



Parkway Printshop Debuts Cool Building (in Every Sense)

By Melissa James, York County Contributor

When Jared Chubb opened his printing business four years ago, he had a great vision. He had excellent employees. He had a rapidly growing customer base. What he didn't have was air conditioning. And that was a problem, because the company's early success meant adding more equipment and workers to their small leased space.

"The screen-printing process generates a lot of heat. Our production staff were in a non-climate-controlled portion of the building (which was the majority of space), and it was a miserable 93 degrees in the peak of summer," Chubb said.

It became so tight that the businesses couldn't add even one more employee or inventory shipment. Chubb decided it was time to leave behind their Lightfoot strip mall space for a new location—and this time, a place they could own and customize. A longtime admirer of old architecture, Chubb fell in love with a rundown, 10,000-square-foot commercial structure that had been sitting empty for a long time. The structure was situated in the up-and-coming "Edge District," where York County borders Williamsburg and James City County.



"When we realized the new space was in York County, I was delighted," he said. "I met [Office of Economic Development Director] Jim Noel in 2019 and worked with him. I loved seeing his excitement about us moving into the Edge District. York County has been a huge supporter of businesses in this side of town."

Chubb approached the County's Economic Development Authority for help turning this public eyesore into a beautiful, functional place of business. He presented his vision for the space and described the role he wanted Parkway Printshop to play both in the community and the Edge District. Chubb was approved for two grants: an EDA incentive for renovating the building, and a Commercial Corridor Property Improvement Grant to revitalize the storefront and landscaping.

"We're highlighting the Edge District throughout the region as a cutting-edge destination for business and entertainment, so improvements to this corridor are a smart investment for the County," said Noel.

They closed on the property in August 2020 and embarked on the long journey of architect consultations and filing permits. In early 2021, construction progress slowed as supply costs shot up and availability plummeted. Undeterred, Chubb and his team saw the project through to completion, opening in July.

What's great about the new digs? First of all, HVAC was designed specifically to battle the heat output from Parkway's equipment, so that even in the summer heat when they arrived, indoor temperatures never exceeded 75 degrees—improving the production staff's morale and physical well-being. For the office staff, Chubb created an open, communal work space ideal for collaboration. There's also an exposed employee kitchen area, with bistro tables and sofas in the works. They even have a dedicated conference room for meetings with clients.



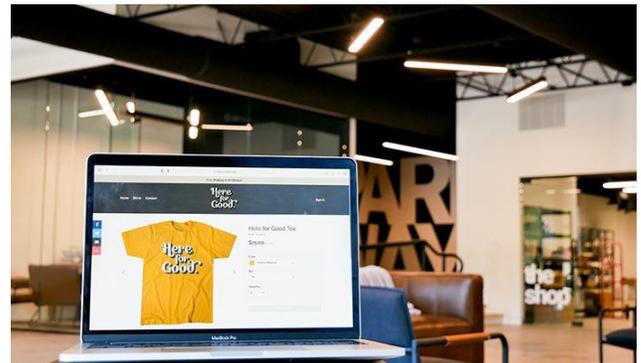
The front area of the building features a retail shop (still being completed), intended to be a place of community and interaction. Best of all, Parkway has been able to increase the quantity and selection of printable merchandise (which means increased business).

“Our focus is on printing retail-quality garments. We print a lot of merchandise that is resold to an end user for breweries, restaurants and other brands, so we take pride in our work. It’s not just slapping ink on a shirt,” said Chubb. “It’s cool to walk into a local restaurant and see shirts that you printed on their merchandise stand. And to see landscapers on the side of the road and know that their shirts came from your shop.”

Parkway Printshop has also created partnerships with schools, community members, and other local businesses, and is dedicated to giving back. For example, in April 2020, Parkway implemented the “Here for Good” campaign to support local business—they sold T-shirts that allowed buyers to pick which business they wanted to support, and then Parkway donated \$10 from each shirt sale to that business. Parkway raised over \$18,000 in two months.

That same spirit of generosity has helped Parkway develop a thriving staff, which has grown from three to seven in the new location. Chubb credits them for the business’s success, especially production manager Allison Collins, who has been with the company since Day 1.

“We aren’t experiencing the same hiring challenges as other businesses because we’ve adapted to the new norm, especially from a pay perspective. Our goal is to ensure that all employees have a livable wage. We’re also just a really cool place to work, which naturally attracts good candidates,” said Chubb. “We hire based on personality to our people culture, not necessarily on experience. Having a team that has your back and is as ‘all in’ as me, the business owner, makes the difference.”



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