

Chelsea Preston

New Smyrna Beach, Florida



[Jelly Press](#)

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Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Chelsea Preston:

Some entrepreneurs are content with carving out a niche and providing products or services for a local market. Others, like Chelsea Preston, founder of Jelly Press, have much bigger aspirations. "I want to be a national brand," she said. "There's a big nostalgic thing happening these days. We're overloaded with technological ways to communicate with each other. A lot of younger people are getting back to paper."

Born in Texas, but raised in Lexington, KY, Preston traded hills and horses for beaches and palm trees and moved to the Sunshine State to pursue a college degree. She studied Fine Art and Graphic Design at Flagler College in St. Augustine. After graduation, Preston moved back to Lexington and received a Master's Degree in Fashion Design from the University of Kentucky. During her time at UK, Preston interned for a

fashion magazine in New York City. After graduate school, she worked for the J. Peterman Company as an Assistant Buyer before moving back to Florida.

Immediately before launching Jelly Press in April of 2017, Preston spent five years teaching fashion design, illustration and graphics at a professional college in Orlando. As Preston explained, the inspiration for starting Jelly Press was a combination of necessity and heeding her own advice.

"The school was closing," she said. "It's cliché, but I was losing my job and I had to find something else. I thought to myself, 'What am I going to do with my degree?'. I love buying prints when I travel and I noticed that New Smyrna Beach, where we live and where my husband has a law firm, was missing an affordable take away. It was also around this time when I had an 'aha' moment from my experience teaching. I always told my students to do all of these things as it related to their career and their profession and they would never take my advice. I decided to stop giving out advice and to take my own. Sometimes it's hard to do what you tell everyone else to do, but this time I listened to myself and I started Jelly Press."

Preston draws much of her inspiration from the Old Florida quirks and curiosities of small towns and destinations such as Spook Hill, Homosassa Springs, Monkey Island and The Putnam Hotel. Her beautiful illustrations are available as prints, postcards, notecards and more. In addition to stock prints, she offers custom-designed invitations and cards for various occasions. Preston's creations can be purchased through her website, her Etsy store, at different events throughout the

state and several local boutiques,

Preston shared her challenges and what she enjoys most about being an entrepreneur. "I'm not an entrepreneur at heart, but I love the freedom and flexibility that comes with being your own boss," she said. "I also love making people happy. When I do events, people will come up to my booth and say, 'I can't look at your work and not be happy.' That's very satisfying. The actual part of owning your own business is definitely challenging, especially for a woman in this industry. I never really experienced a glass ceiling until now. I have to buy my products in bulk from large companies, most run by men, and several have made insensitive remarks about the nature of my business. It's been eye-opening."

What advice does Preston have for someone looking to make the jump into entrepreneurship? "My sister's in a similar situation," she said. "I talk to her a lot about it. I basically just tell her to not question it and to just do it. If you can, start your business on the side. I started Jelly Press while still working. If you dedicate yourself to it, it will happen. I was a workaholic. I reflected on that one day and decided that if I spent as much time on my own business as I was on my job, that I would be successful."

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