

Margaret Meier, A Success Story



“The most rewarding aspect of my business is seeing the impact that information security through proper destruction and recycling has had on the lives of so many and witnessing the growth of UltraShred Technologies. JWBC has been a vital part of my professional growth and Ultrashred’s success. I’ve reaped the benefits of programs such as Financial Matters, Marketing Matters and Venture Leadership. I’ve been able to make great connections via networking, vendor sources and opportunities for mentorships.”

UltraShred Technologies’ president and owner, Margaret Meier, loves to tear things up. UltraShred has led the way in the secure destruction industry while keeping the primary goal front and center — to protect the information privacy of millions of customers.

Meier never dreamed of the environmental impact and savings that UltraShred would create when she opened the business in 2000. From the beginning, it was about getting the message out about the need to “shred” confidential information. She had to explain why it was a need to potential customers in the fledgling industry – before “information governance” and “identity theft” were buzzwords.

Margaret admits that everything was new to her in the beginning. “From sales to logistics, I had to learn about running and driving commercial trucks, buying, maintaining and operating expensive equipment, HR policies and procedures, background checks, securing loans — you name it — I had to learn it,” she said.

Meier has a background in teaching and used that to get informed about the information privacy and secure destruction field — while facing a steep learning curve.

Other necessary skills included learning to plan, organize and prioritize, establish budgets, implement new technologies and gain education and certifications. She gives credit to her enthusiastic mentors and fellow women business owners of information security companies. “Without their encouragement, I would only be halfway there,” Meier said.

International trade groups such as NAID (National Association for Information Destruction) and ARMA (Association of Record Managers and Administrators) were a great resource. Locally, her go-to education sources included the SBDC at UNF, State of FL Office of Supplier Diversity, SBA North Florida District Office and the Jacksonville Women’s Business Center (JWBC).

JWBC has been a part of Meier’s professional growth and she kept learning by completing programs such as Financial Matters, Marketing Matters and Venture Leadership.

“I’ve established great connections via networking, vendor sources and opportunities for mentorships. Experts in the field such as Carlton Robinson, Ellen Sullivan, Dara Gourley, Leslie Maddox and Mindy Barker have provided much needed practical information to clarify business priorities and help me with planning changes. Kathy Bolesworth and Ashlea Justice at the JWBC have also provided great support to me in the education process. The resources provided by JWBC and JAX Chamber have proven invaluable to my business.”

Meier takes pride in UltraShred being a woman and minority-owned business. Her team of skilled professionals and high-tech mobile destruction vehicles have securely destroyed and recycled more than 20,000 tons of paper – representing a savings to the environment of more than 340,000 trees, 7.6 million gallons of oil, 60,000 cu. yds. landfill space, 140 million gallons of water and 80 million kilowatts of energy.

She gives back to the community by donating UltraShred services to local nonprofits. which include: BEAM, City Rescue Mission, Keep Jacksonville Beautiful, Life Services, USO, Catholic Charities, Hubbard House and Community Hospice and Palliative Care PEDS program.

On a personal level, it is about the cherished relationships she has among her company, family, friends and talented individuals she has had the pleasure to work with over the years. This especially includes her husband Walt, who serves as UltraShred’s executive vice president and general operations manager. “He has daily walked by my side – helping me through all the ups and downs in business. His logistical know-how and intuitive spot-on guidance never cease to amaze me,” she said.

It also includes a great team of employees over the years, customers, professional colleagues, teachers and friends in business and in the industry – particularly fellow women business owners. A special place in her heart is for her own family members who have both worked in the business and supported her endeavors. “I am blessed and grateful to be surrounded by wonderful caring people who help me grow and succeed,” Meir said.

When asked what the future holds for UltraShred Technologies she said, “More technological advancement, faster and more efficient customer service, increased client growth and plenty of shredding! It’s all in a day’s work. Our goal is and always has been to provide high-security information destruction services to our clients. We enjoy helping our clients and community protect their greatest asset: the proprietary information of their employees, customers and businesses. The team and I greatly appreciate the loyalty of our customers through the years and it’s been an absolute gift to serve them. At the end of the day, it is about friendly, professional, customer service and reliability. We strive to achieve that and improve every day.”