



Christine Stalsonburg, Gold Canyon Candles

My name is Christine Stalsonburg. I have been an Independent Distributor for Gold Canyon Candles since May of 2006. I have a huge “WHY” behind owning my own business. Children in need have always tugged at my heartstrings. It has been my dream to be able to help the many children out there that are in need.

Having a healthy start at life is on of the most important gifts that a child can be given. I worked for many years in Emergency Medicine for the Fire Department and ran across too many children who were not receiving their immunizations and well baby checkups. This concerned me because there are so many preventable diseases and child development issues that can be caught early on in a child’s life if they are being seen on a routine basis by a physician.

While I worked for the Fire Department, I was able to start a free immunization program for the children in the community. When I left the fire service to start my own business, we were seeing over 100 children a month. However, there was one vital component missing from this program and that was the well baby checkups. Our program did not provide for that.

When I searched for a business ownership opportunity, I wanted to find something that supported my vision of providing a healthy start for children. I found Gold Canyon Candles in early 2006. They provided me with the ability to start my own business and fulfill my dream of helping children in need.

The support of my friends, family and now husband are the building blocks and the foundation that kept my dream alive and moving in the right direction. I was not prepared for just how many challenges I would face owning my own business. There were many challenges along the way and there still are today. I take each new challenge one at a time and get through it. Some are easier than others. The single thing that keeps me motivated is the children.

This past fall, I was able to form Kidz Care Foundation. The mission of Kidz Care Foundation is to enhance the quality of life of infants and children under five years of age in the area of immunization and wellness. 10% of all of the proceeds from my company are donated to the Foundation. Through these donations, grants and donations from local businesses, it is our goal to see that no child in northern Michigan goes without a healthy start in life. The Foundation is just in its infancy and many areas still need to be addressed before we are up and running to capacity and can help our first family.

I enjoy being able to provide a quality product to the residents of northern Michigan while being able to give back to the community and have the flexibility to spend time with my family.

The best advice that I could give any woman considering beginning their own business would be to take the time to find out what your "WHY" is for starting your business. This "WHY" will be your driving force when the times get tough and the road gets bumpy – and trust me it will. I recently moved to the Traverse City area from Phoenix, AZ. Not sure if I was going to be able to transition this business to fit the needs of the residents in Traverse City, I fell back on my "WHY" many, many times throughout the past few weeks. My "WHY" has kept me going and will continue to keep me going. Knowing that I can make a difference in even one child's life is the best gift I could receive.

I look forward to making my business a success so that I can make the Foundation a success and be able to help the many children out there that need us.