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# PRESS RELEASE

## **Mylestones Launches First Online Design and Publishing Platform Offering Print, Video and Virtual Memorybooks**

Tech startup provides group-driven books that are collective, collaborative & crowd-fundable

**Orlando, Fla. (November 15, 2021)** – Launching today, Mylestones is a new design and publishing platform where groups can publish collective, collaborative and crowd-fundable Memorybooks that celebrate big life moments. Memorybooks can be Printbooks, Videobooks or Virtualbooks. Better than old-school photobooks, a print Memorybook can include photos (JPEGs and PNGs) as well as PDF scans of mementos, Word files and even unlimited raw text. Video Memorybooks are similar to photobooks but contain video clips and JPEG photos combined into a video story that play in a book that has an LCD screen instead of pages. And Virtual Memorybooks allow for any Printbook or Videobook to also be shared digitally.

Mylestones' CEO Keren Peters Atkinson began working on the platform when Covid began. Two experiences sparked the initial idea for Mylestones. After her husband passed in 2012, Peters Atkinson's coworkers delivered a box of deeply personal letters expressing their heartfelt condolences. She wanted to compile those letters in a way that was easy to read. No good option existed. Then, when her son turned 18 years old in 2018, friends and family wanted to celebrate his coming-of-age birthday, an event that was even more significant because he had been diagnosed with Hydrocephalus during gestation and had not been expected to live. They shared heartfelt messages, mementos and photos. Again, Peters Atkinson looked for an easy way to collect and compile this variety of materials in a keepsake book. Photobooks didn't provide space for extensive text or PDFs and the group could not contribute directly into a photobook. In 2020, with the rise of remote work and increased social distancing, Peters Atkinson realized there was a need for a platform where groups who are **apart from** one another can be **a part of** making something deeply personal 'together'. Mylestones was born, combining the best features of photobooks, scrapbooks, greeting cards and social media posts into a platform that was designed with groups in mind.

With great intentionality, Peters Atkinson developed every aspect of the business from its name and brand to the website, with its group-friendly features including: a private mailbox for every book so contributors can easily submit materials directly to the platform; a whiteboard design space so groups can design a book together in real time; video conferencing tools so they can see and hear one another as they collaborate; and a crowd funding payment system so each person in the group could share in the cost, which facilitates a group gift. No more collecting materials, chasing payments, sharing user names and passwords or emailing files.

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Every feature of the Mylestones platform was designed by a woman for women and with community in mind. “We know 80% of photobooks are made by women because they are the archivists and nurturers of their communities. And, they also like collaborating on creative projects. We see it in knitting circles, quilting bees, paint parties, pottery classes, book clubs and scrapbooking,” explained Peters Atkinson. “The Mylestones platform allows every person in the group to contribute – no matter where they are in the world -- to a group book celebrating a big life moment like a wedding, baby shower, retirement, birthday, anniversary, bar mitzvah, or communion. Together, they can craft a deeply meaningful gift and also engage in a fun, creative project. More than just photos, each Mylestones book says ‘We see you. You matter. We care. You belong.’” By facilitating deeper connections in a community, Mylestones hopes to combat loneliness and help people to ‘love one another’.

### **Group-Focused Company Gets a Group of Supporters**

As a tech startup focused on disrupting a \$20 Billion photobook industry, Mylestones was accepted into the UCF Business Incubator in Orlando in 2021. “It has been a huge advantage to be accepted into the Incubator program,” said CEO Keren Peters Atkinson. “I believe in the power of ‘us’. It’s been said if you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together. The UCF Business Incubation Program has provided a deep bench of experienced mentors to help us make the best business decisions so we can go the distance.” Mylestones was also awarded a one-year grant for legal services from the University of Miami Law School’s Law Clinic. “We know that having the right technical, financial and legal support is key for any tech startup,” said Peters Atkinson. “Often minority-owned and woman-owned startups are unable to afford the kind of help that is essential for a tech startup, but the UCF Business Incubator and UM Law School’s Law Clinic are affording us invaluable knowledge and guidance.”

Peters Atkinson knows about the power of community. As a Hispanic female entrepreneur whose parents emigrated from Cuba to the U.S. in the 1960s, Peters Atkinson was encouraged by her family to study and work hard. She received a full academic scholarship to Miami-Dade College and then Florida International University where she earned her Bachelor’s degree in Communications. She then went on to earn her Master’s degree in Leadership at Nova Southeastern University. Peters Atkinson had a career in Communications and Marketing, helping take several startups to market, before recognizing the timing was right to turn her own nascent idea into a startup business.

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**Domain:** [www.Mylestones.com](http://www.Mylestones.com)

**Photo Caption 1:** Mylestones’ Memorybooks allow multiple people to contribute directly into the book, work on the design of the book together, and then share in the payment of the book.

**Photo Caption 2:** Mylestones’ focus on group-driven books as a way to leverage the power of community. According to CEO and Founder Keren Peters Atkinson, each group-driven book says “We see you. You matter. We care. You belong.”

**Photo Caption 3:** The collective aspect of each book ensures each book is more meaningful. While photos are beautiful, it’s the words that tell the story and truly ‘Mark the Moment.’

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**About Mylestones:** Mylestones is an online design and publishing platform that allows a group to mark a big life moment by contributing to and crafting a Memorybook. Each book is one-of-a-kind... capturing and presenting the personal and meaningful written or video messages, photos and mementos shared by that person's 'inner circle'. That 'inner circle' can then design the book together on a shared whiteboard design space combining their materials with embellishments from the platform's Media Library and using the site's videoconferencing system to see and hear one another. And, they can share in the payment of a book by using the platform's unique crowd-funding tool. For more information, visit [Mylestones.com](http://Mylestones.com).

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**About the UCF Business Incubation Program:** The University of Central Florida Business Incubation Program is a community resource that provides early-stage companies with the tools, training and infrastructure to become financially stable, high growth/impact enterprises. Since 1999, this award-winning program has provided vital business development resources resulting in over 300 local startup companies reaching their potential faster and graduating into the community where they continue to grow and positively impact the local economy. In 2017-2018, participating firms have helped sustain more than 6,725 local jobs and had a cumulative impact of over \$725 million on regional GDP and over \$1.3 billion on regional sales. During the same period, the program has returned more than \$12.00 in state and local taxes for every \$1.00 invested in the program. In addition, for every \$1.00 of public investment the firms also produced \$118 of additional regional GDP and \$226 of regional sales. For more information, visit [www.incubator.ucf.edu](http://www.incubator.ucf.edu).