

Sowing the Seeds of Success

Jamie Seward, owner of Repeat Roses, discusses the rewards and challenges of reviving the flower-repurposing company three years after its original owner closed it during COVID-19.

INTERVIEW WITH **JAMIE SEWARD**
 WRITTEN BY **MATTHEW BRADY**
 PHOTOS COURTESY OF **REPEAT ROSES**

→ Did you come into this venture with a business background?

I don't have a business degree, but my professional background provided me with a strong foundation for reinvigorating Repeat Roses. My experience as an attorney, an officer in the Navy JAG Corps, and in development and alumni relations at Johns Hopkins University (where I currently work) has equipped me with valuable skills in everything from operations and logistics to event planning to marketing to networking. Most importantly, I've learned a lot about working with and managing people.

→ Did you have any prior experience with flower arrangements?

Great question. No, I didn't. That's something I often share with people who sign up with us to create



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arrangements to be donated, emphasizing that you can't make mistakes playing with flowers, which are in and of themselves beautiful.

→ What made you want to restore Repeat Roses?

I knew [original owner] Jennifer Grove through mutual friends when she lived here in Baltimore. So I had heard about her company and its goal: providing a second life to expensive flowers being discarded after an event by giving them to nonprofits such as shelters and treatment centers. One day, I found myself in the exact same situation of throwing away flowers after an event, which immediately brought Jennifer's idea to mind, so I reached out to her about reviving the business, and I ultimately acquired it.



→ Did you ever consider using a different business name? What advantages were there in keeping it?

I did consider creating a new name but ultimately decided to carry on the Repeat Roses legacy. The main business advantage was the existing brand recognition, however dormant it might have been. The name still resonated with some people who remembered the original concept, which provided a starting point for re-establishing connections and credibility. It also clearly communicates what we do, which is a plus.

→ What were some of your biggest hurdles in the beginning?

Restarting the business three years after it closed and relocating it from New York to Baltimore both certainly presented significant challenges. We had to re-create awareness nationally, for example,



focusing on “replanting” Repeat Roses’ roots. This is an ongoing process in addition to rebuilding relationships with old clients and forming new ones—in short, getting the word out that we are back.

We work all over the country, so forging partnerships with nonprofits that not only receive the flower donations but also align with our mission is also crucial to our operations. Overall, society being even more focused on sustainability now than before the pandemic works in our favor since we’re an excellent solution to preventing floral waste.

→ Have you tweaked any parts of the business?

Yes. We are intentionally focused on two primary revenue streams: repurposing flowers and holding our Blossom Bar workshops, which are a significant addition. These

interactive events provide individuals and groups with materials, flowers, vases, and supplies to create their own arrangements, which they can either keep or donate to nonprofits. They’ve been incredibly well received as unique team-building and social events with a clear purpose.

→ Overall, what are the most challenging aspects of this unique business model?

Logistics and scaling. Coordinating pickups from various event venues, rearranging flowers efficiently, and then delivering them to multiple nonprofits, all within a narrow time frame, requires meticulous planning and execution. We’re committed to slow growth and finding the right partners to ensure that the business thrives and never closes again. Ideally, we’d also love to partner with supermarket chains and big-box retailers who discard unsellable flowers, which would present another layer of logistical and partnership development challenges that we’d enjoy taking on.

→ How does Repeat Roses impact everyone involved?

We call it a triple win. For example, those donating the flowers, our clients, receive a receipt for their in-kind donation, which provides a



tangible benefit. More importantly, they get the satisfaction of knowing that their beautiful event flowers, which might otherwise be discarded, are bringing joy to others and contributing to a sustainable solution for floral waste—a wonderful way for them to add another layer of purpose to their event.

For those receiving the flowers, the impact is often immeasurable. These fresh, vibrant arrangements can brighten sterile environments like homeless shelters, nursing homes, and hospitals, providing a sense of warmth, beauty, and unexpected cheer to people who are often going through challenging times. It is a powerful reminder that someone cares and is truly the most rewarding part of what we do.

As a mom, daughter, sister, and friend, my goal is to leave this world a little better than I found it, and through this business, I genuinely believe that I can make a tangible difference. It’s about spreading joy, promoting sustainability, and transforming what would be waste into moments of beauty and connection. That mission means everything to me. ■

For more info, visit repeatroses.com