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### **Local Mother and Entrepreneur Brings Lightbridge Academy to Tampa to Support Other Working Moms**

As a longtime Mergers and Acquisitions executive and proud mother to twin boys, Hetal Shah faced the challenges of being a working parent. When deciding on her next business venture, she knew that she wanted to combine her passion of working with kids and provide families with collaboration opportunities to foster better values and address the challenge of it takes a village to raise kids!! Hetal had been following [Lightbridge Academy®](#), a leading early childhood education and child care franchise, since her boys, now in college, were young.

Knowing what amazing services and the Circle of Care, the brand has to offer parents, Hetal decided to open centers of her own. Hetal has enthusiastically signed on to bring two [Lightbridge Academy](#) centers to Tampa and expand the brand even more in the coming years.

1851 Franchise spoke to Hetal about her franchising journey with Lightbridge Academy.

### **PROFILE QUESTIONS**

**1851 Franchise: Frame your personal story for us. What did you do before franchising, and how did you decide franchising made sense for you?**

**Hetal:** Many years of experience in mergers and acquisitions, helping organizations acquire or divest businesses; What got me interested in childcare was having my own twin boys. It was hard for me to get through the routine of picking up my boys

everyday, so I wanted to do something for working moms. Not just anything, but a place where mothers can drop their children and get quality care. A place where people don't have to worry about the safety and the healthiness of their children as I did so many times when my kids were younger.

**1851: What was your perception of franchising prior to becoming a franchisee, and what do you want people to know about franchising now that you are in it?**

**Hetal:** I knew that it would definitely help having the corporate umbrella. If I were to start a daycare of multiple units all by myself, it would probably take humongous effort. With a franchise, it will help me with the synergetic partnership & experience of the day care franchise as they would equally share experiences. There are teams that can help me with the PR, the marketing, operations, and logistics that I have no experience with when it comes to running a franchisee. People should know that franchising comes with great risk and requires great knowledge and passion for the industry that you are entering in. It is not for everyone and takes a massive effort from multiple teams of people.

**1851: What made you pick this brand? What excites you most about this company?**

**Hetal:** I have been following Lightbridge since they were called Rainbow Academy. I inquired about sending my own kids, but we ended up moving. I really liked what they had to offer. I had been trying to get into franchising for some time but then I had dropped the idea for a few years because life happened. I wanted to franchise with a very reputable and trusted name like Lightbridge, I liked the theme of the Circle of Care and you feel welcomed when you enter any LightBridge center. I think what's exciting about Lightbridge is how quickly it is expanding and how quickly it is adopting new customs to keep kids more entertained. The learning and growth once you start with Lightbridge never really stops

**1851: What do you hope to achieve with your business? What are your plans for growth?**

**Hetal:** I hope to open multiple centers in Tampa – that's my goal. I have two units for now, but I am definitely looking to grow more if I can and help the Lightbridge brand grow in Florida. I also want to create a system of reliable childcare that mothers can trust and take advantage of whenever they need. Accessibility is a necessity when it comes to raising children.

**1851: What is the one thing about your story you want us to know?**

**Hetal:** As a mother of twin boys, I found it challenging to balance my family and career. I have played an influential role in bringing about changes to child development, athletic, and safety programs at public elementary schools. I have raised awareness about the importance of introducing children to community service projects, youth leadership programs, and the enhancement of oratory skills from an early age. I have actively supported local Cancer & Autism foundations through fundraising events such as organizing 5K runs and spreading smiles! This extensive experience with youth has provided me with the ability to interact with

children of various ages. This understanding has enabled me to grasp their patterns, tendencies, and how to create a comfortable and joyful learning environment for their growth and development!

**1851: What advice do you have for other people thinking about becoming a franchise owner?**

**Hetal:** I'm trying to get away from merger and acquisitions and get into daycare services, but this is not an easy job. I would say if you love kids, and if you have the passion for doing something for kids, this is for you. You should do it only if your mind is in the right place and you want to help make lives better for parents and kids.