



JWBC Success Story 2022 **Dionne Wellington, Owner, Icecapade Frozen Treats, Inc.**

By Lorrie DeFrank

Icecapade Frozen Treats recently contracted with the Jacksonville Icemen minor league ice hockey team to offer its artisanal ice pops at games—a cool connection for a small business that overcame the challenges of opening in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With significant help from JAX Chamber and its Jacksonville Women’s Business Center, Dionne Wellington, owner and president, started the business where she handcrafts and sells ice pops inspired by her Caribbean culture. Her vision evolved from a desire for healthy treats to satisfy a passion for sweets.

Even before moving to Jacksonville about five years ago, she and her husband Joseph would often venture out at midnight or later to a 24-hour grocery store for ice cream during intermissions of movies they were watching at home. Packing on pounds and realizing that this was not sustainable, they experimented with family recipes and eventually introduced their products at various events.

A native New Yorker of Jamaican heritage, Wellington recalled her grandmother making juices and freezing them in trays. “Every Sunday was dessert day,” she said of those childhood memories. “I decided that I was going to create my own treats like my grandmother used to do.”

Encouraged by glowing feedback after presenting their treats at a church event in Orlando, the Wellingtons more earnestly researched family recipes and got creative with flavors. Today, they operate a thriving frozen treats cafe in Jacksonville’s Springfield Historic District, provide catering services and partner with the sports team. With nods to her Jamaican and Joseph’s Bahamian lineage, their signature ice pop flavors are Jamaica Spice and Bahama Vibe.

“I did not know one thing about business until I came to Jacksonville and connected with JAX Chamber and the JWBC,” Wellington said. “I did not know the terminology or what a business plan or business model were. They provided a wealth of information. I am so grateful for them.”

At a friend’s suggestion, she started taking classes at JAX Chamber in 2018.

“She completed all JWBC classes, opened her brick and mortar during 2020, and has shown so much resiliency that she was awarded a contract with the Jacksonville Icemen,” said Jackie Perrault, JWBC director.

Wellington was also a member of cohort 12 of JAX Bridges, the chamber’s entrepreneurial growth program for new and existing businesses. “COVID hit in the middle of JAX Bridges. We were the first hybrid class. Everything else was going to be online. It was successful; the whole class was able to graduate,” said Wellington, demonstrating her resilience.

Additionally, she completed a certificate program on Women's Entrepreneurship through Cornell University on a business scholarship secured by JAX Chamber Foundation and provided through JWBC.

Wellington credits JAX Bridges and the JWBC's marketing, legal, financial and other classes with the success of her business.

"Before that, I thought marketing was taking a picture and telling people about your business," she said. "I learned how to market and how to use social media to promote your business. You do have to create a budget, but it doesn't have to be thousands of dollars. There are tools you can use so you don't go broke marketing."

Through JAX Chamber programs, she learned how to budget and create a business plan and to take responsibility for every facet of her business.

"JWBC guided me through the whole process. They were concerned with where I was and how they could help. Even now, if I have questions, they are there to help me," Wellington said.

The pandemic was still raging when she opened her business in summer 2020. With their building ready, permitted and inspected, the couple debated whether to open or wait. "We came so far and waited so many years to open a shop, we had to move forward," Wellington said. "It's been a struggle, but we've learned so much."

She makes the frozen treats herself, using fresh ingredients including herbs and spices. Her artisanal ice pop collection is categorized as Botanical, Antidote, Harvest and Essence. The newest, Pop with Shots, is an adult treat created from alcohol-induced fruits.

Wellington said her business has grown steadily by meeting people and continuing to use JAX Chamber resources. Her new vision is to see her products at different places, such as Jacksonville International Airport.

To connect with Dionne Wellington:

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The Coolest Sweets for Treats!

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