

## 2 Albion elementary teachers have businesses at Arnold Gregory

By Tom Rivers, Editor Posted 25 July 2023 at 1:02 pm

### Melissa Prince takes over Brushstrokes and Amanda Flagler opens 'Learning Lab Tutoring Center'



Photos by Tom Rivers: Melissa Prince, new owner of Brushstrokes Studios, is shown with some of the bisques to be painted and then glazed. Brushstrokes is located on the second floor of the Arnold Gregory Office Complex at 243 South Main St. Prince is also an elementary art teacher at Albion.

**ALBION** – Two elementary teachers at Albion are both running businesses at the **Arnold Gregory Office Complex**. They didn't plan to have the businesses next to each other on the second floor, but Melissa Prince and Amanda Flagler see opportunities to promote each other's business and work together.

Prince is the new owner of Brushstrokes Studio. She bought the business from Dee and Al Hansel. Prince, an elementary art teacher for 23 years, praised the Hansels' for building up Brushstrokes and making a comfortable space for artists to create at Arnold Gregory. Brushstrokes has a painting room, display room, inventory room, space for a kiln, and a birthday party room.

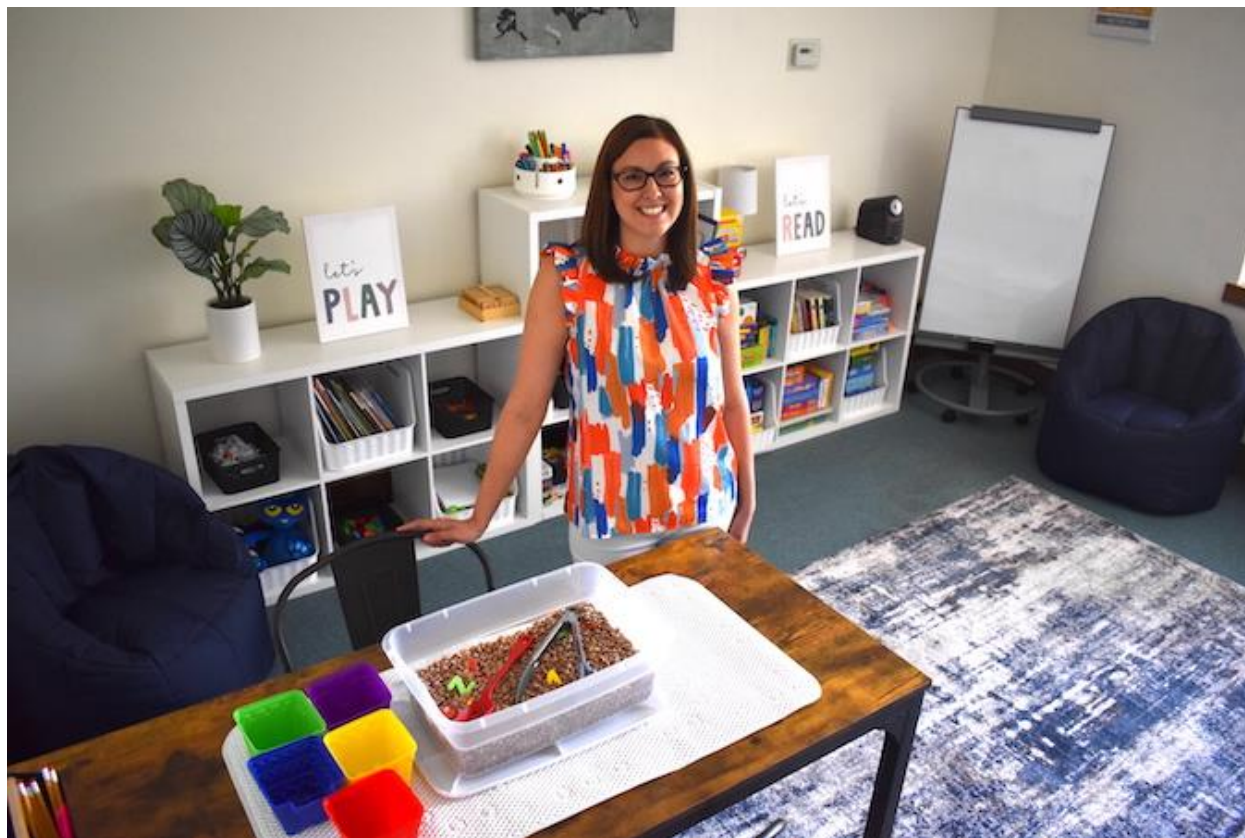
*"I feel like it's an extension of what I'm doing and it's my passion,"* Prince said about the business offering art to the community.

Brushstrokes has several hundred different bisques – plates, cups, platters, seasonal and holiday items, many woodland creatures, animals, and characters from video games. Prince said Brushstrokes has been popular with many beginning artists and those farther along with their skills.

The prices range from \$10 for smaller bisques up to \$45 for the larger pieces. That includes the bisque, paint, supplies, studio time and to be dipped in glaze and fired in the kiln. *"It's about disconnecting from electronics and exploring your own creativity,"* Prince said.

The remainder of the summer Brushstrokes will have studio hour Tuesday through Friday and from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Prince will also have pop-up events in the community on Mondays. (She will be at the Rock the Park music festival at Bullard Park on Aug. 5.)

Once the school year starts, Brushstrokes will be open for appointments Monday through Friday, with studio hours on the weekends. Prince said she is planning to offer art classes at Brushstrokes in the future. [Click here](#) for more information.



Amanda Flagler has opened The Learning Lab Tutoring Center on the second floor at Arnold Gregory. She is standing in front of a sensory bin on the table where kids find letters, sorting through beans. She has activities, puzzles, and games to help students with phonics, math and reading skills.

Flagler opened The Learning Lab Tutoring Center on July 3. She has been an elementary teacher for 10 years and is moving from fourth to fifth grade this school year at Albion. She will have the Learning Lab open after school from 4:30 to 7 p.m. from Tuesday to Thursday.

She will be working with students from pre-K to grade 8 and has students this summer to help prevent the *"summer slide"* where students often have learning loss in math and English. She also is helping some younger students with kindergarten readiness.

Flagler has worked as a private tutor. She said many students have gaps due to the Covid pandemic with students out of in-person classes for several months, and then on a hybrid schedule for much of the 2020-21 school year. She works with students one-on-one to fill those gaps.

The Learning Lab has bean bag chairs, tables, and a comfortable rug for students to work on their skills with reading, math, and phonics. *"This is a separate space outside their home that is safe and quiet,"* Flagler said. Flagler said she expects most of the Learning Lab students will be from Orleans County.

**She picked the Arnold Gregory site because it is close to the Albion schools and the former hospital is well known in the community. She also likes the connections in the building, including The Tree House, an early childhood enrichment program on the second floor of Arnold Gregory.**

For more information, about The Learning Lab contact Flagler at (716) 525-3976 or check The Learning Lab [Facebook page](#).