

Renata Franck, Reborn Luxury Candles

By Lorrie DeFrank

When the light went out of Renata Franck's life, she made a candle.

She turned the unspeakable grief and pain of her teenage son's tragic death into a pastime that provided solace and healing, and grew into a successful business. Franck began making candles in 2023, most of which she gave away. After attending classes offered by JAX Chamber and Jacksonville Women's Business Center, in early 2025 she started Reborn Luxury Candles, LLC, an artisan hand-crafted candle company she said was born from a deeply personal journey of loss, healing and transformation.

This spring, when reviewing applications for scholarships for JWBC's Entrepreneur Certificate Program, facilitators looked at all elements of the entrepreneurs' businesses. "Hers is a story that became very compelling to us just because of the WHY," said Annie Grogan, JWBC director. "She captured our hearts with her story and why she was motivated to start her business. This is one of the things that we actually teach, the story of your why in marketing and promoting your business as an essential piece of your sales profit."

Franck is among a handful of women selected for their potential to succeed to receive scholarships to proceed together as a cohort through the certificate program that consists of five courses. The program uses some of the scholarship funds raised from the proceeds of JWBC's 20th anniversary celebration in 2024.

"I am so blessed to be selected," Franck said. "Each course is significant to where I am now as a person. Each helped build my confidence and gave me a lot more than I anticipated."

Born and raised in Jacksonville, Franck holds a bachelor's degree in supervisory management from Florida State College at Jacksonville. In addition to doing the paperwork for her husband Shadrac's moving company, she held management positions for several businesses before leaving the workforce to grieve the death of her only son.

A popular saxophonist who his mother said was known locally for his courageous heart, 17-year-old Kaleb Floyd was shot while driving from First Coast High School with his sister and some friends in 2022. "After seven months of staying home I turned to Christian Healing Ministry and my creative side," said Franck, whose four daughters inherited her creativity.

Franck was accepted into Cohort 21 of JAX Bridges in fall 2024 to focus on expanding Express Pro Delivery, LLC, the family's moving company. When she learned about the JWBC scholarship program at one of the classes and ultimately was a recipient, starting her own candle business became her priority.



“The JWBC has been such a driving force in the start-up stages of my business,” she said. “Not only has it rebuilt my business confidence but this experience has given me the resources and the networking opportunities needed to further the growth of my business. Currently, I am making candles in my home kitchen and my office but I would love to someday move into a brick and mortar location for candle making and courses.”

Committed to eco-friendly and sustainable craftsmanship, Franck uses clean-burning premium coconut apricot wax and infuses some candles with prayer oil to foster a sense of renewal. She also customizes labels and scented notes that focus on emotional healing. Partnering with another local business, Voices Institute, LLC, with owner Dr. Selena Webster-Bass, has given her the opportunity to provide group candle making courses for grieving parents to help aid in their self-care after loss. In addition, she recently landed her first White Labeling agreement with Christian Healing Ministry to sell her candles through its website and bookstore.

“I was so inspired by the different businesses and the women behind them. I’ve learned from each person as individuals. They are making me move even faster,” said Franck, giving credit to the JWBC leaders as well as the other women business owners in the Entrepreneur Certificate Program. “Annie is the heart of the JWBC. She is very encouraging.”

Her biggest takeaway was addressing her fears in Legal Matters. “They went right into if you have a fear of something, address it,” she said. “I was giving gifts to people and hadn’t even sold a candle when I officially started my business. They guided me through startup by addressing things like copywriting and trademarking.”

After taking Marketing Matters, she created a website and joined a collective to promote her candles via YouTube.

Having met with bankers to select the right bank for her needs, she is in the process of implementing what she learned in Financial Matters by developing spreadsheets and making sure she has good tools to calculate cash flow and profit and loss statements. She said she is enjoying strategizing to use this opportunity to make her business stand out, such as by hiring a private label company to help procure her vision.

In Venture Leadership, Dr. Carlton Robinson, chief innovation officer, Venture Services Division, challenged her to consider perspectives she hadn’t thought about. “Learning the difference between a business strategy, business plan and business model showed me that I didn’t have a strategy on how to implement my plans,” she said.

Customer Development has made her more eager to engage with and listen to her customers, rather than assuming what they want.

Franck also praised the JWBC Advisory Board members for their genuine interest in her and her business and for their guidance. “They gave me ideas and wanted to help in any way they could, and I am so grateful,” she said. “They are amazing, professional and wise women who are very trustworthy. I am so excited and fortunate to have this opportunity. They believe in me and ignited a flame in me. I have a message to give and it’s going to get out there.”

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