

**Cindy Lithgow** knows that she has stumbled onto something profitable. A few months ago, Lithgow decided to do something she has always wanted to do - interior renovations. "I can do drywall, refinish hardwood and refinishing projects," says Cindy Lithgow, owner of Start to Finish Renovations. "I can do everything from the ground up, no job is too small."

Through the assistance of the SEB program, Lithgow opened her home based business in March. She is self-taught, after years of flipping houses with her former husband who was a construction worker. "I loved doing it, and then I realized that I had some talent, so I started doing a few jobs for friends," says Lithgow. With a few jobs under her belt, Lithgow is trying to shed the stereotype of women in the construction business. "I think women have a lot of design sense when it comes to projects. We spend a lot more time with the details. In the end it pays off," says Lithgow. She is booked right now with projects until the end of the summer.

While Lithgow enjoys her work and the flexibility of setting her own hours, there are a few challenges of running her own business. "The biggest challenge is pricing. I



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underestimated what other people in the business charge. It's more than I ever anticipated. I will have to adjust my prices eventually," says Lithgow. Right now, she wants to continue to get more work and maintain the success she has experienced so far. "I am in control of my own destiny. This is more of a hobby than work. I could never say that about past employment until now."

Needless to say, there are exciting things happening in the business sector with women entrepreneurs. Women are now the dominant force in small business ownership and succeeding in industries that were once taboo. Women are not only starting business, they are staying in business.