



Hillsborough Economic and Business Development Commission (EBDC) Recognizes National Women's Small Business Month - Spotlight on Marisa Narula of Code Ninjas



October is "**National Women's Small Business Month**" and was created to celebrate the growth and accomplishments of female entrepreneurs and to recognize the vital role they play in our economy. The Economic & Business Development Commission (EBDC) is taking the opportunity to recognize women business owners in Hillsborough. The EBDC has invited all Hillsborough women business owners in the Hillsborough Business Association (HBA) to share a few details of their business by completing a questionnaire. These business owners' responses will be released on the [Hillsborough Business Association Facebook page](#), the Township's website and in the Mayor's e-newsletter. Additionally, October features "Q&A Profiles" of successful female business owners in Hillsborough. Get to know Marisa Narula of Code Ninjas to learn about her journey as an entrepreneur!

Q: Tell us a little about your business model/service and your target client.

A: I am a multi-unit franchise owner of Code Ninjas, the world's largest and fastest growing kids coding education franchise. We teach kids ages 5+ how to code, robotics, and other STEM-related topics.

Q: What is your business background prior to owning this business?

A: Prior to owning Code Ninjas, I was an IT Staffing and Recruiting professional as well as Social Media Manager. With over a decade of volunteer work including scouts, PTA/PTO, and other local organizations, I knew that I wanted to work with children and help them pursue STEM opportunities. With Code Ninjas, I get to combine both.

Q: When did your current business open, what led you to open this particular business, and why did you choose Hillsborough?

A: We opened our Hillsborough center in June 2019 and have been running successfully since then and been awarded 'Best Summer Camp in Central Jersey' for 2020 and nominated as a finalist for 'Best Summer Camp' and 'Best Children's Education Center' in Central Jersey this year again. We've had hundreds of students and been able to support the community in many ways. As I mentioned earlier, my former career and volunteer work led me to opening Code Ninjas. I knew I wanted to have my own business and combine my passions, and this allowed me to do both. As a working mother and businesswoman, I wanted our business to be close to home, so I could be there for my sons' events. Having a business in Hillsborough is very convenient to all major roads, the Township is extremely supportive, and we were always made to feel like family here.

Q: What do you find to be the most challenging aspect of owning your business?

A: The most challenging aspect of owning my business was navigating the Covid-19 pandemic and pivoting during the 5-month quarantine. At that point I was only open for 9 months. Any business struggles during the 1st year. For us, it was a tremendous hurdle. With hard work, diligence, and support, we were able to survive when many businesses were

shuttering their doors. Since then, we have maintained our vigilance and kept a safe, fun, and welcoming learning environment for the children of the community. I'm very proud of that.

Q: Given the challenges of owning a small business, and the hard work involved, what motivates you every day?

A: What motivates me every day are my sons Jai and Joshua. I work hard to show them that you can be successful in your life in a variety of ways- being a good businessperson, being a good community member, and being a good family member. As a family, giving back is very important to us, and having a business gave us another platform to do that. We're grateful every day for having these opportunities and being able to make a difference.

Q: As a woman business owner, what are you most proud of?

A: What motivates me every day are my sons Jai and Joshua. I work hard to show them that you can be successful in your life in a variety of ways- being a good businessperson, being a good community member, and being a good family member. As a family, giving back is very important to us, and having a business gave us another platform to do that. We're grateful every day for having these opportunities and being able to make a difference.

Q: What is the best advice you have been given? What advice would you give to a woman looking to start her own business?

A: The best advice I have ever been given still holds true to what I learned as a Cub Scout Leader for over a decade, three little words: "Do Your Best". In anything in life, be it personal or work related, always do your best. At the end, when you look back, you'll be satisfied knowing you put in the effort and have no regrets that you could/would/should have done more. This is the advice I would give any woman (or man) looking to start a business.

Q: Any final comments or thoughts you would like to share?

A: I would like to thank the community for being so supportive of all the local small businesses, including mine. During the pandemic and Ida many of us struggled and were able to make it through because of our wonderful customers. The saying is absolutely true that 'every time you support a small business, you are supporting a family'.

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