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Staff Report

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Alumni Open First Selfie Museum in Tupelo

Walker sisters use lessons from McLean Institute initiative to craft a winning business plan

FEBRUARY 20, 2022 BY STAFF REPORT



Kendall Walker (left), Chloe Walker and Camille McCallum pose for a picture on one of Love Your Selfie's 20 sets. The sisters launched the business in July 2021, using many of the skills Camille and Kendall learned in the university's CEED initiative. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Three sisters from Tupelo are using skills they learned from a **University of Mississippi** community engagement initiative to build a thriving business in their hometown.

Camille (Walker) McCallum, Kendall Walker and Chloe Walker opened the city's first selfie museum, **Love Your Selfie**, late last July. Featuring 20 "Instagram worthy" sets, the business attracts a social media-sawing crowd to its location inside the Mall at Barnes Crossing.

McCallum and Kendall Walker developed a passion for business and community through their involvement in the **Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development**, or CEED, Initiative at the university.

The sisters enjoyed many extracurricular activities on campus, both serving as Ole Miss ambassadors and pledging Delta Sigma Theta sorority, but it was the CEED Initiative that set them on the trajectory to become business owners.

"CEED showed me the path to entrepreneurship," McCallum said. "After being involved in the program, owning my own business felt like an attainable goal rather than just a dream."

A signature initiative of the **McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement**, CEED empowers students to fulfill the mission of partnering with Mississippi communities to fight poverty through education, innovation and entrepreneurship. The innovative community engagement initiative teaches students to view community needs through the lens of entrepreneurship.

Students in the CEED program use the Innovation Hub at **Insight Park** on the Ole Miss campus to work on projects.

CEED connected the sisters with summer internships that helped train them for the work they do now. McCallum, who earned her bachelor's degree in public policy leadership in 2016, interned with the Mississippi Development Authority, assisting business advisers with research, pitch decks and financial projections for their clients.

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Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children's play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith's Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school's first African-American student.

This experience helped her write Love Your Selfie's business plan and secure funding.

During her time with CEED, Kendall Walker participated in two internships while working on a bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders, which she completed in 2020.

She first served as a lead for Entrepreneurial Learning Center Charleston, a monthlong program where students combat summer learning loss and grow academically in a fun and safe environment. She also interned with the Tupelo-based **Community Development Foundation**, where she worked directly with Judd Wilson, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, and learned how its resources benefit local small businesses.

"Love Your Selfie is the type of business we love to have in our chamber: family-owned, young entrepreneurs coming home and full of energy," Wilson said. "We are blessed that CDF played a small part of their success story."

Walker's experience with ELC Charleston and connections with CEED helped her start her first entrepreneurial venture, Kendall Garten, a K-6 tutoring business that has operated since August 2020.

She built upon those experiences and relationships in opening Love Your Selfie. She entered the business in the 2021 edition of **CDF's pitch competition**, snagging the top prize of \$500 cash and professional services to help get the business going.

Walker also orchestrated a ribbon cutting with the chamber, which resulted in a viral video for both the city and Love Your Selfie.

"My experiences at the CDF and ELC Charleston helped to prepare me for owning my own business even in the midst of the pandemic," she said. "Opening a business with my sisters while simultaneously running my own has been one of the greatest joys of my life."

The youngest sister, Chloe, brings to the group a unique creative perspective. As a true Gen Zer, she quickly finds and adapts to trends, keeping the store refreshed with sets that remain relevant to the target audience.

The youngest Walker sister balances her work at Love Your Selfie with being a student-athlete at Itawamba Community College, playing on the Indians' soccer team. She is looking forward to completing her bachelor's degree and becoming more involved in the business.

"For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to be an entrepreneur," she said. "Love Your Selfie is the perfect place for me to learn and grow as a business owner, and the work is fun!"

Visitors to Love Your Selfie get an hour to enjoy 20 unique photo stations, capturing social media content and making lasting memories – all while using their cellphones.

For a more elevated experience, guests can book a professional photography session with Love Your Selfie's chief photographer, Ole Miss student Kyion White. A sophomore integrated marketing communications major from Tupelo, White also is a CEED scholar.

The sisters want to continue engaging with students such as White and offering opportunities for them to develop their skills and learn more about running a small business.

"The CEED program was transformative for Kendall and me, and we want to help create that experience for others," McCallum said. "I know my sisters and I are strong because we have each other, and we want to provide that community and support to as many young entrepreneurs as we can."



Camille McCallum (left) and Kendall Walker pick up their \$500 prize check from the Community Development Foundation's 2021 pitch contest. The prize also included professional services and guidance. Submitted photo

"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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