

Sawdust City LLC, Incubator Success Story

Sawdust City LLC

Liz & Lanny Collins

1811 Susan Drive

Eau Claire, WI 54701

(715) 858-5884

www.sawdustcityllc.com

Owners

It all began in 1995 when Liz and Lanny Collins' third child, Reid, was born severely ill in March of that year. Later, they were told that Reid was the sickest baby to survive the in the history of Eau Claire and Minneapolis medicine. 26 surgeries, 3 months in Minneapolis Children's Medical Center, and two years of 'round the clock care, Reid's recovery is nothing short of a miracle. Today, you would never know he had the beginning he did, and he's perfect. We are blessed.

That Christmas they handmade presents for everybody. Then the phone started to ring. In February, Liz proposed the business idea of "Collins Designs" to her husband, Lanny. Liz would do the patterns, design, finishing work, and sales; Lanny would do all the carpentry (after he got home from work). The Collins did things this way out of their garage for 5 years.

Sawdust City is Eau Claire's nick name, and what the shop looks like most of the time. This area is rich in logging history, and with a Paul Bunyan logging camp museum here in Eau Claire. That's how Paul & Babe came to be in the logo. Lanny's own grandfather, Gary Miller, was a real lumberjack, living in the logging camps for months on end, using teams of workhorses to help move the huge logs.

Lanny quit his job to run the shop, and Liz went to Chicago to exhibit in the Chicago Gift & Home Show in the Merchandise Mart, and the rest is history.

"We are amazed daily to be able to go to work and do something we love, creating things that people want to have in their stores and in their homes, all over the United States. We are fortunate to have great people all around us, helping in everyway, to get it all done."

Business Profile

Sawdust City LLC specializes in creating rustic pine furniture. Sawdust City started with four employees including Liz and Lanny, and have grown to eleven employees. Sawdust City also adds new product lines every six months.

Company Goals

Liz and Lanny Collins' number one goal is to take care of their family and their employees. Sawdust City has moved to a larger facility after they graduated from the center in 2007. Liz and Lanny have appreciated their time in the CVIC, "If it wasn't for the CVIC, we are not sure we would have a business. The center provided everything we needed to start a business."

