

HARTFORD BUSINESS JOURNAL

GREATER HARTFORD'S BUSINESS NEWS

JUNE 21, 2010

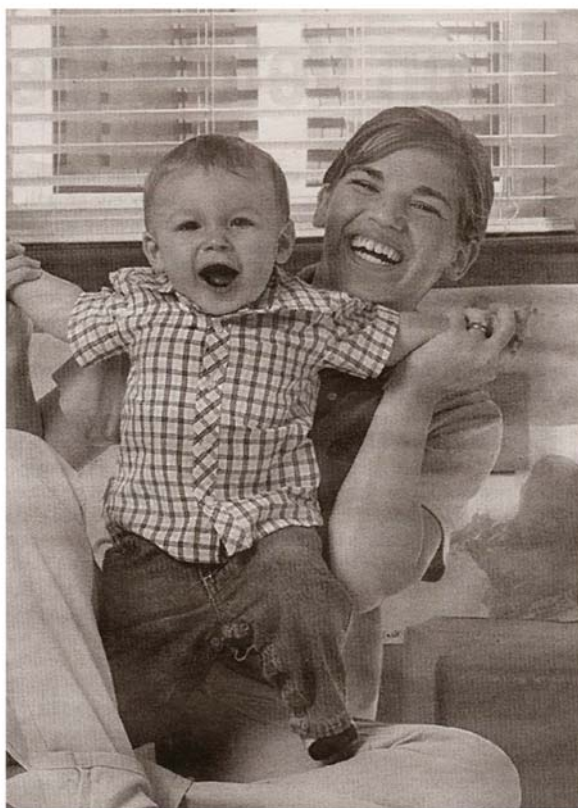
WWW.HARTFORDBUSINESS.COM

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 34 \$1.95



Winning Bet

Asian gaming helps slow casino bleeding.
PG. 3



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Isites, like the Glastonbury location pictured below. Inside, teachers promise a nurturing and creative learning for children ages six weeks to six years old.

Goddard School Targets CT For 3 New Franchises

By Becky Bergman

Special to the Hartford Business Journal

A Pennsylvania-based chain of educational childcare franchises plans to open three centers in Connecticut. The Goddard School hopes to build a facility in the Greater Hartford area this year and two before the end of 2011, said Jeff Travitz, director of franchise sales.

Targeted areas for the childcare centers, which work with children ages 6 weeks to 6 years old, also include Fairfield and New Haven counties, although the company hasn't selected a property or secured an investor yet.

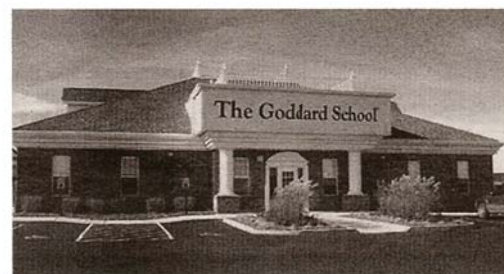
Franchisee Heather Dubian opened Connecticut's first Goddard School in Glastonbury in September with 100 students and 17 teachers. The former attorney expects enrollment to swell by another 50 this fall and plans to add eight more instructors.

Dubian, who spent almost three years and \$600,000-plus to open her school, expects to turn a profit before the one-year mark.

The 8,000-square-foot schools, which typically cost \$700,000 to outfit and takes 18 to 24 months to launch, house as many as 130 students, two directors, eight to 10 college-educated teachers and 10 to 15 assistants.

Amid a dismal economy and weak lending climate, The Goddard School added 39 locations and awarded the rights to another 17 in 2009 across the U.S. This year, the company has a goal of opening 20 new facilities nationwide. The privately-held franchise company would not disclose its financials.

The Goddard School targets areas with high-income households, said Joseph Schumacher, president and CEO of Goddard Systems Inc., franchisor of The Goddard School.



The Goddard School historically set up its centers in the quiet suburbs. In 2007, the company followed its clients to the metro area in Columbus, Ohio where parents could easily drop off and pick up children on their way to and from work — and even visit during the day, said Schumacher.

While tuition varies depending on the number of days and hours a child attends, full-time generally runs about \$1,000 a month.

What sets The Goddard School apart from neighborhood preschools is the curriculum and enrichment courses offered, said Schumacher. Early childhood education expert Dr. Kyle Pruett, child psychiatrist and clinical professor at Yale School of Medicine, provides curriculum material for the company.

The school also offers a wide variety of fun classes, including yoga, technology and Spanish.

Anthony Martino, who founded AAMCO Transmissions, started The Goddard School in 1986 and sold the first franchise in 1988. Today the company has 360 centers in 34 states and provides services to more than 40,000 children.

The childcare and early development market is a \$50 billion a year industry catering to more than 14.4 million children in the U.S. who are in some form of childcare program. The sector shows no signs of slowing down as it grows at a steady 9.2 percent annually. ■