

Open for Business > Paragon Pilates & Physical Therapy

Owners: Cari Riis Stemmler and Rhondi Miller

Type of business: A woman-owned hybrid business integrating Pilates, physical therapy and dance medicine

Number of employees: Two

Location: 17001 Cahill Road No. 27, Edina

Contact Information: paragonpilatespt.com; 952-405-9765

Tell us what your business does. Paragon provides physical therapy and Pilates training, separately and in concert, to teach clients how to move better and feel better in their bodies.

Physical therapy combined with Pilates' emphasis on strength and mobility is a powerful pairing, especially for clients who have had limited results with traditional personal training or physical therapy. We address all physical problems but also use a holistic body/mind approach that leads to lasting results.

In addition to being a Pilates Master Teacher, Cari has an extensive background in yoga, was a professional dancer and trained with the



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

ABOVE; Rhondi Miller, left, and Cari Riis Stemmler are owners of a new Edina-based company. **RIGHT:** Cari Riis Stemmler teaches a class on the Pilates wall units.

Harkness Center for Dance in dance medicine. Rhondi has 16 years of experience treating injured athletes and general orthopedic patients, as well as gymnasts and dancers. She is a board-certified Sports Physical Therapist, a certified Pilates instructor and provided physical therapy at the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Where did you get the idea for your business, and why are you launching it now?

Cari recently returned to the Twin Cities from Los Angeles, where she was part of the team that successfully pioneered combining Pilates and physical therapy. When she met Rhondi, she knew she had found the business partner she had been seeking: a highly trained physical therapist who recognized the complete role Pilates could play with physical therapy.

How did you develop your



business plan? The model of the California company and our experience drove the shape of the plan. In addition, we were fortunate to have mentors who very selflessly shared their time and expertise.

How do you see current economic conditions affecting your business? We factored in the struggling economy by deciding not to overreach when we started.

What makes your business

unique? It begins with the integration of these complementary disciplines, Pilates and physical therapy. And our comprehensive experience really stands out.

What was the biggest obstacle you had to overcome? Initially, we envisioned a much larger operation, both in space and staff. When we decided to start smaller and grow organically, everything clicked.

What will tell you the business is successful?

Although we downsized our plans to open more quickly, we still have that larger ideal studio in mind, so Paragon will be particularly successful when we graduate to that next stage. That said, we are beyond thrilled to be in business and living this dream.

Interested in taking part in Open for Business? If your business is less than one year old, e-mail us at businessnews@pioneerpress.com.