

For immediate release

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Roane State Cumberland Business Incubator provided huge help for new clinic



The Cumberland Business Incubator operated by Roane State Community College played a huge role in moving her business to the next level, says Board Certified Behavior Analyst Allison Crawford.

She's certified in Applied Behavior Analysis – a research-based therapy to change behavior which has gained popularity through its tremendous success in helping people affected by autism and other related conditions. The intensive therapy seeks to increase verbal and social skills, enable independent living and decrease problematic behaviors.

At first, Crawford worked as an independent contractor to offer home care but soon found there was a large unmet need for those services in the Upper Cumberland area.

"I discovered there were a lot more families needing help," Crawford said. She also said having her own clinic would enable her to offer more services, but she worried about startup costs.

Crawford learned about the Cumberland Business Incubator (CBI) after her husband, Dr. RJ Crawford – owner of a chiropractic clinic and a Crossville City Council member – encountered CBI director Holly Hanson at a meeting for local businesspeople.

"It was always my goal to have a clinic-based setting," Allison Crawford said, "but it's a big investment and some risk."

Crawford took a CBI course in starting a business, and her company, Momentum Behavior Analysis, then located in an office in the CBI in February 2016.

At the CBI, she said she was able to rent one room while the CBI staff assumed responsibility for cleaning, maintenance and providing a receptionist.

"It was an opportunity in a low-risk setting to focus on what was most important to the business," Crawford said.

As a new tenant, she met regularly with Hanson to discuss her business plan and determine what steps should be taken next as her business grew.

Crawford said the CBI has a network of volunteers willing to offer their business expertise, and Hanson connected her with a person versed in human relations in the behavioral health field who helped her write a policy and procedures manual.

Another advantage: Crawford said she could discuss business topics with other tenants in the CBI, located next-door to Roane State's Cumberland County campus off Cook Road in Crossville.

The CBI's goal is to help launch a business and then enable that business to move out on its own. That's what happened with Momentum Behavior Analysis.

Today, Crawford's company has a growing list of clients and 14 employees in two clinics, one on Daniel Drive in Crossville and the other on West Jackson Street in Cookeville.

"The CBI was very supportive and a great place for us to start our business," Crawford said. "It helped us take gradual steps toward our ultimate goal of having a full-time clinic setting and expanding."

To learn more about services offered by the Cumberland Business Incubator, visit roanestate.edu/CBI or cumberlandincubator.com.

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Roane State is a two-year college providing transfer programs, career-preparation programs and continuing education. Founded in 1971, the college has locations in Roane, Campbell, Cumberland, Fentress, Knox, Loudon, Morgan, and Scott counties as well as a branch campus in Oak Ridge. For more information, visit roanestate.edu or call (865) 882-4554. Remember, eligible adults can now attend Roane State tuition-free with the new Reconnect grant. Learn more at roanestate.edu/reconnect.