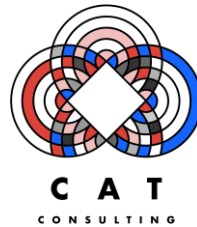


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2024



### **Former St'Artup317 brand plants roots on Mass Ave**

*Local lifestyle brand sees continued success after graduating from City's retail accelerator program*

**INDIANAPOLIS** – Today, the City of Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) congratulates We Don't Run From Adversity (WDRFA) on its new storefront on Massachusetts Avenue. The business, co-owned by Mike Gillis and Gary Patterson, recently graduated from [St'Artup 317](#), the City's retail accelerator program which matches Indianapolis-based entrepreneurs with prime real estate opportunities. Shoppers can visit WDRFA at its newest store at 871 Massachusetts Ave. on Saturday, December 14 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. There will be refreshments, special product drops, and giveaways to celebrate WDRFA's grand re-opening.

"We consider ourselves a lifestyle brand that focuses on clothes," said Mike Gillis, WDRFA co-owner. "Since our participation in St'Artup317, we have learned a lot about our business and customer base, been able to increase our product offerings, and seen upwards of 30 percent increase in sales. We are excited to show people our largest offering yet and to be here, sell our goods, and connect with the community."

WDRFA's expansive catalogue features apparel, headwear, accessories, commissary, and drinkware. Since its start as an online/pop-up shop in 2016, WDRFA has collaborated on several local collections, including partnerships with [People For Urban Progress](#), [James Dant](#), and [Tinker Coffee Co.](#) Mayor Joe Hogsett, DMD, and Cat Consulting, the City's St'Artup317 consultant, welcomed WDRFA to the [historic Stutz building](#) through St'Artup317 in August 2023. Opening weekend was met with overwhelming success with more than 1,000 visitors in attendance.

"St'Artup317 exists to build our bench of retail brands and creative economy here in Indianapolis," said Catherine Esselman, Cat Consulting founder. "The unique program offers a unique opportunity to amplify young entrepreneurs, scaling brands and members of our creative local economy."

WDRFA's new 1,000-square-foot space was secured in September thanks to a partnership with Cat Consulting and [RDOOR Housing Corporation](#). In addition to retail, the space features several art components illustrating the WDRFA's ties to the local community.

"St'Artup317 was the catapult for us to have a long-term store," said Gary Patterson, WDRFA co-owner. Online retail is huge, and our original intent was never to keep a store. However, due to our early success, we began thinking about a physical storefront. Mass Ave has always been a destination in Indianapolis and something we have had always something we had in the back of our minds. As a creative and unique space for local businesses, it perfectly matches WDRFA's brand."

Holiday shoppers can visit the store and pick up unique local gifts for loved ones anytime from December 15 to December 24 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. To learn more about post-holiday hours and special drops, follow WDRFA on Instagram at [@wedntrun](#).

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**ABOUT ST'ARTUP317 x STUTZ ACCELERATOR PROGRAM:**

*Launched in 2018, [St'Artup317](#) originated as an innovative tool supporting Mayor Hogsett's [Downtown Resiliency Strategy](#). By aligning brands, established businesses, startups, and artists with prime vacant and underutilized properties, St'Artup317 demystifies the commercial leasing process and creatively address the needs of landlords and small businesses alike in a way that contributes to the success of our downtown. This innovative program secured private commercial real estate for short-term, pop-up retail ventures in key commercial corridors. It also supported iconic pop-up stores, art installations, and event activations during major events such as the 2024 NBA All-Star Weekend and 2021 March Madness Tournament.*

*In 2022, the Hogsett Administration awarded \$12.3 million in TIF funding for the district-style redevelopment of the Stutz, which now features a mix of retail, food and beverage, and office space. In 2022, St'Artup317 secured over 1000 square feet at the historic Stutz building through a public-private partnership with the building's current developer, Somera Roads. This partnership afforded St'Artup317 two prime storefronts that now serve as accelerator spaces for local retail businesses looking to take the next step in their business journey. As a part of the accelerator program, local businesses can position their brand in the Stutz for a six-to-12-month lease. From now through May 2025, [HBH Professional](#) and [Nate Redd Clothing](#) occupy accelerator storefronts at the Stutz, positioning both brands for significant growth in traffic, exposure, and popularity.*

*For information about past brands, or to learn more about how to make your pop-up a success, visit [www.startup317.com](http://www.startup317.com). To receive ongoing updates or to connect with the St'Artup317 community, follow [@Startup317](#) on Instagram.*

**ABOUT CAT CONSULTING:**

*Cat Consulting is a commercial real estate corporation specializing in problem-solving for economic development and matchmaking for creative retail partnerships in Indianapolis. Esselman's talent and passion for pairing growing local brands with prime real estate opportunities has supported the growth and connections of widely loved brands including [WDRFA](#), [CARGO Streetwear Boutique](#), [NAP OR NOTHING](#), [GANGGANG](#), [Maven Space](#), and many more.*

**MEDIA AVAILABILITY:**

**WDRFA – Mike Gillis + Gary Patterson:** 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, December 13 at 871 Massachusetts Ave.

**Cat Consulting – Catherine Esselman:** 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, December 13 at 871 Massachusetts Ave.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

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