

Andrew Riojas – Milestones

Client of the Del Mar College (Texas) SBDC



The Riojas family entrepreneurial endeavors commenced in Nebraska where Andrew Riojas was completing his Navy enlistment and met his wife, Nikki. Now living in Corpus Christi, the Riojas family opened 2 local businesses and started an organization for women business owners while raising their 2 young children.

In 2017, Andrew came to the SBDC at Del Mar College with a plan to open his business – Milestones, which would create custom personalized awards, plaques and trophies onsite, complete with manufacturing and design capabilities second to none. Andrew worked closely with his advisor, Tiffany Kline and graduated from the Veteran's **SBDC StartSmart™** Program while also working with PTAC to obtain his TXHUB certification. By July 2017, Andrew had completed a business plan with extensive financial projections as well as finding a suitable property to purchase for Milestones and as a result, was able to obtain the financial funding needed to start his business. In May 2018, Milestones became open to the public, complete with a beautiful showroom and a manufacturing area.

Pleased with the assistance Andrew had received from the SBDC as a client, Nikki also saw Tiffany for advising. In 2002, Nikki founded Sol Chicks, an online boutique that found a niche providing products for celebrity gift bags as well as cultivating a large following in retail and corporate environments. After taking some time off to focus on her family, Nikki had decided to relaunch the company under a new name – Thirteen & Market in January 2016. The shop features curated collections of home décor, gifts and gives a special focus on artists from around the globe. Thirteen & Market opened its first brick & mortar location on August 1, 2018 which is located in the same building as Milestones. As a result of her interest in supporting other women-owned small businesses, Nikki founded the Women's Entrepreneur Society of Corpus Christi in 2017. This non-profit organization was established to develop and nurture relationships among women business owners.