



**Entrepreneur:** Louise Thomas  
**Business:** Ahnishabae Art Gallery  
**Industry:** First Nation Art



Louise is from Sucker Creek First Nation and established Ahnishabae Art Gallery 10 years ago in honour of her late husband Roy Thomas. She was inspired to turn Roy's studio into a gallery since there was nothing else like it in Thunder Bay that represented Aboriginal people. Initially, Louise invited a hand full of artists to feature their artwork in her gallery, today she's proud to say she has worked with over 368 artists and is elated to showcase their creations.

Louise's mission is to take people's breath away and to create an appreciation and awareness of Native culture through art. In order to do this, Louise jumped head first into her business, using only her passion and know-how to create the gallery. Throughout her journey, she has not utilized any financial resources but has sought family support along the way. Currently, the sale of artwork allows her to finance the business herself. Down the road, Louise will look to take advantage of funding or resources that she can use to expand her gallery into bigger and better things. Carrying on the legacy of her late husband and representing artists motivates Louise to be a positive role model to First Nation youth and the community.

Louise attributes her long-term success to having a dream and a passion and never giving up. It is a lot of responsibility being an entrepreneur, but if you find something that you love to do, you will start to see the benefits. Her advice to upcoming entrepreneurs is to dream big and if you want something, work hard to get it.



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