

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BuzzBallz creates virtual classroom space for employees' children

Carrollton, TX – Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many North Texas public schools shut down and ended the 2019/2020 school term in virtual classrooms. As the impending school term nears closer and many elementary schools plan to continue virtual learning, this poses an issue for North Texas parents who are unable to work from home.

Carrollton-based BuzzBallz, LLC/Southern Champion is offering a solution to their employees; the company is turning a conference room into The Nest, a virtual learning school of sorts to accommodate the elementary school-aged children of employees. Here, the children will attend their virtual classes with the supervision and aid of a Texas Education Agency-certified teacher, Christine Drumm, and teacher's aide, Sergio Diazdeleon, during the hours of the production team's first shift – 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.

“Many of our employees have dual income households and, during COVID, their children need supervision while the parents go to work,” said Merrilee Kick, founder and CEO. “So, we hired a certified TEA elementary teacher, Christine Drumm, to work in our classroom with them while they do their online learning with their respective schools.”

As of now, there are five students set to begin their online classes in The Nest. One of the students is in first grade; two students are in second grade; one is in third grade and the other is in sixth grade. These students are registered in Dallas ISD, Irving ISD and Arlington ISD.

Though The Nest provides these students with a supervised, safe environment for online learning, the transition away from a regular school day with music classes, P.E. and the like has posed a challenge for Drumm.

“This is the part that may be a little tricky,” Drumm said. “... It’s hard for adults to sit still for hours on end. So, we’re going to do some activities and let them showcase their art. ... Our first project will be to let them decorate an apple.”

Drumm and several BuzzBallz employees have outfitted The Nest with cork boards to showcase the children’s art and images of their favorite things. The tables are lined with large foam puzzles, board games and craft supplies. A keyboard was purchased, as well, to allow the students a musical outlet.

As the children enter the building each morning, their temperatures will be checked.

Throughout the course of the day, The Nest will be sanitized to ensure the students are learning in a safe environment.

The students will receive a free lunch, just as the employees of BuzzBallz, LLC/Southern Champion do, and their medical history will be on file so proper medication administering will occur, if needed.

“We are a family owned business and, as a former teacher, we take education seriously,” Kick said. “Kids shouldn’t be shortchanged on their education during this pandemic.”

Virtual learning in The Nest will begin Aug. 17 with three of the five students.

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About BuzzBallz/Southern Champion, LLC

BuzzBallz/Southern Champion, LLC is a woman-owned and family-operated Texas distillery and winery founded in 2009 as the result of Merrilee Kick’s master’s degree thesis project. In a little over 10 years, BuzzBallz/Southern Champion, LLC has greatly expanded its product base and begun to grow into a worldwide brand. As the only combined distillery and winery in the US that is woman owned, this company has gained significant recognition, boasting distribution in 45 states, several countries abroad and growing. The company maintains a fun brand message as they create high-quality, premixed cocktails, as well as small-batch spirits. Learn more at: <http://www.southern-champion.com/> and www.buzzballz.com.

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