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Hip mom: Adoptive families benefit from Lawrence resident's jewelry sales

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By Daisy Wakefield
April 11, 2011

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Ann Andersson was not looking for a business idea in 2004, but, as with many mom-preneurs, the muse came knocking on her door.

"I ordered a piece of jewelry for my daughter and was disappointed in the workmanship when it arrived," Andersson says. "I knew I could make something better myself."

And so began [Hip Mom Jewelry](#), an online shop of custom-made, hand stamped jewelry that is now in its seventh year. The jewelry, as indicated by the company name, is tailored for



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Ann Andersson, Lawrence, is owner of Hip Mom Jewelry.

mothers, with initials, names, or birthdates of their children stamped into silver pieces and worn as pendants or bracelet charms. Some are very simple, just a flat piece of silver with one elegant initial. Others are more elaborate, embellished with birthstones or small charms.

The designs all originate with Andersson, although an idea for a new design can take anywhere from hours to months to come to fruition. She sources her raw metals from a recycled metal supplier and then recycles the scrap metals that don't make their way into final products.

Andersson takes joy in the ritualistic, almost meditative, quality of designing and crafting each piece and takes pride in the quality of her work. She has personally honed each stage of the process, from crafting to refining to quality reviewing. Her jewelry-making process is more time intensive than average, as she uses a special polishing method that gives the silver a bright luster which takes the piece from "homemade" to "high end."

"I use high-grade metal and a refined polishing procedure to ensure



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One of the designs from Hip Mom Jewelry, by Lawrence resident Ann Andersson. See more at HipMomJewelry.com, including pieces for which 30 percent of proceeds are given to families trying to pay for adoption.

that each piece is one that the wearer can feel good about.” Andersson says. “I want my jewelry to look handmade, but high quality, a piece that will last.”

This ethic has paid off for Hip Mom Jewelry, with a steady increase in business and now three part-time employees. She has also started another business line, Sporty Girl Jewelry, making themed pieces for women athletes. Most of her customers come by word of mouth and referrals, although she does have a few wholesalers among her clientele.

Gratified by the appreciation for her jewelry and the success of the business, Andersson has recently started a venue for giving back.

“I have always had a heart for adoptive families, especially those that adopt from overseas” Andersson says. “I wanted to find means of partnering with them to help raise money toward their adoption fees.”

Last year, Andersson began a program to feature several families a month as Hip Mom Jewelry adoptive families. She donates 30 percent of sales from a specific “adoption” product page toward the families’ fundraising goals. To coincide, she began a line of jewelry that is specifically geared toward parents who have adopted or are in the process of adopting a child from overseas. This line includes thematic jewelry pieces for adoptive parents of children from China, Africa and Haiti, as well as several nonspecific pieces.

Andersson says, “I’m so inspired by our feature families. One of our first families to feature was adopting a special-needs child from China. They were doing anything they could to raise money toward their adoption fees — giving up eating out and recreation, taking on extra jobs... I was so happy to be a part of their journey in bringing their child home to her forever family.”

Andersson’s affinity toward adoptive families has come from knowing several families who have adopted from overseas. In particular, she says she has always been particularly drawn to Africa and African children. Her desire to converge Hip Mom Jewelry with her heart for this country came together in another way just last month, as Andersson made her first trip to Africa.

As a part of a group of eight women from Lawrence, Andersson went on a two-week trip to Ethiopia to teach jewelry making to nine African women. The group’s goal was to teach the women a viable trade and give them a means of generating their own income. She came back from that trip, in her own words, “different,” and more committed than ever to having her business be a means for helping others.

“Working with those African women, all of whom were single mothers, and half of whom were HIV positive — it gave me a perspective that was invaluable,” she says. “I was humbled to be a part of their lives.”

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