

Give Your Career A Makeover

Melody Buringer is an unshakable start-up junkie. She's built over 20 companies that range from Buringer Farm, a family-run specialty-food business, to a home furnishings store to a fitness studio. Her current entrepreneurial love-child is the CRAVE company, connecting women business owners with the people and resources they need to boost their businesses.

The idea for CRAVE came about in 2001 when, then 39-year-old, Melody realized how much she missed spending time with her girlfriends. As Melody and her girlfriends followed their various journeys through life, it was clear that their busy schedules allowed for little time together.

Wanting to reconnect in a fun way, she was inspired to create the first CRAVEguide: CRAVE Seattle. The *Urban Girl's Manifesto*, which was published in 2002. Women from around the Sound bought copies and called their girlfriends for shopping and lunch expeditions. A movement was born.

Now prominent in more than 35 U.S. and international cities, the CRAVEguide is coming to Charlotte this fall. CRAVE Charlotte connects urban gals to the sassiest, funniest, most inspiring people they need to know.

Such is the case for eight stylish women who have taken the leap of faith and given their careers a makeover. Now they're doing what they love and are sharing their passion and business acumen in the CRAVE Charlotte book this fall.



Melody Buringer

Julia Austin
(FM's Fine Fashions)

Business Philosophy:

Dedication and Commitment to providing excellent customer service to both our customers and shoppers. Our golden rule? Treat others the way you expect to be treated.

Favorite Designer:

Steve Van Pelt and a little Edward Unger

Stylish Obsession:

Jackets- I think that is why fall is my fav season. There is love!

Best thing about your career:

Assisting ladies to find their stylish comfort zone on a budget. The absolute best reward is when I am able to help women in need. Women empowering Women. The great part keeps me going. It is such an awesome feeling when you know you have made a difference in a young or old ladies life.

Nicole Blackmon

(Aston by Nicole, LLC)

Business philosophy:

Victory by Nicole, LLC is dedicated to being the premier resource for discerning individuals seeking

Have you ever wanted to start your own business? Do you dream of firing your current job and trading it for the career of your dreams? There is no better time than now to give your career a makeover and step into professional fulfillment.

exclusive personalized interior design experiences, by providing consistent, reliable, and impeccable solutions in order to revolutionize the way we think live their everyday life through the interior experience we create.

Favorite Designer:

Carolee Olson. I love her sense of style and her knowledge of Interior Design. I love her design process because it's simple yet very detail oriented. Carolee Olson's ability to implement the principles of design in her projects creates timeless and classic design.

Stylish Obsession:

My stylish obsession would have to be about I love all kinds of shoes, from sneakers to sandals, to boots. I love funky styles and colors too!

Best thing about your career: The best thing about my career is being able to do what I am passionate about 24/7, and change people's everyday lives through design!

Teresa Davis

(LGBT Community Center)

Business Philosophy:

Time is money

Favorite Designer:

If food is art, then Chef Bryan Engross, who designs incredible dishes.

Best thing about your career: My career as a lawyer gives me time to build up Charlotte's diverse LGBT community.

Sandy Fulginiti

(Front Door Fabrics)

Business philosophy:

Love God, Love People, Love Fabric!!! (smile)

Beautiful simplicity, be honest and do the right thing!

Favorite Designer:

Estimote Fowler or Courtney Snowgater

Stylish Obsession:

Pillows, Pillows and MORE pillows! We love to design them, make them and stuff them! We just can't get enough!

Best thing about your career: Working with amazing people! It's the collaboration of creating unique spaces and encouraging the ones that dwell there.

Perry Swenson Livoniks

(Diner, Fancity Party Rentals)

Favorite Designer:

Chloe, Yves Saint Laurent, and I love Target!



Featured from Left to Right: Chip Row (Perry Swenson, Estomote Fowler, Julia Austin, Sandy Fulginiti, Teresa Davis (Middle Row) Alyson Willis, Gisela Steward (Back) Nicole Blackmon, Photographer Erik L. Hinkle

Best thing about your career:

The ability to meet so many wonderful new people everyday!

Shawna Robinson

(Diner, Happy Chair)

Business Philosophy:

On after what you want, knock on doors, no one is just going to come knocking on yours and hand everything to you! My father said "If you can accomplish things with love, imagine what you can do with more!"

Favorite Designer:

Eric Reardon, for many reasons!

Stylish Obsession: Chairs of course!

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Sintha Steward

(3 Keys Marketing Products, LLC)

Business Philosophy:

Listen. Care. Respond.

Favorite Designer:

Tina Tack - she's both elegant and classic.

My Stylish Obsession:

No doubt it's about!

Alyson Willis

(Love Grow)

Business philosophy:

Think Big, take baby steps. It's important to have

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a vision in business but the big picture can be intimidating at times. I try to take each day as it comes while staying focused on my long-term goals.

Stylish Obsession:

I love anything vintage. I'm also obsessed with statement necklaces, mules, funky hats, and 31 bits.

Best thing about your career:

I love people so it would have to be just seeing others smile. Whether it's with Photography or helping children in Uganda. The hard work is always worth making others happy.

For more information on registering your business, visit www.utsa.gov

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