

Veterans Business Success Story

Jessica Erhart

U.S. Army | Master of None Artistry

Meet Jessica Erhart, a remarkable veteran whose path from Active-Duty Army service to becoming a successful artist and small business owner embodies the true spirit of resilience and determination.

Jessica served in the Army for an impressive 14 years and 3 months, a journey that ultimately led her to the world of artistry and entrepreneurship. Growing up in Green Bay, Wisconsin, Jessica faced economic challenges and limited access to higher education. Joining the Army provided her with an opportunity for a fresh start and a new career.

Initially uncertain about her path, she jumped at the opportunity to become an AH-64D model Apache Crew Chief. This choice took her on a noteworthy journey, serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea, where she honed her skills and developed a strong work ethic.

In 2012, a significant transition occurred when Jessica moved from aviation to the 101st Division band at Fort Campbell. Despite initial setbacks, including multiple failed auditions, Jessica persevered, taking voice lessons, and ultimately achieving her goal of becoming an Army Bandsman. Her resilience was further tested when she underwent spinal surgery in 2017, which, while successful, led to permanent nerve damage and her medical retirement.

Jessica's transition to civilian life was challenging, marked by PTSD, insomnia, depression, and anxiety. "I had a hard time finding purpose and fulfillment in my life," said Jessica. "I started painting to quiet my mind and started to use it as a type of therapy."

With a sales tax license in hand, Jessica embarked on her journey as a business owner. The positive response to her work at her first vendor event, where she made \$500, ignited the idea for "Master of None Artistry." She specializes in alcohol ink art, with a focus on wildlife, wilderness, abstract, and impressionism.

Key milestones in her journey include obtaining insurance, finding her unique artistic style, securing a \$10,000 loan from the West River Economic Development Center, and traveling to art festivals throughout the Midwest to showcase her work.

Jessica's military training has undoubtedly played a significant role in her approach to running a successful small business. Her determination, adaptability, and refusal to quit have been instrumental in overcoming obstacles. "If I have learned anything in life during my time in the military and in the world, it is you can do anything you put your mind to as long as you do the work, adapt and overcome!"



Jessica Erhart showcases her work at a festival in the Midwest. Painting helped her quiet her mind after nearly 15 years of active duty.

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