



SUMMER 2016

**AGE:** 30

**EDUCATION:**  
*Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts - University of Texas at Austin*

**CITY OF RESIDENCE:**  
Victoria

**NAME OF COMPANY:**  
*Victoria Strutters at Debbie Bennett Green School of Dancing, Callison Strutters, El Campo Strutters, Dance Showcase, Miss Victoria Pageant, Cotacacah Republic Pageant*

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 7

#### WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO GO INTO BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF?

I was raised by two self-employed parents. From an early age I learned both the realities and benefits of owning one's business. They taught me not only to take an active role in my own life, but also to be responsible for my own goals. After working for a business in Austin for a year I decided my parents were right. I wasn't going to be able to leave on demand, when and how I didn't take the same risk they did. I decided to quit my job and move here to become business partners with my Mother, Debbie Bennett Green, and my brother-in-law, Mike Green, who had the same competitive dance-part-of-the-studio.

#### WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT BEING YOUR OWN BOSS?

Our Dance studio does not fall under the category of classical or traditional dance made in my opinion. We have a different take on dance education, and it should be credited to students to get the best results from each student. All of this came from my own experience as a young dancer. She had a strict ballet teacher who didn't want her any less dance completely. Her philosophy on teaching dance - that it should be fun - has all stemmed from this one teacher. Because we are not our typical run of the mill dance studio we do things differently. We find other ways to connect with kids to get results. Being my own boss allows me to share my love and passion with others and dance to the beat of my own drum.



SUMMER 2016

**AGE:** 24

**EDUCATION:**  
*Bachelor of Science, International Business and Business Management - Hawaii Pacific University*

**CITY OF RESIDENCE:**  
Victoria

**NAME OF COMPANY:**  
*Victoria Strutters at Debbie Bennett Green School of Dancing, Miss Victoria Pageant, Cotacacah Republic Pageant and Dance Showcase*

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 1

#### WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO GO INTO BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF?

Being able to transition to dance the love and joy that dance has brought into my life has been my biggest motivation to become business partners with Debbie Green and Bennett Cain. I enjoyed my time in an office setting but I knew that I wanted to be teaching and creating memories for little dancers. Constantly I heard the phrase from Debbie Green, "I'd love that I love and I love what I do." I was thinking what I was doing. So I decided to move back to Victoria and go into business doing something that I love to do.

#### WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT BEING YOUR OWN BOSS?

There's everything about my job and being able to create my own hours is one of the best parts. Not to mention, my two business partners help to make my job even easier. My first year back we were able to provide adult school hip-hop classes at Citrus and Sharky Elementary. This is our second year with VSD and it has been nothing but exciting. There is so much freedom that comes with being your own boss, but at the same time you have to be ready to put in the work. The studios we make to create a successful business are so much it when you have a child that you have work they have coming to class. It is exciting to know that you helped to create a little bit of joy in someone's life. I am blessed to be excited to go into work every day.

## DEBBIE BENNETT CAIN

#### WHAT ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF YOUR JOB?

As a Dance Teacher - Customer Service is one of the top of my priority list. But unlike a normal business we have two customers to please at all times: The parent and the student. Parents must trust me with their most precious possession and I will do and care for their children as much as they do while they are in my care. As an employer I want to make sure all the people we hire love both our industry and business as much as we do. I have to feel comfortable and confident that when I leave a classroom that it will be run the same way as if I were teaching the class. It's also challenging as a wife and mother working within a non-traditional business hours. Family is always first, so doing everything possible to ensure I never miss a school function or extra-curricular activity. Let's balancing act. Finally, I have learned the hard way you cannot please everyone, and when this happens I try to remember not to feel defeated.

#### WHERE DO YOU HOPE TO BE IN 20 YEARS?

We have opened a second location in Victoria and hope within the next two years to build a larger studio to bring us all back to our location. I hope in 20 years we have outgrown the new location and are looking to rebuild again, that my staff and I are still providing the best of the best dance instruction in Victoria, and that we have expanded to even more surrounding towns. On a grander scale, my lifelong dream has been to start a jazz company, and in 20 years I'll be teaching my company dance at the country's biggest venues.

## DEVONN BENNETT

#### WHAT ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF YOUR JOB?

I am fortunate to have very few challenges in my job. I wish to receive feedback, talented, hard-working, and smart kids, that every day I look forward to making learning studio. The challenges I have are so very small that in the big picture, I can't complain. Being my own boss doesn't mean I have never to answer to. I have over 300 little learners that help keep me on my toes - and I love that. I know that these students talented and accomplished staff that I am depend on to create a loving and fun atmosphere.

#### WHERE DO YOU HOPE TO BE IN 20 YEARS?

I know that our business will be thriving and growing beyond anything Debbie Bennett, or I can imagine. I hope that we will be seeing many of our past students coming what we taught them to create the lives they have always wanted. I hope that I was one part Strutters dancing in college, on TV, in movies, on Broadway, or wherever I just hope they are sharing their love of dance. I hope that every studio we open will have an impact on each community, dancer and family. I hope that we create successful, talented and confident dancers, all while keeping our basic philosophy of having fun. Happiness is my ultimate hope and I have faith that God will continue to bless us.