

Career paths take unforeseen turns

Cincinnati Enquirer - Cincinnati, Ohio
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Date: Aug 27, 2008
Start Page: E.1
Section: Business
Text Word Count: 323

Document Text

Jayne Heekin, Lindsay Reynolds and Andrea Schmidt are proof that sometimes your career can find you rather than the other way around.

The three friends started an event planning business together after discovering a knack for party and event planning when Reynolds got started in the business mostly by chance.

Reynolds is the daughter-in-law of Mercer and Gabby Reynolds of Indian Hill, who are active fundraisers for Republican candidates. Mercer Reynolds served as the finance chair for President Bush's re-election campaign in 2004.

It was through volunteering to help with a fundraiser at the Reynolds' home in June 2003 that Lindsay Reynolds, a teacher by training, was exposed to the world of event planning.

Helping to organize, secure the rental tables and correspond with guests gave Reynolds a feel for how to put on a high-profile event.

Through that experience, Reynolds was hired to help with events for the Bush/Cheney campaign.

That led to a job as associate director of the White House Visitors Office, which hosts public events for the White House, such as the annual Christmas party and Easter egg hunt.

When Reynolds returned to Cincinnati, she wanted to continue her newfound career. So she approached her two friends, Heekin and Schmidt, who also had their own separate career paths at the time, about joining forces to start a business.

In 2006, the women founded H&RS Event Planning and Consulting, which they nicknamed HERS. They have organized everything from kids' birthday parties and weddings to political fundraisers and a large gala at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center a year ago that featured President Clinton.

While at first keeping their day jobs, the women have now devoted all their time to their new business because of the increasing demand for their services, they said.

"I think originally, I thought it would be fun to do on the side," Reynolds said. "But it started to snowball into a fulltime job."

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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