

2022 *Spotlight Business Review*

Soaring Dreams

Vicki Helhowski

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Vicki Helhowski grew up in Roseville Michigan with her brother and family. She graduated from Regina high school in 1984 and furthered her education at Macomb college, earning her degree in physical therapy. Vicki worked in various roles as a physical therapist assistant for 12 years.

Vicki and her ex-husband share 2 children together. Their son Kelly who lives in Wisconsin with his wife Nicole and their autistic daughter Jessica. Jessica shares her time equally with her dad and bonus mom in Arizona and Vicki and her bonus dad here in Michigan. When Vicki has some free time, she loves to bake cookies, cook up her delicious polish pierogies and crochet.

While working in physical therapy, Vicki and her daughter Jessica had started up a side business making fabric tie wreaths. Jessica enjoyed making the wreaths so much, Vicki wondered if other adults with special needs would too. While looking for volunteers, Vicki met two women who had founded the organization. The ladies wanted their adult children with special needs to have a place to learn, grow and build upon the skills they had learned while in school, so they decided to fund their vision with a resale shop calling it Soaring Dreams. These women were retiring and worked closely with adults who had special needs. Vicki saw this as her calling, a purpose in life with a mission and a chance to make a difference.

After discussing this opportunity with her husband, they agreed this would be a great fit for Jessica and Vicki. In 2019 Vicki took on her new challenge and took over Soaring Dreams as Executive Director. In 2022 she moved the shop to St. Clair. Her big success in managing Soaring Dreams would come with relocating the business from East China to the St. Clair Plaza. Vicki feels she has found her niche and is proud to build upon the vision of the original founders.

Soaring Dreams main purpose is to serve individuals who are unable to hold position in traditional jobs due to developmental delays, physical impairments or sensory issues. They are focused on inclusion, acceptance, life skills and job training which allow the volunteers to be contributing members of the community.

Soaring Dreams gives Vicki time to spend working with her daughter while helping other adults with special needs to build upon and retain the skills they learned in school.

The adults spend their time at Soaring Dreams making handmade specialty items which include: shirts, mugs, healthy dog treats, wreaths, seasonal chocolate treats and much more!

The resale side of Soaring Dreams is filled with generous and quality donations which include clothes, kitchen items and glassware, leather goods, antique, pictures, furniture, handmade bath & body products and ornaments.

The part of Vicki's job she enjoys the most is seeing the volunteers learn new things as well as the sense of pride they feel from their accomplishments. Vicki puts her merchandising skills to the test to display all the latest donations and appreciates all the local support from the community to rally around her volunteers that support their mission.

Coming up for the holiday season, Vicki will be promoting their custom ornaments, cookies and unique chocolate goodies and treats. So come on in to say "Hi" to Vicki and her volunteers. Feel free to browse around the store and check out what's new. This is a great time to get a head start on your gift shopping for the holidays!