

Michele's Pet Grooming & Boarding
7432 Grindstone Hill Road
Chambersburg, PA 17202
Franklin County
[www.facebook.com/pages/
Micheles-Pet-Grooming-and-
Boarding](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Micheles-Pet-Grooming-and-Boarding)

Industry: Pets

Year founded: 2001

SBDC Assistance: Market
Research, Business Plan,
Financial Planning

"Oh my gosh, she was instrumental! The bank would not work with me without a business plan."
- Michele Gossard



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Michele's Pet Grooming & Boarding: "Home Away from Home"

Daisy, the "greeter," came up to me happily wagging her tail as I approached the recently opened doggie daycare and boarding facility. Upon entering I saw Becky, a groomer, busily painting a Saint Bernard's toenails purple to match her new collar. In the next room a large Rottweiler lounged on the leather couch, half dozing and half watching the large screen TV while a couple of other dogs lazily wandered over to say hi. Such are the dog days of summer (fall, winter and spring) at Michele's Pet Grooming & Boarding in Chambersburg.

Michele Gossard grew up on a farm and always loved caring for animals. She worked at Citibank in Hagerstown, MD for 14 years, until her "job left" in 2001. A single mother, with a young daughter she did not wish to put in daycare, Michele made the decision to become her own boss. Though often quite challenging, Michele today says "it was the best move I ever made."

Utilizing her severance pay from Citibank, Michele went to grooming school in 2001 and began grooming dogs. She gradually expanded her business by boarding some clients' dogs in her home. When small renovations no longer accommodated the demand, Michelle decided to pursue expanding the business with dedicated kennel space and a boarding facility. Michele contacted the SBDC for assistance in developing a business plan to assess the opportunity and secure the necessary financing.

On her rural property today Michele has a beautiful boarding facility where she can keep 10 – 12 dogs at a time. And, they stay in fine style. Dogs are only in kennels to eat and sleep and they have access to go out into a secure yard at all times. Michele has also added another groomer who rents space and works in the facility and she also added a new staff member, who has taken several classes in dog behavior, to supervise the dogs.



When asked about the assistance provided by her SBDC Business Consultant, Cheryl Young, Michele replied, "Oh my gosh, she was instrumental! The bank would not work with me without a business plan. I gave Cheryl my information and she pulled things together, including detailed financial projections." Michele secured the needed \$131K financing. In an email inviting Cheryl to the business open house, Michele stated, "Thanks for all of your help. You are awesome."

Michele believes that if she treats animals good and customers good then her business will develop a positive reputation. This has certainly worked for her! Michele notes that at times she thought maybe she should get a part-time job at Sheetz, but she remained determined and committed to building her business.

Michele shares this thought with other entrepreneurs who are pursuing their passion – "be persistent. Don't give up." "And," she concludes, "don't hesitate to contact the SBDC for the expertise and assistance necessary to build your dream!"