

2018 SUCCESS STORY

WILLISTON



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CHATTER PEDIATRIC THERAPY

Williston, ND -- A local speech and language pathologist opened her private practice in an unlikely yet fruitful location. Katie Kringen started Chatter Pediatric Therapy in her husband's motorsports store.

Challenge/ Solution

"Only in Williston could you buy a four-wheeler and receive speech therapy in one building," laughed Kringen.

Katie and her husband Josh relocated from Sidney, MT to Williston in 2015 to be closer to MonDak Sports (they had moved



Katie Kringen

their dealership during the oil boom). The new residence allowed Katie to explore career options and her entrepreneurial husband encouraged her to start her own business. He even offered complimentary office space!

"When we moved to Williston I started to look

for a place for myself to start therapy, but it was a tough; child care was hard to find and finding an affordable building was tough. I didn't need a lot of space so my husband, who is super optimistic, told me to use an office at the motorsports store."

It took Katie awhile to warm up to the idea, but once she opened her doors, the clients started arriving.

"I got one client. I got two clients. It was slow at the beginning. Then basically one day it just blew up and I was super busy," she said.



Eventually Katie and Josh decided to purchase an office building for the practice so they went to see the experts at the Small Business Development Center and Williston Economic Development. Keith Olson and Shawn Wenko helped Chatter Pediatric Therapy utilize the Flex PACE Interest Buy-Down Program.

“The Flex PACE Program is by far the most utilized of any of our programs,” said Wenko. “In a nutshell, the program provides businesses like Chatter a reduced interest rate on their small business bank loan. When you are a new business startup or existing business expanding, initial costs can be high. Dollars saved through reduced interest make a big difference.”

Impact

The investment has provided Chatter Pediatric Therapy more room to grow. In just three years

the private practice has grown from one to 15 employees.

“We are one of the most diversified private practices in North Dakota,” said Kringen. “We have evolved from a single therapist to a wide-ranging practice for our community.”

Chatter offers extensive services for children of all ages including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, feeding therapy, ABA therapy, child psychology, mental health therapy and nutrition counseling. They serve families within a hundred mile radius of Williston.

“One of the things that is so impressive about what Katie has done is



that she has seen an opportunity and found great staff to add to her vision,” said Olson. “That has allowed her to grow to meet the demand for the services she provides.”

Katie’s entrepreneurial success was recognized in May 2018 when she was awarded the SBDC Woman-Owned Business of the Year. She was also named to the Williston Herald’s first 20 Under 40 List in February 2018.