

## My Professional Journey After Marietta College



If you are an MC grad who participated in the PioBiz Competition or studied Entrepreneurship while at Marietta, we would like to hear from you. Please write a short article on your professional journey after Marietta and submit it [entr@marietta.edu](mailto:entr@marietta.edu). Hi! I am Leah Seaman, a former Marietta student, and current professional artist. I am based out of Columbus, Ohio, and am the owner of ArtaBella Gallery LLC. I graduated from Marietta College in May of 2021 with a degree in Communication Studies and Studio Arts and a minor in Leadership Studies.

My journey towards the arts found traction while I attended Marietta College when I made the life-changing decision to compete in the 2020 [PioBiz Competition](#) with my current business, ArtaBella Gallery. After spending countless hours researching, engaging with mentors, writing, and then re-writing my very first business plan, I came out of the competition with \$7000 secured to help cover the initial costs of jumping headfirst into my business after graduation.

When the time came for me to go full time into the arts, I was truly terrified. Although I then had the basic business knowledge, and the funding, to help me get started as an entrepreneur, I still heavily ascribed to the 'starving artist' stereotype and had no clue what kind of response would await me out in the real world. Within my first few months of business, however, those fears were quickly diminished as the response from patrons, followers, and loved ones alike was overwhelmingly positive. Pretty soon I was inundated with orders, especially by Christmas season, and was able to make two times my predicted income within seven months!

The primary work that I currently do as an artist is commissioned pieces, mural work, and live event paintings, all three of which have taken me to some pretty incredible places! In June of 2021, I completed my very first live event painting and since then, I have booked over 40 weddings and will have traveled to five different states by the end of 2022, meeting some pretty incredible people along the way. My mural work has taken me to New York, Upper West Virginia, Marietta, and beyond, and has provided me the space to explore my artistic style in a massive and colorful way. Much of the artwork I did before graduating college came from commissions, and so this realm of my work has been the easiest to transition into.

Since May, I have had the chance to create works that I am incredibly proud of, including a painting for the Alderson Broaddus University nursing program that reflects the diversity of their clients, a painting that was auctioned off to support the LGBTQ+ community, paintings of lost loved ones and pets, and so much more!

Now that I am more than a year and a half into my career as a professional artist, I am so excited be living in a two-bedroom apartment in Columbus paid for with the income I have earned through ArtaBella Gallery. Something I have come to love, and continue to treasure, as an entrepreneur is the full ownership over my own time and schedule flexibility that self-employment has afforded me. I can work from almost anywhere, which fits well with my values of travel and movement.

I am currently looking to expand my work into more personally motivated paintings and begin to explore my own artistic voice outside of commission world. I also plan to gradually increase my prices in accordance with the increase in artistic quality of the paintings I have been producing as of late, which will hopefully afford me more financial freedom to explore more of my personal work. I am so excited to continue to see where this work takes me in the future!

How to find me:

Facebook- [@ArtaBella](#)

Instagram- [@artabella\\_gallery](#)

TikTok- [@a.b.gallery](#)

Etsy: ArtaBella Gallery

Website: [www.artabellagallery.com](http://www.artabellagallery.com)

Email: [leahmarie26416@gmail.com](mailto:leahmarie26416@gmail.com)

## From MOVEE to BIG

The Mid-Ohio Valley Entrepreneurship Expo (MOVEE) has been a key component of Marietta College's Entrepreneurship Program since 2016. The main objective of MOVEE was to provide a venue for entrepreneurs to build and expand their networks. Last semester, two teams of students in Professor Julie Harding's Marketing Research class conducted studies on MOVEE. It was based on the results of these studies that we decided to rename the event and modify its mission.



The new event is called the BIG (Build, Innovate, Grow) Workshop. The mission of the BIG Workshop is to connect aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners with each other and with resource providers and experts to create a network that solves business problems, identifies viable entrepreneurial ideas, and puts them into action. On Wednesday, November 2, 2022, we will hold the first BIG Workshop on the campus of Marietta College, and you are invited to join us. [Learn More.](#)



## A Classroom Project Becomes Real



Almost exactly a year ago, Alexis Sommers (Entrepreneurship, '25) and Lilly Posti (Strategic Communications, '25) were assigned to work on a pitch project in their first entrepreneurship class, the Entrepreneurial Mindset. After Lilly came across a thrift shop on Otterbein University's campus, she suggested that they use the same concept as their pitch project in class. The idea was to open a non-profit thrift shop named "Big Blue" on the Marietta College campus. The mission of Big Blue was to create an alternative shopping opportunity for Marietta College students that was trendy and affordable while resulting in less waste and less clutter in small dorm closets.

After their final class presentation, Lilly and Alexis pitched the same idea in Round One of the PioBiz Competition and claimed first place. Just a few weeks later, Big Blue hosted its first pop-up thrifting event. This successful event encouraged the duo to continue working on this project throughout the summer months. Later this month Big Blue is expected to open its doors for business. Alexis and Lilly admit that they still have a lot to learn. However, they are extremely excited that their classroom project has become a reality. If you would like to make donations to Big Blue, please email [entr@marietta.edu](mailto:entr@marietta.edu). Visit Big Blue on Instagram at [mc\\_bigblue](#).



## Entrepreneurship Hackathon

Are you free on the evening of Saturday, February 18, 2023? If so, consider spending the evening with us on the campus of Marietta College to witness student presentations at the first Entrepreneurship Hackathon at Marietta College.

The mission of the Entrepreneurship Hackathon is to engage students in problem-based, multidisciplinary, learning by providing them with the opportunity to examine the root causes of a local or global social, environmental, political, or economic problem, and find creative solutions that students themselves can put into action.

The Entrepreneurship Hackathon is open to all full-time Marietta College students regardless of their major or class.

[Learn More](#)

## Become a Mentor

If you are passionate about sharing your entrepreneurial skills with our students, consider becoming a mentor in our program. As a mentor, you will determine the nature, extent, and timing of your involvement. There are no obligations.

[Learn More](#)



## Fall 2022 Events Open to All!



### Start of The Year Networking Party

September 8, 2022

4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

The Great Room in Andrews Hall

Register before noon on 9/2/22

[Register Here](#)



### Hackathon Information Session

September 14, 2022

8:00 pm to 9:00 pm

327 Thomas Hall

Register before midnight on 9/13/22

[Register Here](#)



### PIOPITCH: Homecoming Edition

September 15, 2022

10:00 am to 11:00 am

Thomas 124 Cooper Auditorium

Free and open to the public!

Register before midnight on 9/13/22

[Read More](#)



### PIOBIZ Proof of Concept Workshop

October 25, 2022

8:00 pm to 9:00 pm

327 Thomas Hall

[Read More](#) [Register Here](#)



## BIG Workshop

November 2, 2022

11:30 am to 5:00 pm

Marietta College

[Learn More](#)



## PIOBIZ

### Proof of Concept Competition

November 29, 2022

3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

124 Thomas Hall

No Registration Necessary

## Join us as a Sponsor

It is, in part, due to the generosity of our sponsors that we can offer our extracurricular events and activities to the community either free of charge or at a discount. We do this because our goal is to build a network of young and seasoned entrepreneurs that create economic, social, and environmental values through collaboration and cooperation. [Read More.](#)

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