

Small Business Success Awards 2004

Mercer/Middlesex SBDC at The College of New Jersey

Winners: Monif and Elaine Clarke

Buy4Less Esales LTD.

Piscataway



732-801-1613

Rutgers University student Monif and proud mom Elaine Clarke are the prime players in a real family operation. Classified as “power sellers” on e-bay, meaning they sell more than \$10,000 per month, this duo sources new and used women’s plus size clothes and children’s clothing, then sells in the online marketplace.

After attending an e-bay convention in New Orleans in June, Monif learned many more tips to help improve their sales. “E-bay is very much a community, a lot of people who sell full or part-time on e-bay utilizing message boards and communicating so it’s like a big family affair,” she said. One of the features of the online marketplace is a ratings system and Buy4Less enjoys a sellers rating of 99.6 percent, based on 268 positives and one negative rating.

Since opening the e-bay business, they decided to branch into other areas by setting up a web site to sell contemporary, stylish women’s clothing next year on their own web site.

Currently, Monif works Monday through Saturday full time. “We do clothing so I have to take the photographs, get them online, then fulfill the orders,” said Monif. Monif said that everything they list sells the first time so their sell through rate is 100%.

“Because we have items that people want, we have a strategy that we set the bid price low because we know it will be bid up.”

To plan for the new site and expand on their current success, the Clarkes are working with the Mercer/Middlesex SBDC at The College of New Jersey, receiving assistance with their business plan, e-commerce, international trade and market research. “From the first time we met with Tyra Sartor Brown from NJSBDC, we knew we had stumbled onto a resource that would prove invaluable to us. All three consultants, Tyra Sartor Brown, Nat Bender, and Roger Cohen have given us advice and information that continues to steer our business in the right direction. It is a great feeling to know that NJSBDC is in our corner always willing to help us bounce around ideas and make connections with the right people,” said Monif.



Virginia Bauer and Brenda Hopper present e-bay.com power sellers Monif (center) and Elaine Clarke with their NJSBDC Success Award on behalf of The College of New Jersey SBDC.