



# Peers in Action: Women in Pharmacy

## Featuring an Influential Female Pharmacist Inspiring Change Through Ownership: *Melynda (Mindy) Munden, PharmD., Owner, Hemmingsen Drug Store*

Mindy, along with her husband Chris, has co-owned Hemmingsen Drug Store for over two years now. The couple was motivated and focused throughout their journey to ownership, but they had to consider what going into business for themselves would mean. They had to think about how it would impact their three young and active children. Mindy knew that owning their own pharmacy was going to be more time consuming and that the family would have to move somewhere else for the right opportunity. "Chris promised me that if we did this, I would not have to work the weekends. I knew moving would eventually have to happen, but I never considered it as a barrier to hold us back," explained Mindy.

Another item to consider was what role she and her husband would play in the business. She knew Chris was going to thrive at running their own pharmacy with his strong business sense and experience. Mindy had some fear about where she was going to fall on the business side, especially with having a family. She decided to play off her strengths and focus more on the clinical side. "I'm a clinical girl, and Chris is a business guy. We're the dream team. I love taking care of and interacting with our patients. That's where I thrive," said Mindy.

Although there were several things to think about, the pros outweighed the cons. Mindy wanted to make sure she and Chris could reap the benefits of their hard work. A factor that tipped the scale toward ownership was the opportunity to implement new ideas and focus on developing community relationships. "When you work for yourself, you have more freedom to steer these kinds of projects. This aspect of ownership was really exciting for us," explained Mindy. The couple worked with AmerisourceBergen's Pharmacy Ownership Services and matched with a seller.



Mindy speaking at ThoughtSpot 2018's Women in Pharmacy Panel.

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## Addressing Misconceptions

When asked if owning their own pharmacy has changed their home and work life, Mindy explained that it's a work in progress. "I'll be honest, we haven't owned long enough to really figure it out, but we're working on it. It's a good kind of crazy, and it's something that we expected from the beginning." She also wants other female pharmacists to know that owning a pharmacy should be an option to consider. What held Mindy back for so long was the misconception of how much it would cost them to start their own business. "I wish we had done it sooner and taken the risk. I graduated in 1999, and we started our business in 2016. You don't have to bring the whole pie to the table. Owners are motivated to sell to younger individuals. There are various ways to come to the table with something to offer. Don't be afraid of the money," explained Mindy.

## Accomplishments and Advice

Mindy does not see co-owning her own pharmacy with her husband as her greatest career achievement. She explains that this is because throughout her 20-year career she has been doing what she loves: serving people. Now that they are owners, they take that service to the next level and go to bat for their patients when they need something. They have made changes in the store that expand their ability to take care of their patients and are consistently finding new and innovative ways to assist them. "We are uniquely positioned as independents, and if we're willing, we can decrease the friction in accessibility to care," said Mindy.

The couple still has interactions outside of the pharmacy with people who are surprised they own their own business. It's a personal mission for Mindy to expose to the public at large that there are more options than chains out there. "I love explaining there are thousands of independent pharmacies working hard that are a healthy part of your local economy; that what we offer is a unique health care experience different from chain retail. Go find your independent and support them and explore how they can support you."



Left to right: Brynn Jenkins, PharmD., Mindy along with her husband Chris Munden, B. Pharm. and Matt Schwartz, PharmD.

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