

SVCC Grad Shanetta Beck Has a Cool Job

Shanetta Beck has a cool job doing what she loves to do. Beck is owner of her own business, Baskets by Occasion. She started this as a cottage industry on a part-time basis and now has transformed her hobby into a prosperous career.

Beck, who lives in Emporia, is a graduate of Southside Virginia Community College with an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice. In her mid-twenties when she returned to school, Beck already had children. She wanted to go to college to encourage them to succeed in life.

When she attended SVCC, she was working as a Corrections Officer and the degree she worked towards helped her with on-the-job promotions. She fondly remembers her mentors from her student years at SVCC, especially Dr. Al Roberts who is now President and Trooper Ron Posey who taught some of her classes.

"I feel good that I got an SVCC education," she said. Still learning, Beck hones her business skills with the help and guidance of the Longwood Small Business Development Center.

A breast cancer survivor, Beck is adamant in her support of breast cancer awareness and fundraising for the cause and participates in SVCC's Pink Power celebration. Only 35 years old when her cancer was discovered, Beck has been in cure mode for the past four years. One reason she likes having her own business is she can pace herself; her treatment for the disease took a toll on her energy level. But, with her enthusiasm for her career and her personality, she seems pretty energetic.

She works closely with the Emporia-Greenville Chamber of Commerce and networks with others there to promote her business. She offers baskets that are custom made for all occasions including weddings, births, birthdays, holidays. In addition, she plans children's parties and makes welcome baskets and dipped treats and fruits. Her shop, located in a tiny house in her yard, is brimming with baskets, filled pocketbooks and other ideas for any occasion.

Her enthusiasm for her creations is contagious. She is in her happy place while tucked amongst the many completed baskets and gift items in her shop.