

101 ENTREPRENEUR

Learning from the Best



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

We all have a vision of what entrepreneurs are. The American Heritage Dictionary calls an entrepreneur someone “who organizes, operates and assumes the risk for a business venture, or one who starts a business or other venture that promises economic gain, but that also entails risks.” To Dictionary.com, an entrepreneur is “a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.”

No matter how one defines them, entrepreneurs are leaders and visionaries who put their time, money and resources on the line to pursue their dreams. In doing so, they generate jobs, wealth and abundant goods and services for society. We in New Jersey are fortunate to have in our midst countless examples of these high achievers to emulate.

In the following pages you will read about 26 of the finest entrepreneurs in our state, men and women whose break-the-mold methods have something to teach us.

Each week, **NJBIZ** writes about business people throughout the Garden State. There are lessons to be learned weekly in our newspaper, and this was part of the reasoning behind the publication that you now hold in your hands. Like a classroom, this first annual issue of *Entrepreneurs 101* provides practical and extremely useful advice for succeeding in business.

This is a new-concept publication in which we have limited the advertising to a handful of highly enthusiastic and successful companies and organizations whose expertise was vital to this venture. **NJBIZ** selected the entrepreneurs from more than 200 nominations made with the help of the advertisers.

I am delighted that **NJBIZ** has launched this publication to highlight some of the best and most innovative minds in business and the lessons they offer. Read, enjoy and learn.



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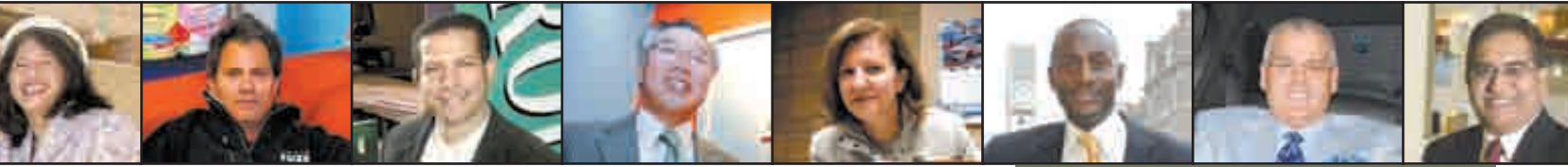
Journal Publications Inc.
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MAILING ADDRESS

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New Brunswick, NJ 08901
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By Joel Berg | Beverlyn Grissom has never let rough sailing sink her dreams.

In high school, she set her sights on becoming a maritime attorney. The choice grew out of her childhood fascination with the playthings of her brother and other male relatives.

In pursuit of her dream, she went to Tulane Law School, which had the only maritime law program certified by the American Bar Association, Grissom says.

In addition to studying law, she learned a black woman would have trouble breaking into the maritime industry, a field dominated by white men.

“Black females in maritime law are like an oxymoron,” says Grissom.

Indeed, after graduating from Tulane in 1995, Grissom was unable to find a suitable job in her preferred field.

Instead, she went to work for the Senate Republican staff in the New Jersey legislature. However, she didn’t abandon her goal of entering the maritime industry.

She planned to go into business for herself. But first, she needed experience, if only to convince potential investors.

“No one would have allowed us to buy a 80-foot, 70-ton dredge without any financial stability,” Grissom says.

So in 2003, Grissom and a partner, Michelle Bunting, started Mercer County Children’s Medical Daycare, which provides day care and other assistance to medically fragile children and their parents.

Today, the day care employs about 50 people and consultants. And, it gave Grissom the freedom to pursue her long-term goal.

In 2005, Grissom and Bunting launched Camden Shipping Corp. The partners looked at ways to enter the industry and eventually settled on marine construction. They bought a dredger named Trenton for \$1.4 million and docked it in Camden. They plan to begin bidding on projects this spring.

With the money from construction jobs, Grissom hopes to build Camden Shipping into a force for economic good for residents of the South Jersey city. Plans include opening a terminal and other shipping-related businesses.

“If we’re going to start a business, it must benefit the community,” says Grissom, the company’s chief executive officer.

She hopes to be a trailblazer for women and minorities who follow her into the field.

“We’re not seeking to be big man on campus. We just want to be on campus,” she says. **E101**



Catherine Stroud

BREAK BARRIERS

Beverlyn Grissom / Camden Shipping Corp.

