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The Westmoreland **Business Monthly**

Vol. 2, No. 1

The Business Newspaper For All Of Westmoreland County

October, 2004

Pottie Stickers, invented by local woman, a national hit

There is a local woman entrepreneur who sincerely hopes that when children being potty trained "do their business," it will mean big business for her.

Tammi Aaron-Barrada, of Ruffs Dale, Pa., is one of the finalist for a national award given to women entrepreneurs, and she is just going national with her product: Pottie Stickers.

The concept is simple: a reward system for children for using the potty.

Her two children are 5 and 6 years old now, but the idea of such a reward system came to her when she was potty training her son.

And after a relatively short time of selling the Pottie Stickers herself, pretty much on an individual store basis, she has recently joined a national women inventors co-op and has reps selling her product in the U.S. and Canada.

She will find out later this month if she won the 2004 Stevie Award for the best new product by a woman entrepreneur, but she feels that she has already won a lot just by being named as a finalist in what one newspaper calls "the Oscars for the business world."

Here is how her company describes the product she invented:

"PottieStickers, a new patented creative toilet-training system that offers portability, structure and success (was introduced) in March 2004 to assist parents in providing day-to-day consistency throughout toilet training.

"They stresses positive reinforcement,

imagination development and motivates the child in the toilet-training process in less time and with less hassle. The product comes in a variety of 12 assorted designs with 3 different design sets per package and is designed to be user friendly and flexible.

"Through the creative design concept "No Wrong Way", PottieStickers builds a child's self-esteem and creates pride. Children place the PottieStickers in any direction onto a portable foldout scene creating a picture and will always be correct."

Aaron-Barrada was also honored as a 2003 WriteIdea business plan competition winner. Open to women start-up businesses or businesses in operation for less than one year in select Pennsylvania counties, the competition is administered by Seton Hill University's National Education Center for Women in Business.

The product is now being printed in Hong King, but Aaron-Barrada says she hopes to have them printed in the U.S. soon.

She also says the system really works. "You give one sticker for sitting down, two stickers for pee-pee, and three for poopy."

She did not set out to be a business woman. She was living in Alabama when her husband passed away without any life insurance. She already was thinking about marketing her potty training system, but now she had to do so.

The product has really only been sold



Above, a view of the "Pottie Sticker" system, which rewards youngsters during potty training. The invention has been nominated for a national award. Right, Tammi Aaron-Barrada, who lives near New Stanton, is a Pennsylvania native who has two young children and came up with the concept. She is now marketing it on a national basis.

during the last six months. She has done most of that, calling on day care centers, pediatricians, dentists, and other places where people with small children would see them.

Now, after attending inventors conventions and meeting others, she is part of a group that has reps calling on stores that have regional or national branches.



"I know the stickers work," Aaron-Barrada says. "Now I hope the business does, as well." -- E.G.P.