

GHS student's Bank Row jewelry venture shines

By DIANE BRONCACCIO
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GREENFIELD — Many people dream of owning their own shop, but for 18-year-old Greenfield High School student Anna Sullivan, already a jewelry designer, it's become a reality.

With help from her family, Sullivan has cleaned a donated, empty storefront on Bank Row and filled used display cases with her freshwater pearl jewelry.

The store is called "Sweet Bananaberry," and it will be open just through the holiday season. Along with Sullivan's jewelry, the shop also contains jewelry made by her mother, Darcy Rosner, as well as jewelry made by other Greenfield High School students who took beading classes from Sullivan and Rosner at the high school last year.

Beyond jewelry, the shop has a line of handmade caramels, pottery, hand-dyed silk scarves, handmade soaps and other goods made by crafts people who are family friends.

to-Work Program, she asked to take the program to help her start her own business.

Greenfield High School has between 40 to 50 students in the School-to-Work

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Sullivan will have a lot to keep track of. But, along with a profitable bottom line, the School-to-Work student might also hope to get an A for effort.

A year ago, Sullivan was an 11th-grader who was expecting a child and wondering what she might do to earn a living that would be flexible enough to give her time to take care of her baby.

When she learned about the School-

program, with most working at least 10 hours a week in local stores, restaurants, schools and businesses, according to

school Principal Nancy Athas.

Students enrolled in the program are excused an hour early from school, and school officials periodically check with students' employers, to see how things are going.

Athas said the program generally gives students a chance to gain experience in the workplace while earning money.

"In my case, instead of going to work, I got permission to go out and make jewelry," said Sullivan. "We've been to a few (Old Deerfield) craft shows and the Ashfield Fall Festival," Sullivan said, referring to herself and to her mother.

"And we have the shop for the holiday season."

Sullivan and Rosner will be staffing the store Thursdays from noon to 8 p.m., and Fridays through Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. And with them some-

times will be Sullivan's 1-month-old daughter, Sydney.

After Sullivan and her mother taught beading classes at the school, Sullivan was enrolled in the School-to-Work program as an independent study project.

"She's incredibly talented — not only with her jewelry but with her art," said Athas, who is not only Sullivan's principal, but a customer.

Last year around the holidays, Sullivan sold her jewelry in the school lobby.

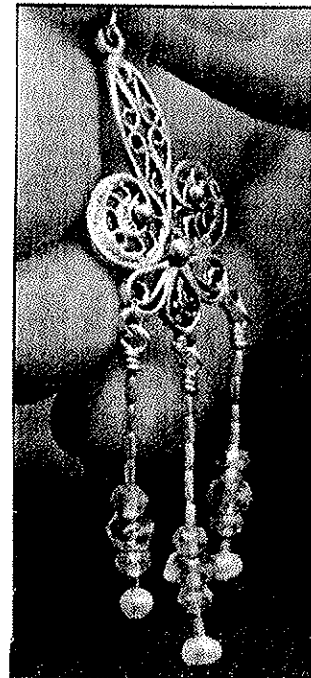
Sullivan said she used her extra hour away from school to make jewelry and to take on online business courses that was offered through YES Inc. (the Young Entrepreneurs Society) in Orange. Sullivan said the course helped her learn how to write a business plan.

"She's certainly been persistent," Tim Cohen-Mitchell, executive director of YES, says of Sullivan. "That's a tough thing for kids, which change direction in the



Anna Sullivan in her shop, Sweet Bananaberry, which is a School-to-Work project that features her jewelry on Bank Row in Greenfield. The store is open for the holiday shopping season.

Recorder/Peter MacDonald



Recorder/Peter MacDonald
A piece of jewelry created by Anna Sullivan of Greenfield.

searching time of life. Sometimes it's unusual to see someone who sticks with it."

Cohen-Mitchell said the experience of running a shop is going to help Sullivan the rest of her life, either as an employer or an employee.

Besides learning business skills, Sullivan said her jewelry-making skills have gotten better over the year.

"Nancy Athas and the entire Greenfield High School has been incredibly supportive," said Sullivan.

Besides earning money, Sullivan said she hopes the holiday shop "will get our name out there." She also hopes to get some ideas on what people like — or don't like. "If you can figure out what people want, or don't want, you're golden," she said.

Sullivan said the next step will be to set up a Web site. She said she and her mother also do custom work.

The shop is located at 25-27 Bank Row.