

# 2017 EMERGING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



## Town Square

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Michelle A. Kaiser</b>
<b>Nature of Business</b>	<b>Event Space and Design Service</b>
<b>City, County</b>	<b>Paola, Kansas, Miami County</b>
<b>Website/Email</b>	<b><a href="http://www.townsquarepaola.com/">http://www.townsquarepaola.com/</a></b>
<b>Structure</b>	<b>LLC</b>
<b>Began</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Employees</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>KSBDC Consultant</b>	<b>John Addressi</b>



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Town Square is a truly beautiful event space and an event design service, situated on the picturesque town square in Paola, Kansas. You don't fully appreciate the venue until you enter and find an enormous ballroom, with high, embossed ceilings, original brick and woodwork, staircases to yet other levels, and owner Michelle Kaiser's extra decorating touches. However, lovely as it is, it's just a space. What makes it all work so well is Michelle's passion. She understands that she is hosting one of the most important days in the lives of her couples and works tirelessly to ensure that their day is picture perfect. Michelle's brides are in excellent hands!

Michelle started Town Square in 2011 "with very little time and money in an industry (she) loved but wasn't necessarily familiar with." In the beginning, Michelle worked with her Kansas SBDC advisor to draft her business plan. As the business grew, they have continued to work on marketing and pricing.

Today, Town Square is a top venue in The Knot, the leading wedding guide. This positioning and exposure means that Michelle's event design services are booked well in advance – every Saturday in 2017 was spoken for before the year began! The venue hosts many other events – Paola's "State of the City" is held there, for example. Town Square's growth has led to a second venue, Little Town, which is available for smaller events such as rehearsal dinners and corporate meetings.

Michelle participates in the Kansas SBDC's GAME seminar series. GAME brings together '2<sup>nd</sup> stage' businesses that are poised to take off and 'dive deeply' into challenging business topics presented by industry experts. Michelle and her GAME cohort have worked on defining their business concepts in the first quarter and are now focusing on marketing.

Michelle plans to develop her event design business so that corporate customers and organizations as well as brides turn to her for their events. Her event services can be utilized at any local or regional venue, extending her expertise far beyond the walls of Town Square. She is not alone in this journey. Michelle says, "The SBDC does a really good job of staying interested in my business and my successes. They stay in communication and provide quality feedback. John Addressi has been great to work with and truly shows interest in what I am doing and how I can be even better. John has also been a great resource to assist me in determining how to reach some of those bigger goals in the future."

### SECRET TO SUCCESS

"Know your value and price your services accordingly."