

Getting Ahead: Jackson woman channels her design passion with window treatments

Jackson woman finds artistic outlet with window treatments

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Kathy Hamilton, owner of Window Alternatives, shows off some of the window treatments she has designed for her Jackson home. / JODY SOMERS/FOR THE ASBURY PARK PRESS

Even as a young girl, I always knew that I had a passion for design.

I grew up in a small town in Connecticut where, as a child, I taught myself how to sew and subsequently how to create clothing from simple raw materials and fabrics. There was such a passion inside me for this career that I knew I would be able to be successful no matter what challenge came my way.

After developing a fashion portfolio in high school, I went on to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

After graduation, I went on to pursue the career I had so desperately dreamed of for my entire childhood. Luckily, I was successful. I landed an amazing job working in the Empire State Building. Not only was I designing, but traveling for my company was an added bonus.

If I could offer one suggestion to anyone who wants to see the world but cannot necessarily afford it, find a job that will send you across the globe. With my career, I visited cities across the United States, London, Paris, Japan and I was also a frequent visitor to cities in China. I can honestly say that I may have never been able to see any of those amazing places if it was not for the career I pursued.

Not only did working for the fashion industry grant me access to destinations around the world, but it also introduced me to the most important person in my life – my husband. I am so grateful for the many wonderful experiences afforded to me by my fashion career and highly suggest it if you are driven toward that career path.

After my marriage, I became pregnant with my first daughter. Both my husband and I lived and worked in Manhattan, but we wanted our children to grow up outside of the city, so we moved to a small condo in New Jersey. I knew that my children came first, so I left my job in fashion for the new career of “Mommy.”

I learned quickly though that being a stay-at-home mom was not enough for me. I am a career-oriented person who takes great satisfaction in my work, so I decided to start my own business in interior design with a focus on window treatments.

The company I created, Window Alternatives, has been a successful force in the tristate area for about 20 years now. My main focus for these many years has been on residential clients, but recently I started to take on many commercial jobs, specifically, window treatments in new or developing nursing homes.

My main focus with my business has always been to make my clients happy. I do not believe that there is such a thing as cutting corners or performing a sloppy job. Every measurement must be perfect, every wrinkle must be steamed and all window treatments must be installed without a hitch. I am not happy with a job until I see my customer with a smile on his or her face.

My last piece of advice – love what you do. If you love your career then you may never have to retire because you will not want to. I am in my early 50s and I have no plans on stopping anytime soon.

Kathy Hamilton, Jackson, owns Window Alternatives (www.windowalternatives.net/).