

SUCCESS STORY

Wapak Athletic Club



Wapakoneta, Ohio



GYM OWNER ACQUIRES NEW SPACE WITH HELP FROM SBDC

The Ohio Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Rhodes State College worked with Rebecca to develop the business plan and cash-flow loan projections for the bank to consider. Although the first bank was unable to provide the loan, the SBDC team advised her to take the loan package to another lender, where it was ultimately approved.

"The SBDC did all the paperwork, projections ... basically whatever the bank needed. Anything I needed done, it made it so much easier to have them around."

To learn more about Wapak Athletic Club, visit wapakac.com.



Rebecca Manger, WAC Owner



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Lydia L. Mihalik, Director



Choosing a gym or fitness center to work out at can be overwhelming for many reasons, let alone in the midst of 2020. Despite these challenges, the Wapak Athletic Club (WAC) is finding its way to success with a loyal customer base and a high-energy atmosphere.

The WAC is a 24-hour athletic center in Wapakoneta that goes beyond your average gym. In addition to the training and classes, there is an infra-red sauna and physical therapy space. They have a mind and body program that hosts yoga and meditation, as well as offering on-site meal prep and fresh lunches that are open to the public.

Rebecca Manger has worked at the club since 2002. After all the years of working as a trainer and helping manage the place, she decided to take the next step and buy it in 2014. She had become the face of the club and realized being involved with her members through classes and personal training was her passion.

Rebecca saw her members starting to grow and knew that she had to look into moving into a bigger location. The existing location was downtown on a second floor and filled with small, disjointed rooms. While working with her bank, there was a long process of trying to gain the capital she needed.

"The bank that I used was going to finance, but it ended up being a lot more than they could give," Rebecca said. "Thankfully, they ended up putting me in touch with the Rhodes (Small Business Development Center)."

The newly acquired capital allowed Rebecca to find a spacious building on two acres borders the Auglaize River. Unlike the prior location, this building had a large open concept, which allowed room for the club to offer physical therapy, showers, and a kitchen, all opportunities the club didn't have before.

They proudly opened the new 10,000-square-foot location in January 2020 and had a great few months before they were shut down because of COVID-19 from March to May. However, Rebecca said business has picked right back up since then, and they were appreciative for the beginning months when people could get excited about their space.

In the future, Rebecca hopes to make use of the large land and wants to host outdoor classes, obstacle courses, and events. They have seen a huge increase in revenue even with the temporary shutdown and are ecstatic that they can see smiling, familiar faces again.

What started out as a 100-person gym has now turned into more than 500 committed members who have great connections to the people and the space in Wapakoneta.

To learn more about the Ohio Small Business Development Centers, visit sbdc.development.ohio.gov.