

BIT + GRAIN

*North Carolina stories from mountain to sea.
Every story, every bit and grain, counts.*



JORDAN BOINEST: NEWGRASS BREWING COMPANY

As the textile industry left North Carolina, towns like Shelby were hard-hit. But a new wave of entrepreneurs, including Jordan Boimest, are on a mission to breathe new life into downtown Shelby. Jordan is the co-owner of a craft brewery, Newgrass Brewing Company, set to open this month. Newgrass is part of a major initiative to revitalize Shelby, and is closely tied to the community's history and current residents.

From just a few conversations, it's clear that Jordan is a giver. She loves making people happy, and the brewery is one way to do that. Moreover, she is passionate about investing in her community. In a world that can seem to disregard the importance of real, physical connections to places and their people, Jordan's approach is not only refreshing but deeply moving

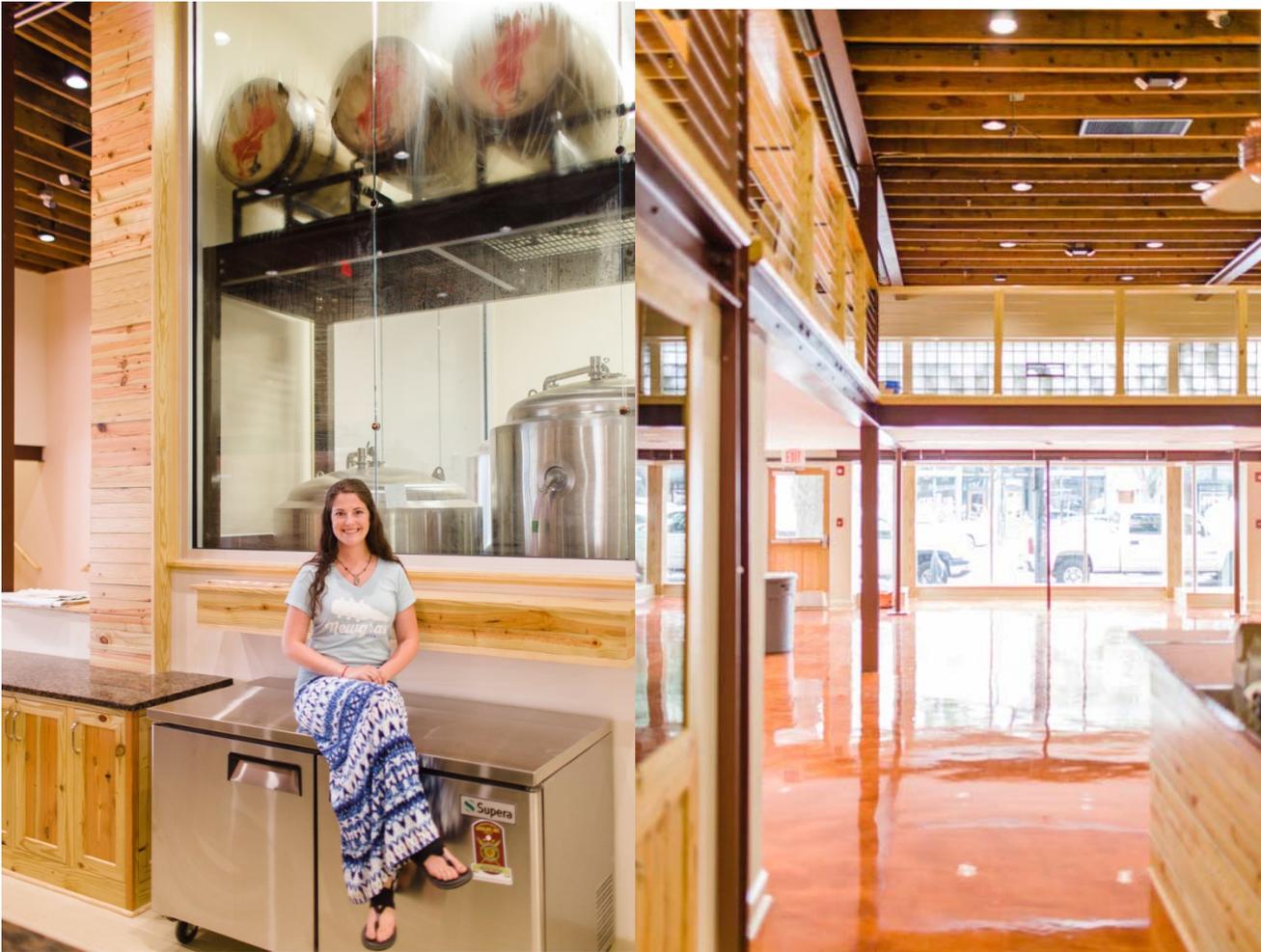


You're one of, if not the the youngest female brewery owner in the US - an incredible achievement that requires a lot of drive, passion, and commitment. What inspired you to take the leap and start your own brewery, and what keeps you motivated?

