

THE CHRONICLE

• See Opinion page on A4 •

• See Sports on page B1 •

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Little bosses, big business



Photos by Alphonso Abbott Jr.

BRIDGET ELAM
THE CHRONICLE

What are kids doing while out of school this summer? Video games? Endless social media interaction? Maybe for some kids, but there's a group of kids who are busy being

CEOs of their own companies. And they showcased their talents and products on Saturday, Aug. 9, at a youth vendor fair hosted by Pop Events Studio.

Saliah Rice, the owner of Pop Events Studio and Pop Balloons Décor Gallery, hosted the Kiddiepreneur Pop-up Shop event at her studio located in the Marketplace Mall in suite 9B.

"I'm always seeing pop-up shops for adults. I wanted to shine light on some young entrepreneurs. It's amazing what these young people have accomplished and how knowledgeable they are about

their products."

Rice is using the youth pop-up shop as an introduction to the Young Business Entrepreneur Academy, a comprehensive business school for young business owners. The academy will start accepting enrollment applications later this year. She said it would place emphasis on money-saving practices and brand development.

On Saturday, there were 27 youth-led businesses represented. The young entrepreneurs, who ranged from ages three to 16, displayed an array of products from books to lip gloss to clothing lines.

Jamaica Gainey, the 16-year-old author of "You Are What You Think," was the keynote speaker of the event. She launched her book with a book signing during the pop-up shop and reportedly sold out.

Also at the event was Blair Noelle, a 4-year-old author, who presented her book, "A Trip to Blair's Closet." She also owns an online boutique and is currently selling her clothes in a beauty supply store in Greensboro.

Kenyota Crocket, who assisted Rice with the event and whose 7-year-old daughter, Leah Crocket, owns LCLove, a lip

gloss and accessory business, said she saw how proud the vendors were to advertise their items to their consumers.

"It was our main goal to build confidence by giving them the opportunity to lead through their sales," said Kenyota Crocket. "Leiah was able to display her sparkle glitter lip gloss with matching handbags. She also had an opportunity to launch her very own make-up play set at this wonderful event."

Rice plans to have another Kiddiepreneur Pop-Up Shop in November, as well as a vision board party for young entrepre-

neurs.

"The vision board party will help me understand what the kids want to do, to see where their passions lie. From there, I hope to link them to Black business owners who are doing it."

For more information about the Kiddiepreneur Pop Up Shop or the Young Business Entrepreneur Academy, Rice can be reached at 336-893-8707 or 336-497-8943. Also, you may email her at info@popballoondecor.com.

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