Growing up in Harrisburg, Jada Wasson knew there was a need for a place where teenagers could meet and hang out. That need is even more prevalent today. She had an idea of a coffee shop for people of all ages and that idea has become a reality with the help of the Workforce & Illinois Small Business Development Center at Southeastern Illinois College. She along with her daughter, Brett Adams, own Steam Café. Don’t let the name of the shop fool you! Steam Café has more than the specialty grade, locally roasted, organic coffee. Hot chocolate, ice cream from another small business in St. Louis that makes their own ice cream, tea, and a host of other non-alcoholic drinks are available. They have also branched out into baked goods, doing the baking themselves. As the present time, they offer muffins, cookies, bagels, biscotti and several options for breakfast including breakfast wraps and bowls. Steam Café also plans to expand within the next 3-4 months and offer additional baked goods such as breads, cakes and more. The convenient drive-thru window accounts for approximately 70 percent of Steam Café’s business, according to Jada. Most weekday mornings the cars are lined up to get their favorite coffee and some sort of baked goods.

Additionally, there is live music from local musicians on Friday nights and in the past they have also hosted a comedy night, which was a huge success, as was the poetry night featuring some of the youth in our area. Jada and Brett believe in spotlighting local talent, whether it is music, comedy, or the artwork of local artists that surrounds you in the café.

Jada met with a counselor at the Workforce & Illinois Small Business Development Center (WISBDC) at Southeastern Illinois College in February of 2013. Jada told the counselor that she wanted a place where people of all ages could come and be in a safe environment. The counselor there helped Jada and her daughter research information on special city ordinances that may have been needed, and with figuring cash projections. Additionally, the counselor helped the clients find a location that would best suit their café. Jada said that when she would call the office, the counselor would always be willing to speak with her and would search and find out answers to her questions.

When asked how the WISBDC was helpful to her when planning her business, she stated, “I can’t imagine someone not going to the WISBDC for counseling. There is a lot of information out there and the counselor at the office helped in sorting out exactly what we needed to proceed with our plan. It is a great resource and it is all free!”
Steam Café is located at 10 Cherry Street, Suite 3, in Harrisburg, Illinois. Contact them by phone at 618-926-5477 or check out their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SteamCoffeeHouse for upcoming events.

The Workforce & Illinois Small Business Development Center is designed to assist owners and managers of small businesses or anyone wanting to start a business. Many of the services of the Center are available at no charge. Call (618) 252-5001 to learn about upcoming events and training opportunities.