



For Althea Mongerson, living and working in her hometown of Salmon Arm is a dream come true.

After graduating from Salmon Arm Secondary School in 2007 and moving to Edmonton to attend the University of Alberta, Althea soon realized that Salmon Arm – with its vibrant arts scene, community engagement and stunning location – was the place she needed to be.

After completing a degree in anthropology and theatre, Althea made her way back to Salmon Arm to make her dream a reality. Realizing there was a demand for a wool and yarn retail store, Althea competed in Launch-a-preneur – a Dragon’s Den style entrepreneurial competition designed by Community Futures Shuswap, Okanagan College’s student business group ENACTUS, and the Salmon Arm Economic Development Society. After pitching her vision of a colourful and creative gathering retail space for fiber artists, she took 3rd place! With the prize package ensuring that she had both the means and community connections to open a retail outlet, Intwined Fibre Arts was born.

“I grew up on a homestead in the Shuswap and we had Angora goats – my Mom was very involved with the Shuswap Spinners and Weavers guild,



ALTHEA MONGERSON
Intwined Fibre Arts
SALMON ARM

continued

so I had access to their wealth of knowledge. Opening a yarn store seemed like a natural transition for me,” Althea explains.

Like many small business owners, Althea admits she excelled at the artistic side of things but struggled with the business side of things, “I knew I needed help getting over the hump after the initial opening and growth of the business.”

Althea turned to her local Community Futures who introduced Althea to Community Futures Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program (EDP), “After my local (Community Futures) contact set me up with assistance from EDP, I was partnered with a local business consultant. It was so beneficial to work with an expert in my community.” says Althea.

Althea lives with Rheumatoid Arthritis, an autoimmune disorder and was eligible for up to six months of business coaching. She stresses that the accessibility of EDP makes it easy for anyone with challenges to access EDP’s services. “I didn’t have to jump through hoops and though there are parameters ensuring all parties are accountable, EDP let’s you tell them what you need.”

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Working with the business consultant for six months, Althea was able to develop an online and print business development plan and a bookkeeping strategy. She continues to work with the

consultant on a causal basis to ensure she is on track. “EDP was a great experience and I highly recommend them to any entrepreneur with challenges who needs a helping hand.”

Now that Althea has tackled what she calls the “daunting” side of her labour of love, she is able to focus on the part of Intwined Fibre Arts she enjoys most, “Educating the next generation of creators about handcrafting and the wonders of using natural fibres.”

For more information about Intwined Fibre Arts, visit their website at:

intwinedfibrearts.ca

To learn more about Community Futures Shuswap, visit:

futureshuswap.com

Success is made, not found.

Since 1997, entrepreneurs with disabilities have started and grown successful businesses with EDP loans and our support.

If you have the raw materials, excellence, determination and passion, ask about the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program at your local Community Futures Office.

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The Entrepreneurs with Disability Program is supported by:

