

# 2020 SUCCESS STORY

GRAND FORKS



NORTH DAKOTA  
SMALL BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Your Ideas - Our Expertise - Your Success

## JULSON LAWN MOWING & ALL SEASONS CAR WASH

**WAHPETON, ND** -- Have you ever had one simple idea that quickly spiraled into several more ideas? Jay Julson, owner of All Seasons Car Wash and Julson Lawn Mowing in Wahpeton, ND, has found himself in this exact spot more than once over the years.

In the spring of 1997, Julson Lawn Mowing started as a way for Jay to get his kids out of the house and make some money. It was an easy way to keep the kids busy on a part-time schedule. For over seventeen years it was just Jay and his two sons mowing lawns for the people in the Wahpeton community. In August of 2014, Jay's youngest son asked him to look into buying the All Seasons Car Wash so they could convert the already existing car wash building into a shop for their lawn mowing business. With business growing,

Jay knew he was going to need a shop at some point, so he started to explore this option. This was the most viable option for Jay as he realized that he would never be

able to build a shop of the same size for the asking price of the car wash.

In the fall of 2014, Jay reached out to the ND SBDC to get help with the purchase of All Seasons Car Wash and better understand all of his funding options. The ND SBDC was able to help Jay with his business plan for both businesses in addition to their financial projections. Because of this, Jay was able to successfully get financing for the purchase of the car wash through Bell Bank, North Dakota Flex Pace Program

through Bank of North Dakota for interest rate buy-down and Lake Agassiz Rural Development for down payment. With an accepted negotiated price in hand,

the transition of ownership soon began. During this time, Jay came up with the idea that he would keep two out of the five car-wash bays open as a way to pay for the newly acquired business while still converting the other three bays into a shop for his lawn mowing business.

In December of 2014, the purchase of All Seasons Car Wash was complete, and Jay once again had an idea. Rather than converting any part of the building into a shop, he decided he was going to improve the car wash in addition to expanding his lawn mowing business. During this time we continued to use his lot on 8th Ave S that had a 28 foot enclosed trailer for his tools and used the car wash at night to store the snow removal equipment and did some equipment maintenance until the car wash became too busy to use for this. December of 2017 he rented a building across the street from his lot for a shop which he continues to use

today. Julson's Lawn Mowing converted to a full-time business by adding nearly ten employees to their staff during the mowing season. They have gradually added services year after year, and as of today they offer services from fertilizer and aerating to hydro-seeding and seasonal cleanups. They even added a snow removal service to keep the team busy year-round.





All Seasons Car Wash has majorly changed over the years as well. Most recently, the car wash expanded by adding a soft touch car wash feature thanks to the help of Nicole Evans, the Grand Forks ND SBDC center director. Jay worked with Nicole to prepare for the expansion. The work they did together resulted in Jay obtaining financing through some of the same organizations as when he first bought the car wash – a traditional lender combined with the Flex Pace Program. Additionally, the City of Wahpeton helped by approving the property for the Renaissance Program, allowing them to receive a five year real estate tax abatement.

With financing secured, Jay was able to turn the five-bay self-service wash into a four-bay self-service wash with the fifth bay being an automatic wash. There is also a pet wash station in one of the self-service bays.

“I have recommended the ND SBDC to others as they have the knowledge and resources of what is needed for their project, can help with the business plans, and can help obtain financing,” Jay explained when asked if he would recommend the ND SBDC to others. Since they began, All Seasons Car Wash’s income has increased year over year by 20%. This year alone they are up over 188%, and over 50% of this increase is attributed to the expansion of the car wash. Jay offers his thanks to Nicole Evans at the ND SBDC for her assistance with that project. Jay also

contributes his success to doing a good job, word of mouth advertising, and most importantly to the continued community support within Wahpeton.

Throughout the years Jay Julson has come up with pretty creative ideas that have paid off in the long run. Julson Lawn Mowing went from being a hobby he did with his sons on the side to a full-time business that employs over ten people. All Seasons Car Wash started somewhat by accident and continues to grow.

Julson leaves other aspiring entrepreneurs with this piece of advice, “Don’t be afraid to take a risk. Don’t be afraid to fail. Keep trying if you want it bad enough. Do your research and if you’re persistent, you will succeed.”

