

1. When did you start your business?

- *What year did you start your business?*

I started this business about two years ago 2017.

- *Did someone own the business before you? If so, who and do you know why they chose to sell?*

Yes, my Cousin Carlene Yarbrough owned it for 33 years. She retired in 2017 and pass the business on to me her cousin. She had been doing it so long and she was just tired and ready to go home and relax.

2. Where is your business located?

- *Is your business only in Memphis? Yes, it is.*
- *Has it always been in Memphis? It has. I remember her branching out any farther.*
- *How important is the location of your business? Why?*

For me this location is very important because I was raised in South Memphis. And I've always wanted to give back to submit this and I see a lot of things I can do in this area. When I came here, I told my husband added what does be laundromat lady, I wanted to be someone who can bring some positive to community. I wanted to help some of the ladies that walk up and down the street, talk to children, pray with them. Just get in there would be a part of them and show them something positive, even tell them my testimony. Tell them my story and how I came up.

3. Why did you start your business?

- *Is it a family business? It is.*
- *Has this business always been a dream of yours? Explain, please.*

Not so much as a laundromat business. I never had a clue that will be in the laundromat business. I know that when I was working for the University of Memphis, I was a housekeeper/lead custodian. And that always pay close attention to my laundry rooms. So when he came before me as it did then I knew it was something God was bringing into fruition and I know that I'm appointed to be here.

4. How did you start your business?

- *Did you have to get a loan? If so, was a complicated? Or If not, why not?*

No and yes. The businesses already up and running my cousin already a clientele when I got here so that was good. And she didn't take out a loan. Not that I know of.

My cousin has always been a business lady. She just saved. She knew how to save. Her and her family would to get together and do certain things. You know the other part the family will get together, the ones that had the ability and they would buy houses, remodel them, sell them and save the money from that. As far as I know she's always been the business lady. She's very careful with how she spends her money. She makes its count. She also teaches us how to make it count. When I came into the business, I did know anything about being a businessperson, but

she took time out and talk to me walked me through things and told me, “Barbara you have to do it like this. I’ve been successful here and you can be successful, but you’ve got to do it like this thus and so.”

- *Did you get any help from your family? If so, in what way?*
- *Is it necessary to go to college to run your type of business? Why or why not?*

It’s not. Not necessary at all. I mean, I was blessed that my cousin of the business before me but I’m really positive that I could have done it now that I stepped into it. I see that it’s something that I’ve could’ve done. Start it up myself because it’s not that hard. It’s just about getting to meet people, learning how to talk to people and going where you are afraid. Even if you feel like you’re not going to succeed still go anyway and see what’s going to happen. Don’t be afraid to step out. So no you don’t have to have a college degree because I don’t have one. I plan on having one one day, but I don’t have one right now and neither does my husband. But it’s about you being able to get out there even if you’re afraid. My cousin who started the business does not have one either. She did go back to school and get her GED. She came up in the rough era. She’s 70 something years old going on 80. So she came out when times were very hard. She told me that he wouldn’t want them to get an education. So she does not have a college degree, but she did go back to school. She has an identical twin sister and it was very hard for them coming up. When they did get a chance to go to school, they went. So when she got older, I don’t know of who was in her thirties or forties, but she did she went back to school. In fact she walked up and down the street, she told me, to get to school at night. She went to night school together GED.

- *How difficult is it to run your business? Explain, please.*

Some of the challenges would be the traffic. The young people they come out and the like to hang out in front of your business. Where my aunt had older customers and I’ve lost some of the older customers because of the young people wanting to hang out. If I ask them to move, they’ll talk back to you, curse you out, or say, “you don’t own this block” and all that. That’s one of my biggest challenges. It’s unattractive to a business. And you don’t want around the mall for the showing them love. So I’m in the midst of trying to show them love and run my business. Because I don’t want them to feel like I’m just here to make a dollar, and I do need to make a dollar because I do need to pay my bills, but I want them to know that I’m here because I care about you, too. But I need you to be respectful. So I want to help them learn respect for others. If I can show them that they don’t have to just stand around. I’d tell them about Advance Memphis that program that can help you. A lot of them say, “Well, I got felonies and nobody gonna hire me” and this and that. When the real problem is you smoke weed out here, you’re doing drugs, and you’re going to get a drug test if you’re going to get a job. You won’t sit down and let the people who are trying to help you help you fill out an application properly. A lot of them don’t know how to fill out an application and read because I’ve seen it in here. But they don’t want to sit down and do it. So hopefully mopey is that that challenge will get better as I stay here because I plan on staying in this spot. You want hope for them, but you also want them to have hole for themselves. You cannot give up on anyone.

5. **What advice would you give my 11th grade students looking to be entrepreneurs?**

- *Is college necessary to be a successful entrepreneur? Explain, please.*

I'm kind of stuck with that question since I didn't go to college. I wish I had gone to college. I can see a lot of benefit and go to college. I would have more information. I would have more social skills. They teach a lot of that stuff in college. I say if you could go to college go. Take advantage of opportunities that lay before you. Even if you go just to get your associates degree go. All the learning you can get it going at it. I wish I had but I did not encourage people to go. Yes, I think it will make you a successful entrepreneur if you go to college and put your mind to it. To come out and use what you really paid attention to school and to use what you've been taught, yes it will help you become a successful entrepreneur.

- *Is good credit necessary to be a successful entrepreneur? Explain, please.*

You can always work toward straightening out your credit. You can always work toward straightening anything out in your life that you have probably messed up yourself, because we cannot blame other people. He has tried it is something that can be fixed. Anything that is damaged a torn can be fixed, and credit is one of them. Having good credit is not necessary to start a business not to me is not. But I got a break, I have to say that. But I think that if you're trying to do what's right and trying to go in the right direction and then some things will happen for you and if you don't have good credit... I really don't know how to answer that. Even what the guys that I was telling you about that felonies, I tell them to take a step. Because if you don't take a step you don't know what's going to happen. If you hide behind the fact you have a felony charge, then don't go back and get another felony charge. Stop right where you are and pick up and start moving forward. Some doors will open for you.

- *Should they focus on what they love to do or what services are needed? Explain, please.*

I would say both. What you love to do is important and what the community needs is important. A lot of times what you love to do may be beneficial to the community. So I would say focus on both and see how you can bring up to a point and make them work together.