



Young Entrepreneur

(15-25 years of age)

AWARD

Lara Cakir

IN THE SUMMER of 2017, Lara Cakir turned her love of making slime, which is a gooey substance that functions like a stress ball, into a business and founded Puppi Slimes to revolutionize the way mental health is perceived. Lara is a 16-year-old young entrepreneur who strives to make sure that her slimes provide the opportunity to relax, increase focus, and become mentally aware because she is an avid believer that mental wellness is just as important as physical wellness and must be treated as such.

Since its inception in 2017, Puppi Slimes has sold over 5,000 units on all platforms (digitally and in-person). Most transactions are made through the Puppi Slimes Etsy shop on which Lara ships to 42 countries.

From 2018 to 2022, Lara has represented Puppi Slimes by attending dozens of slime conventions across the east coast in the states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Virginia, Connecticut, and Maryland. At such conventions, she has sold her slimes, offered live slime-making demonstrations as well as workshops, and donated proceeds to various non-profit organizations.

Through Puppi Slimes, Lara has launched an initiative entitled “Slimes Helping Minds” with aims of channeling profits towards her high school’s mental health

clubs and facilities. She has shared her ideas with her school principal and is currently in the process of executing this initiative at John P. Stevens High School through a collaboration with the Mental Health PACT committee, which is devoted to raising mental health awareness and organizing school events that reinforce a mentally fit lifestyle. The “Slimes Helping Minds” initiative at her high school is poised to launch during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Established as a social entrepreneurship venture, the mission of Puppi Slimes is to create high quality yet affordable slimes with the vision to make an impact within its local, national, and global community. With those founding principles in mind, Lara attended the Edison Beautification Project in the summer of 2021. She aspires to continue her efforts to help small businesses in her local community who have been hit hard by the pandemic. Her national impact has been made possible by directing proceeds toward several causes, such as the ASPCA, the American Heart Association, and St. Jude Hospital. On a global scale, Lara is currently donating proceeds to the World Central Kitchen to help feed Ukrainian families who are both escaping the violence in Ukraine and those who are still remaining in the country.

Today, with Lara’s leadership, Puppi Slimes is proud to be a social entrepreneurial entity that gives back to the community at large. Through her Instagram account, she is able to reach more than 15,000 people.