

# CELEBRATING SUCCESS



## Catopia

Karen Hackney

2080 Laurel Ave NE

Salem, OR • 503-LUV-CATS

[www.catopiaboarding.com](http://www.catopiaboarding.com)

Started ~ June 2006

Employees - 1

Welcome to **Catopia** — a unique cat-boarding experience! Providing a safe, loving and virtually stress-free environment for its “kitty guests,” each cat has access to a full array of kitty-approved amenities. What makes this business unique is the spacious suites—no cages—and access to Camp Catawanda, a fully-enclosed outdoor play area!

These services appeal to cat owners, whether traveling on business, vacationing, or entertaining houseguests that might be allergic to their hosts’ felines. **Catopia** is also a safe place for cats to stay during a residential move or renovation.

Karen recognizes her greatest success is the fact that—even this early in her business—50% of her ongoing business comes from returning customers. She says, **“Be open to new ideas and fresh perspectives to meet your customers’ needs. Listen to your customers!”**

Her future plans include partnerships with complementary businesses, such as veterinarians, cat groomers, pet suppliers, travel agencies, and any business wanting to offer luxury boarding solutions to their cat-loving clients.

### History

Karen has been a passionate animal lover and advocate since childhood. She is a certified Pet CPR specialist and has volunteered with the Humane Society. Karen regularly donates to the Willamette Humane Society, Friends of Felines and their thrift stores. She loves her cats and wanted to find a business she could do from her home. She still works full-time at Salem Hospital, managing her hours to respond to the schedule of her **Catopia** clients, but realizes that the short-term hard work and long hours will move her closer to her long-term goals.

### Partnership with MERIT

Karen participated in the Spring 2005 class of MERIT entrepreneurs. Karen gives credit to this training which **“forced me to look at my business idea objectively, stressed the importance of proper planning, and then gave me the tools to become successful!”**



*MicroEnterprise  
Resources, Initiatives & Training*

### MERIT is a Collaboration of:

Catholic Community Services  
Polk Community Development Corporation  
Salem-Keizer Community Development Corporation

### In Partnership with

Chemeketa Small Business Development Center

TED Center  
365 Ferry Street, SE  
Salem, OR 97301  
(503) 399-5088/phone  
(503) 581-6017 / fax  
[www.merit-microenterprise.org](http://www.merit-microenterprise.org)