

Teen's bracelet business potentially a life-saver

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Grayson Davey works on making one of his Alaska Survival Bracelets on a desk at his home in Anchorage, Alaska. The bracelet is made from about 17 feet of parachute cord and includes a scraper and fibers for starting a fire. Photo: Marc Lester/Alaska Dispatch News/TNS

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — It is spring break for middle school students in south-central Alaska. Many spent it playing video games, skiing or just enjoying a lazy week away from school. Grayson Davey is an eighth-grader. He spent most of his week off looking for people to work for his company.

Grayson is just 13 years old, but he already owns a business. It is called Alaska Paracord Designs. He has already sold about \$40,000 worth of products over three years. Now Grayson is looking to hire people to expand his company.

Grayson sells neatly woven bracelets or keychain dangles. The dangles and bracelets are made from paracord. This is tough nylon cord usually used for parachutes. Grayson's bracelets look like others that people can buy on the Internet. However, his products, which he makes himself at his home, include special items that could save lives.

Products Are Also Survival Kits

In an emergency, the bracelet can be taken apart and the parachute cord used in a different ways. It can be used to create a shelter, or to make a tight bandage to stop bleeding. But Grayson's bracelet is more than a bundle of cord. Its clasp, or fastener, is also a whistle that can be blown to call for help. The fire-starter bracelet can be untied to get 17 feet of paracord. Inside there are some small materials that can be used to help start a fire.

Now if something goes wrong, you have a survival kit, he said.

Grayson began making his products in 2013 when he was 11 years old. So far he has sold more than 1,000 of his fire-starter bracelets and fire bugs. The fire bugs attach to a keychain and contain a mylar signal mirror and exacto knife. The fire-starter bracelet sells for \$35, the fire bug for \$25.

Teen Wants His Company To Grow

Over spring break, Grayson picked out two possible employees. He is looking for at least three more. Even though he is not in high school yet, Grayson has put \$10,000 in profits into the stock market. He put the rest of the profits back into his growing company.

"I want to grow the company as big as I can and at least get enough money for college," he said. "And it could end up being my career."

Grayson said he got his big idea after a family friend almost died while boating. The boat tipped over and the man and his young daughter fell into the water. The pair swam to an island near them. All their gear was lost, so they could not build a fire or a shelter. They were saved only after three days. That's when Grayson thought that a woven paracord bracelet with small, useful tools inside would make a difference.

Three years later, Grayson owns his own company. He sells his bracelets on the Web and in several local stores.

More People Should Follow Their Dreams

Grayson wants his business to grow and handle bigger orders. First, he needs to have more people working for him. He wants to hire people to make his bracelets from their own homes. He thinks his new workers could make \$15 to \$20 per hour, working a few hours a week.

For Grayson, starting a company, has been about much more than making money. It has been a life lesson.

Grayson said he does not think enough people follow their dreams.

“If you have an idea that can be a business, just see the different ways you can start it up, and see how you can grow it from there,” he said. “But it might not be easy. You have to work hard too.”

Quiz

1 Select the paragraph from the section "Teen Wants His Company To Grow" that explains why Grayson started his company in the first place.

2 Which sentence explains a unique aspect of Grayson's product?

- (A) He has already sold about \$40,000 worth of products over three years.
- (B) It can be used to create a shelter, or to make a tight bandage to stop bleeding.
- (C) So far he has sold more than 1,000 of his fire-starter bracelets and fire bugs.
- (D) He wants to hire people to make his bracelets from their own homes.

3 Read the sentence from the article.

Now Grayson is looking to hire people to expand his company.

Which sentence helps explain the meaning of "expand"?

- (A) Grayson said he doesn't think enough people follow their dreams.
- (B) For Grayson, starting a company, has been about much more than making money.
- (C) Grayson wants his business to grow and handle bigger orders.
- (D) He thinks his new workers could make \$15 to \$20 per hour, working a few hours a week.

4 Read the sentence from the article.

All their gear was lost, so they couldn't build a fire or a shelter.

Which synonym of "gear" could replace it in the sentence above?

- (A) belongings
- (B) organizing
- (C) clothing
- (D) equipment