

Kellee Craig's Fresh Start for Growth

By Lorrie DeFrank



Kellee Craig started a business called Insight Financial Group to help other businesses reach the next level by positioning them for growth and expansion. By unexpectedly connecting with JAX Chamber and its Jacksonville Women's Business Center, she built up her own company and enhanced her entrepreneurial skills in the process.

Although she had significant experience in corporate America, she realized she had a lot to learn about being a business owner and was determined to succeed. Since last August, she's been immersed in courses in JWBC's Entrepreneur Certificate Program and the Chamber's JAX Bridges, a full load with promising results.

"Even though I started my business three years ago, I feel like I have a fresh restart with all that learning," she said. "I have so much information. They ensure that you walk away with practical tools and resources and a deep understanding of business concepts. They understand that it can be overwhelming but they provide the information in such a way that it is very empowering."

According to Annie Grogan, JWBC director, Craig's innovation and genuine desire to help others was so impressive that she was selected to receive a scholarship to participate in the Entrepreneur Certificate Program and to proceed through its five courses as a cohort with the six other recipients.

"The JWBC is a huge resource that every single business owner should use. Its programming is not just for women and the content that is being provided and the knowledge that is being shared is eye-opening and empowering," Craig said. "You don't know what you don't know and these are professionals who have all their experiences to pull from to help you."

Craig said she was born into a family of overachievers in Louisiana. She attended Florida A&M University and transferred her last year to Southern University where she graduated. Throughout college she interned at various companies, including Johnson & Johnson that recruited her after graduation and put her through its Finance Leadership Development Program. Through J&J, in 2005 she relocated to Jacksonville where she later worked for Safariland, which makes safety gear.

"That foundation is from my parents making sure I took advantage of every opportunity I possibly could," said Craig, who decided to use her financial talents to help nonprofits after 20 years in the corporate world. She worked in a church finance department before starting her own company in 2023. Taking it slow as she juggled other priorities, she soon realized she needed help to acquire clients and organize her business.

She learned about JWBC from a friend and saw an application for its Entrepreneur Certificate Program scholarship when she looked into it. Thrilled to be selected because it offered courses that aligned with her business needs, Craig said having the support of the cohort was a bonus. "It's an amazing opportunity to be a part of this group of ladies and learn from their variety of experiences. They ask questions that I don't think of and it helps to shape a richer experience for me and I am so grateful for that."

She praised Grogan and the JWBC team for their strong support and for “being there in whatever aspect they can to assist and help.”

Craig had just started the ECP classes when she was accepted into Cohort 23 of JAX Bridges, which wrapped up in December. “Immediately I saw that there was a ton of value in what they were teaching,” she said, recognizing the solid business foundation both programs would provide.

“I really have a path forward now,” said Craig, who is developing a free webinar and other resources to help small businesses grow through her services that include consultation, system setup and maintenance, basic bookkeeping and financial analysis. “But the real benefit we provide on top of that is the story behind the numbers, what they are saying about the way your operations are running. If you are thinking about expanding, let’s visualize that together.”

Meanwhile, Craig pulls from the ECP information to expedite growing her own business and hiring talented people.

Financial Matters affirmed that she was on the right path, already having two decades of financial and accounting experience. But she learned things she didn’t know that strengthened her company’s foundation, she said.

Legal Matters was another story. “It’s been phenomenal the amount of knowledge and information I’ve gathered. We walked away with homework every week,” she said. As a result, she plans to restructure to a corporation if she expands her services beyond Florida because of its straightforward framework.

A self-proclaimed introvert since childhood, Craig said Marketing Matters empowered her. “I walked away with so many tools and resources that helped me step out of that bubble,” she said. “I feel comfortable talking about my business. Building a webinar to attract more customers came out of that class.”

Immensely grateful for her scholarship, she said she would happily pay the nominal fee for the wealth of knowledge you get, no matter what stage your business is in. Seeing the improvements in her own business and those of other participants, she would like to return as a guest lecturer to share her experiences to help other entrepreneurs grow their businesses. “I can’t stress enough how passionate I am at seeing the dreams of others realized,” she said.

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