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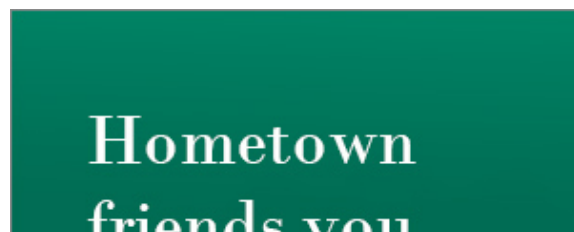
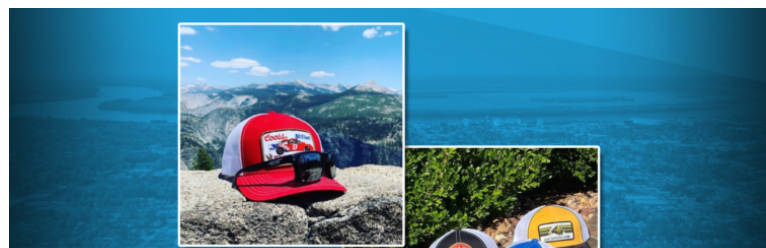
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BUSINESS

# Whitesville hat company experiencing rapid success, offering nostalgic products

By John Kirkpatrick JUNE 27, 2021 | 12:10 AM **UPDATED JUNE 25, 2021 | 9:42 PM**





Throwback Brand | Photos provided

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A unique hat company that started last year in Whitesville is finding quick success. Originally inspired by his love for NASCAR, Travis Barnett created Throwback Brand to offer vintage-style racing hats that were reminiscent of his childhood.

While racing was the primary inspiration, the company has evolved drastically since its conception in September 2020. Their hats can range from farming and automotive to other nostalgic locations and brands — many of which are familiar to Owensboro and Daviess County.



“We began in September with little more than a website and a love for hats,” Barnett said. “I saw that there weren’t a whole lot of vintage-style racing hats available — that’s how Throwback Brand was born. I worked to find vintage patches wherever I could, and

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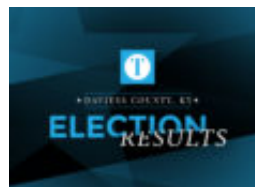
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also connected with a guy who can recreate old patches no longer out there.”

Hats that feature Boarman’s Garage, Rowlands Grocery, and the Black Cat Bar will incite memories for older generations, while some of their newer product lines will feature up-and-coming businesses.

Barnett’s wife Jennifer helped create the website and ignited the social media presence that has accrued more than 40,000 followers already.

“People just love seeing the hats of brands and places they remember. My wife says we aren’t only selling hats — we are selling memories — and that’s probably true,” Barnett said. “To date, we have probably sold over 4,000 hats. We are also launching a new line of vintage racing tees soon, which we are really excited about.”

The custom-designed vintage racing T-shirts feature old racing cars that Barnett’s dad and uncle used to drive at Kentucky Motor Speedway. The entire operation remains solely online for now, though they have aspirations to have their products featured in local storefronts in the near future.

Barnett was born and raised in Whitesville, graduating from Trinity High School before



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obtaining his bachelor's degree in finance from Western Kentucky University. He and his wife have two sons that attend Trinity High School and St. Mary of the Woods Grade School, where they are both active in basketball.

“I love being able to pay homage to my roots whenever I can ... it's really all about community for us,” Barnett said. “We love attending St. Mary of the Woods Church and living in a town where everybody knows everybody — it's just a great place to live.”

For more information on Throwback Brand or to purchase a hat, visit their website [throwbackbrand.com](http://throwbackbrand.com). You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram by searching “*the real throwback brand*” to find a schedule of events and car shows where you can purchase their apparel.

The brand operates as a family business with Barnett's nieces, sons, and mother all playing a role in the daily operations. One seamstress — Medra Wilkerson — individually sews on each patch.

“We are the definition of a family business in a small community ... Our family, friends, and even customers often promote our products via social media, which has really

helped to grow our business,” Barnett said. “Seeing someone’s face light up when they see a hat that their grandad wore or a hat from a place they used to hang out is pretty special.”

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