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Passionate Educator Leaves the Family Business to Follow Her Dream of Helping Children with Lightbridge Academy in Jacksonville

While Trina Anderson’s career has included everything from banking to Human Resources, she has always had an innate passion for teaching children. Now, with her new [Lightbridge Academy](#) franchise in Jacksonville, Florida, Anderson is ready to turn that passion into a successful business venture and take control of her own destiny.

Over a decade ago, Anderson decided it was time to leave her career in the banking industry and go back to school to earn her degree in education. After spending 14 years as a teacher and eventually advancing to administration, Anderson knew she wanted to work more directly with children, but put that mission on hold to work alongside her family construction company. Anderson gained valuable business experience through their construction company, managing Human Resources, certifications, risk management and payroll. Despite her fulfilling role there, her desire to work with children never waned, leading her to explore the prospect of owning a childcare center.

Originally apprehensive about running a childcare center by herself, Anderson and her husband began to investigate franchise opportunities. After researching multiple brands, they attended a Discovery Day for Lightbridge Academy. Anderson felt an immediate connection with the team and their child and family-first approach. The support that Lightbridge offered, their commitment to answering all her questions, and the prospect of being the first Lightbridge Academy in Jacksonville, solidified her decision to join their franchise.

Now, Anderson's aim with her Lightbridge Academy franchise is to assist children to a successful transition into the school system. She aims to prepare these children, both academically and socially, for their journey into elementary school.

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

Anderson: I have an education background, but I actually started my career in banking. When my kids got old enough, I decided it was time to do what I always wanted to do: teach kids. I resigned and went back to school full-time to get my degree in education. After that, I became a teacher for about 10 years before moving into the direction of administration. I went back to school and got my masters in education leadership to further my career as an educator.

My husband and I own a construction company. So, I transitioned into working for the company full-time in an HR and Risk Management role in 2019. I learned all about employees, certifications, risk management, payroll, etc. While I liked these roles, I really wanted to get back to doing what I am passionate about, which is working with children.

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?

Anderson: I had no personal knowledge or experience of franchising prior to becoming a franchisee. After researching, I understood that the level of support from Lightbridge Academy would provide the structure and processes needed to open a turn-key, top-notch learning facility.

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

Anderson: We went to Discovery Day for Lightbridge Academy, and I fell in love with the team and their whole concept of putting children and families first. I had a real connection with them. That is really how I ended up choosing Lightbridge Academy. I felt that their core values and their curriculum structure aligned with what I always wanted to do in education.

The support that they offer to franchisees was also very appealing – every step of the way they are there. From the beginning, they answered all my questions and connected me with people who could help me get started. They are there to guide me in the right direction.

Another reason I chose Lightbridge Academy was because there wasn't a center in Jacksonville, which surprised me. I like the idea of being the first one.

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

Anderson: As someone who is passionate about education, my goal is to provide kids with the educational foundations they need to be successful in school. That is

what drew my attention to learning centers in general. We can build up those academics and social behaviors while children are still young to ensure that they are ready for the next step in their learning. It is all about building that community, while maintaining a repetition of nurturing and promoting growth, in all areas.

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

Anderson: I believe this is the right time for me to move forward in opening my learning center. My background and experiences have provided me with the knowledge and skills needed to move forward with this great opportunity.

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

Anderson: Do your research. We called other franchisees from Lightbridge Academy. They gave us great advice, but not one person said it was going to be easy. We knew there were going to be some challenges. If it is something that you really want to do, pursue it and don't give up. Surround yourself with people who have been successful and can push you to do your best.

The initial investment required to start a Lightbridge Academy ranges from \$2,611,900-\$5,202,500. To find out more information on costs to buy this franchise, visit: <https://1851franchise.com/lightbridgeacademy>

About Lightbridge Academy®:

Established in 1997, the company was founded as a family business based on core values and a Circle of Care philosophy that places equal importance on the needs of children, their families, teachers, center owners and the community. Now celebrating its 25th anniversary, Lightbridge Academy provides quality early education and child care programs to children aged six weeks through kindergarten. The company currently has over 140 child care centers either open or in development throughout Florida, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. In response to COVID-19, Lightbridge Academy launched The Lightbridge Promise as the Gold Standard for health and safety in the child care industry. In 2020, the company was featured on the Inc. 5000 ranking, Franchise Times Top 200+ awards and on Newsweek's 2021 list of America's Best Customer Service. For the second year in a row, Lightbridge Academy was on Inc.'s "5000 List of Fastest Growing Private Companies." In 2023, Lightbridge Academy was featured for the ninth year on Entrepreneur Magazine's "Franchise 500."