnovateHER

December 1, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of support for Elsie Mae's for the National InnovateHER competition. Elsie Mae's was selected as our winner by a panel of judges for the competition held by Gateway Technical College and WWBIC. This competition was statewide in Wisconsin. As co-partners of this event, both myself, Thalia Mendez from Gateway and Heather Lux from WWBIC, would like to highly recommend Kelly to move on to the national competition.

Elsie Mae's is a business, located in Downtown Kenosha, that makes products from traditional baking and canning, using produce from local farms. The product line currently consists of a variety of freshly baked pies, 100+ varieties of jam, freshly canned preserves and relishes, drink mixes (Bloody Mary, lemonade ...) and specialty potpies. They also take special orders and requests. In addition to the products listed above, Elsie Mae's adds an education component - bringing in children and families to learn about farming, locally grown products and baking. Although this is a "traditional" business, Kelly has added a very unique and innovative component to the product line and to her plans for growth.

Kelly started her business at local farmer's markets three years ago. She has now expanded to 18 farmer's markets. She is also in her second brick and mortar location in Downtown Kenosha. She moved at the beginning of this year to her second location do to the growth and demand for her products.

The three criteria for the competition are commercialization potential, filling a market need and impacting the lives of women and children. We believe that Kelly's Action Plan, shared at the end of her business plan, demonstrates the potential for commercialization extremely well. It spells out how she is currently expanding and how she looks to expand in the future. The plan includes increased production space, retail sales, wholesale expansion, and marketing plan growth. In addition, the product line is innovative and fills a market need, especially in the way she utilizes locally grown products and educates the community on this as well. Finally, Kelly has developed a business that absolutely impacts the lives of women and children in many ways. The product line itself helps the busy mom and families, by offering canned products, baked goods and specialty orders. Kelly has also found a way to help educate the community on farming, baking and the importance of locally grown products, bringing families together in a great environment.

Kelly goes even further in her support of women and children. She impacts the lives of women and families through job creation and training. To date, 67% of Elsie Mae's staff have been female, with the current staff being 65% female. Elsie Mae's is also a "job incubator", providing support and education to staff members. 48% of the staff has no prior job experience, and 76% of the staff are currently or started working at Elsie Mae's under the age of 18. Because the company produces their own products that are sold at various markets throughout the week, they have the opportunity to provide staff with a flexible work schedule. Currently 50% of the women that work at Elsie Mae's are also taking college classes. This is particularly useful as demonstrated with two staff members who are busy moms.

Kelly adjusted their schedules, offering one mother an early weekday schedule to accommodate the care of her school age children and changing the other employee's schedule from the markets to the shop which reduced the physical strain of lifting at markets during her pregnancy. Kelly has also worked to support a current employee who is about to become a single teenage mother.

For all these reasons, we hope that you will review Kelly's business plan and her action plan. We strongly believe that she deserves to be invited to Washington, D.C. for the national competition!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thalia Mendez', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thalia Mendez – Gateway Technical College

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather Lux', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Heather Lux - WWBIC