I have always been a bit of a talker and love meeting new people. I previously lived in Wilmington and Boone. Both towns are huge tourist destinations, so tourism became part of my everyday life that I enjoyed.

When I started my first craft beer job, I saw beer and tourism go hand in hand and knew I had found my career. While living in the mountains, Lewis McCallister (Brewmaster), and I would come to Shelby to visit family and saw a need for a brewery.

It soon became a dream of ours to eventually be part of one in the area. Lucky for us, investors interested in the same dream found Lewis and me and the project to open Newgrass Brewing Company began.



I STAY MOTIVATED EACH DAY BECAUSE OF OUR TEAM AND THE CONSTANT SUPPORT FROM OUR COMMUNITY. I CANNOT IMAGINE STARTING A BREWERY IN ANY OTHER TOWN OR WITH ANY OTHER GROUP OF PEOPLE. HAVING A SOLID COMMUNITY IS SO IMPORTANT TO OUR BUSINESS. WE ARE FINDING SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK WITH OTHER LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS AS WELL. WITH OUR COMMUNITY STRENGTH, I EXPECT THE TOWN TO GROW IMMENSELY OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS.

This industry in general motivates me on a daily basis. Anytime I have a question, I know I can call a friend in the industry and just ask for help... I know I am young and have a lot of questions, but there are people much more experienced out there that have given me so much advice and I couldn't be more grateful. People in craft beer want to see the craft beer industry grow. By helping each other succeed we are doing that.

Are there advantages to being a female in a male-dominated industry, and if so, what are they?

I wouldn't say there are any advantages for women in this industry. "Making it" is all about doing your job well and efficiently.

In the beginning, I started to research women in the beer industry and came across The Pink Boots Society, created to empower women in craft beer through education. I immediately joined and was blown away by the inspiration these women gave me each day. Even without meeting any of the women, I was able to find encouragement, strength and empowerment as a female working with all men.

I applied for a scholarship through The Pink Boots Society after finding out I would be part of Newgrass Brewing Company. To my surprise, I was selected to fly out to San Diego, CA, and partake in a class about the Business of Distribution. I can already tell you that what I learned will help our business a great deal as distribution is arguably one of the most important parts of running a brewery. I look forward to working more with The Pink Boots Society in the future. Women are a huge part of this industry!

Launching a new project, initiative, or business is an exciting time, but full of learning experiences. What contributes most to your success?

I love to interact with people especially when it comes to talking about beer! I have always been interested in meeting new people. Working in a brewery, I am able to do that everyday. Most people who walk into breweries are relaxed and ready for a good time with friends or family around a great pint of beer. Nothing makes me happier than being able to provide that for them.

Starting your own company is hard work - it's not for the faint of heart. How do you face and tackle challenges? Where do you find strength?

In 2005, my mother passed away from cancer. Over the past ten years, I have had my fair share of struggles. I face and tackle challenges by remembering that I am lucky to be alive and have the opportunity to live my dreams each day. Some days may seem harder than others, but if you let those days bring you down you are doing yourself an injustice!

I find strength in knowing that we are all here to love each other and make this world a better place together. I hope more than anything to let this show at Newgrass Brewing Company.

It's clear that your North Carolina roots are hugely influential in the founding, construction and vision of Newgrass. Could you speak a little to that vision and mission? Do your brews in any way represent or reflect your North Carolina experience?

We have always had the mission to help preserve and recreate history in Shelby. The building that has been renovated for the brewery was originally built in 1909. On the front of the building several features have been preserved to help keep the same look as before. Inside of the facility you will find wood throughout that is over 100 years old. It is all heart pine from the old Dover Mill here in Shelby. The reclaimed wood was flooring in the mill, [and] many locals had relatives that worked and walked on this wood.

Many of our beer names are tied to our area as well and have great stories behind them.

North Carolina is an American beer capital. Is it intimidating to launch a new brewery in that industry?

It has never felt intimidating because we know we make great beer and are very passionate about quality in the craft beer industry here in North Carolina.

Our facility is located between two major bluegrass destinations, The Earl Scruggs Center and The Don Gibson Theatre. We have included a stage for live music in our facility to help expand and support the music scene in Shelby.

Do you have any advice for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

Read as much as you can. I try to read other publications that are not about beer as well to stay current and learn new ideas that I can apply to Newgrass one day. Be confident and get to know your community. Getting to know people and building relationships with them will help any business. Get out there and represent!

Newgrass Brewing Company is slated to open in downtown Shelby, NC in August 2015. Follow their [website](#) for updates.