

Being the Master of Your Own Destiny: A Story of Resilience and the Importance of Play

Small businesses are the lifeblood of any community, and Kitsap County, Washington is no exception. Rhonda Koh, the owner of [Ahoy Kitsap Playland](#) in Bremerton, is one of the 20 "[Growing Greater Businesses](#)" grant recipients in the area. In this blog post, we will explore her journey to entrepreneurship, the challenges she has faced along the way, and her commitment to being a responsible and ethical business owner in her community.

[Rhonda Koh](#) has two master's degrees, an MBA which she uses regularly, and a master of science in foreign service which she got because she thought she would become a foreign diplomat but ended up working in a desk job that she hated. After a while, she decided to do something different and opened her own business in Washington, where ***she could be the master of her own destiny***. She loves owning her successes and mistakes and being able to move forward in a way that she couldn't in a desk job.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Rhonda faced the challenge of keeping her "non-essential" business open. However, she took advantage of grants and loans and used the time to think about how she could reopen and what it would look like. ***She implemented plans to expand her business and generate additional revenue, including opening a virtual reality arcade and a commercial kitchen.*** Rhonda received pushback for not allowing outside food, which was a difficult decision for her, but she had to make it to move forward.

Ahoy Kitsap Playland is an [indoor playground](#) for children aged 0-12. The playground is designed for children aged 6 and under and features a toddler area and a three-story jungle gym with various activities. ***Occupational therapists sometimes come to help children develop motor skills, and the playground is also a safe space for families, caregivers, and parents with newborns.*** Playland is free for babies under one year old, and it provides a safe environment for socialization and play for children of all ages. In the late afternoons and on weekends, older children come to play and use the virtual reality arcade.

Rhonda's pricing structure is affordable and offers all-day play. The pricing is \$12 for children under two and \$15 for all-day admission for everyone else. The business is open from 9 am to 5 pm on Mondays and 9 am to 7 pm Tuesday through Friday. On weekends, the business has shorter hours due to hosting private parties.

The pandemic has affected the way Rhonda's business operates. ***She mentioned that pandemic babies may need help socializing, and building community is important***

for people to bond over shared experiences. Rhonda's business has shifted from just trying to get people through the door to finding the right people who will stay and enjoy their services, such as getting coffee or grabbing a meal. A new item on their menu, a unicorn sundae, has become a bonding experience for customers.

Rhonda's commitment to being a responsible and ethical business owner is evident in the way she treats her employees and supports her community. ***She pays her employees above minimum wage, provides paid breaks and lunches, and supports the community through donations and sponsorships.*** She believes in being engaged in the community to promote a healthy environment and is committed to supporting the community.

Rhonda Koh is an inspiring Greater Kitsap-based small business owner who loves tacos, spending time with family, and listening to Fleetwood Mac. She enjoys reading books, especially fiction, and is currently reading book nine of the "Wheel of Time" series. Her goal is to grow her virtual reality arcade with the \$10,000 she has received as part of the "Growing Greater Businesses" grant.

If you get one of their Unicorn Sundae's tag us in your pic - it sounds delightful!

Listen to her full interview – check out the link below!

Support Rhonda and Ahoy Kitsap Playland by visiting them in Bremerton or purchase a ticket at www.ahoykitsap.com.

AUDIO LINK: <https://recorder.google.com/321f5167-cc1f-476e-b87e-2588f9c86ccf>