

Lorna Owens Esq

Miami, Florida



[Desert Sage](#)

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Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Lorna Owens Esq:

Originally from Jamaica, Lorna Owens, owner and founder of Desert Sage and Footprints Foundation, was recruited in 1979 to work as a Registered Nurse at Mercy Hospital in Miami. She spent several years in that role before obtaining her Bachelor's Degree in International Relations from Florida International University and then a Law Degree from the University of Florida in 1986.

After law school, Owens began her legal career as an Assistant Miami-Dade County Prosecutor under Janet Reno. With three years under her belt, she started her own firm practicing Criminal and Entertainment Law. In 2010, Owens saw a story that changed her life forever.

“It was a piece about the rape of women as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” she said. “After seeing that, I decided to do something about it.”

Owens launched Footprints Foundation, a 501(c)(3) whose local and global mission is to reduce maternal and infant mortality and morbidity with culturally sensitive evidence based training of doctors, nurses, midwives and traditional birth attendants in Jamaica and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Owens, being the savvy entrepreneur she is, then came up with a creative way to fund her nonprofit.

“I’ve always loved aromas, candles and personal care products,” she said. “I also started getting concerned that a lot of candles, bath washes and gels had too many chemicals that were affecting individuals and the environment. I knew I could make a safer and greener product and, at the same time, find a way to support the work I did around the world without having to fundraise.”

In 2017, Owens launched Desert Sage. The concept originated as a high-end soy candle company. Over the past three years, however, it’s grown into much more than that.

“To be honest, the business just took off,” Owens said. “The universe conspires when you’re doing things for good. Word got out and my candles became very popular. As a result, I was able to do pop ups in Pottery Barn, West Elm and J. Crew. I was also invited to be in a William Sonoma store, but not necessarily for my candles.”

Owens continued, “The manager asked me to do a tea pop up. I was under the impression that she meant a pairing with my candles and tea

from William Sonoma. I called the week before to confirm and she mentioned how excited she was to try my teas. I thought to myself, 'Uh oh...I don't have any teas'. I was frantic. I went back and forth with a company I had worked with in the past to create a tea but never did anything with it. Several days later, I had teas all packaged and ready to go. That's how we expanded to include organic and fair-trade teas."

From there, Owens also expanded to include all-natural body washes, lotions, CBD and personal care products.

"Being a nurse, I'm mindful that the skin is the biggest organ of the body," Owens said. "By putting anything on your skin, you're exposing your entire life to it. It goes right into your bloodstream."

Thanks to what Owens refers to as a "gift", her presence in the William Sonoma group of companies has given her the ability to travel throughout Florida and showcase her products. With mini-candles made in Grasse, France, known as the perfume capital of the world, and teas sourced from exotic locations throughout the world, Desert Sage has provided Owens with an opportunity to be creative, while providing unique products and simultaneously funding a cause she's passionate about.

"To be able to conceive of something, source it, produce it and then get it in the hands of my customers is very rewarding," she said. "That's what gets my juices going."

Looking ahead, Owens is focused on bringing a new perfume to market called 'Strength of a Woman' and on empowering female entrepreneurs through Desert Sage's affiliate program. Her future growth strategy

involves signing up women who care about physical and emotional health and who want to create a side income for themselves. She's also releasing a cookbook that chronicles her journey with food during the COVID-19 Pandemic and features delicious and healthy recipes.

What advice does Owens have for aspiring entrepreneurs? "Build it and they will come," she said. "Find something you're passionate about and don't overthink the process. Start wherever you can. Put your best product on the market and tweak it as you go along. Also, understand that people want their products as quickly as possible. Focus on excellent service and quick delivery. Lastly, don't produce a lot of merchandise until you have enough clients in place and never lose faith.

If you fail, turn it into something positive and learn from it."

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