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**CEDC E-News**  
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## CEDC's MicroBusiness Program helped launch Kinderhook business

A simple idea and the Columbia Economic Development Corporation's annual Microbusiness Seminar Series literally meshed at the last minute, resulting in the creation of a successful small business launch called "June Bug Bags."

It was the fall of 2013 and Kinderhook resident Heather Lloyd, a self-described "bag lady" who has detested plastic bags and the damage they cause the environment before it was popular, saw an ad for the CEDC seminar the day before it was to begin. She called, the class was full and she took her idea back to the drawing board without a sense of direction to make it become a reality. The next day, as the seminar was about to start, Lloyd received a call from CEDC Business Development Specialist Martha Lane to report a cancellation. She dropped everything, went to the CEDC class and left 8 weeks later with a solid business plan for "June Bug Bags" -- reusable, breathable, washable bags designed for loose produce, bulk goods and groceries.

"That seminar series kick-started me," said Lloyd, who founded her business in October 2013 upon completion of the class which teaches participants about tax law, accounting, insurance, how to create a business plan and more. "The Microbusiness Seminar Series also puts participants in touch with experts and provides an excellent networking experience as they meet other entrepreneurs in the area," said CEDC Marketing Director Carol Wilber. Free technical assistance for seminar graduates is another perk of the Microbusiness Seminar

Series which Lloyd took advantage of by working with Suzanne and Rob Trevellyan after the class ended. The Trevellyan's worked with Heather to get a website up and running, designed the June Bug Bag logo, and provided great marketing advice.

The mesh bags come in three sizes and retail from \$4 to \$8. Lloyd said the bags keep produce fresh longer than if it is stored in the plastic bags available in the produce aisle at the supermarket because they allow fruits and vegetables to "breathe." All of the June Bug Bags are made in the United States and predominantly from New York State producers. She started sourcing the pattern-making and sewing of the mesh bags to Chris Rielly of the former Rielly Mills of Valatie and has expanded her supply chain using the Herkimer Area Resource Center (ARC), purchasing the polyester mesh fabric from Mohawk Fabric in Amsterdam. Her logo and website were designed by Trevellyan of Chatham and the product cards are printed by Pro Printers in Hudson using soy ink on 100 percent post-consumer waste recycled paper manufactured using wind power. Lloyd also makes muslin grocery totes that fold up to fit in a purse for \$11.



June Bug Bags are sold locally at Samascott's Garden Market, 65 Chatham St., Kinderhook and at the Kinderhook Farmer's Market, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturdays May through October; The Berry Farm, 2304 Route 203, Chatham and Chatham Real Food Market Co-op, 15 Church St., Chatham; Kaaterskill Farm Nature Storehouse, 173 Healy Boulevard in Hudson; Staron Farm Stand, 4 Merwin Road, Valatie; Guido's Fresh Marketplace, 760 South Main St. in Great Barrington and 1020 South St., Pittsfield, Massachusetts; and Taste NY Todd Hill, LaGrange on the Taconic State Parkway.



Designed to hold loose produce, Lloyd said there are no limits on use for the reusable, washable bags. Lingerie and gym clothes can be laundered in the bags and they are useful for knitters to store yarn in so it can "breathe." Lloyd, a software engineer by trade, believes strongly in her product. "I use them all the time," she said. "They're really great and they work."

The name of her product pays homage to her childhood nickname given to her by her parents growing up in Philadelphia. "I hated it then," she said with a laugh. As she was winding down her engineering career in 2013, the idea of creating the bags was born. Living in

Westchester County, Lloyd used to run on the Bronx River Parkway and was appalled at the amount of roadside litter. She would pick up plastic bags on her runs, collecting wads of trash as she ran. Lloyd approached government officials about installing trashcans along the route but was told the cans attracted rodents and were prohibited for that reason. "People would see me running with these bags and thought I was just a crazy bag lady," she said with a laugh. "The colossal ecological costs of plastic on the earth is frightening," she said.

As June Bug Bags gain in popularity, Lloyd is working on developing a dispenser for them so they can be placed in the produce aisle of stores as an alternative to the rolls of thin plastic bags that are placed there now for produce. "They don't belong in the housewares department," she said. "They need to be in front of the consumer at the point of purchase so they can choose to reuse."

**"CEDC's MicroBusiness Seminar changed my life. The education I received gave me exactly what I needed to start my business. One year later, my company is selling in eight stores and expanding." -Heather Lloyd**

Lloyd moved to Columbia County six years after meeting and later marrying Eric Beebe of Kinderhook. She was familiar with the area having ridden her bike from Westchester to

Copake along Route 22 to visit friends years ago and was smitten with the area from the start. "I always loved Columbia County," she said. "I'm thrilled to be able to live and work here."



For more information about June Bug Bags, contact Heather Lloyd at [info@junebugbags.com](mailto:info@junebugbags.com) or call (914) 629-5299.

**Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), the lead economic development organization for Columbia County, is committed to strengthening the county's tax base through economic development and job creation while maintaining the quality of life so desired by the people who live and work here. For more information about CEDC programs and services visit our [website](#) or call us at 518.828.4718.**

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