

## Mission Beach entrepreneur wraps the solar system around wrists of San Diegans

by VICTORIA DAVIS

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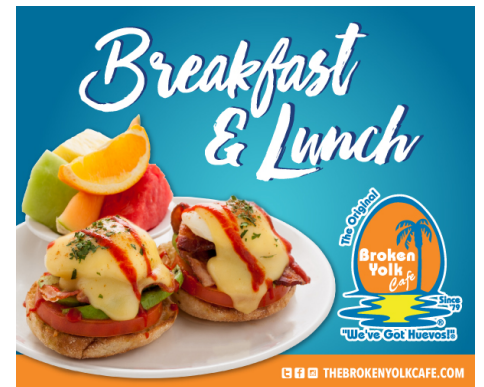


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The Astronobeads bracelet.





*Mission Beach resident Bea Doheny.*

What started out as high school graduation gifts, eventually became the business that won Mission Beach resident Bea Doheny the “Entrepreneur of the Year 2018” award. She may have moved to San Diego only five months ago, but the reputation of Doheny’s Astronobeads bracelets proceeded her, having distributed more than 9,500 jewelry products across the globe in the past two years.

“The cool thing about astronomy and space is there’s so many things to be inspired by,” said Doheny, who continues to receive orders from Australia, Israel, Romania, and Budapest, along with local requests across the U.S. “We’re discovering new stuff every day and it’s fun creating jewelry that embodies that.”

Doheny grew up in Columbia, Mo., and harbored a fascination for astronomy since she was 7 years old. Since she worked in an art studio during high school, Doheny decided to make bracelets as celebratory grad gifts for her friends. Each bracelet



was made up of nine beads, representing each planet in the solar system, and included a note from Doheny that read, "Every time you look at your solar system bracelet, remember I think you're out of this world."

"It was cheesy, but I loved it," said Doheny with a laugh. "And funny enough, that's the bracelet that really started it all."

During her sophomore year of college, Doheny was studying business marketing at the University of Missouri and saw the uniqueness of her product and its potential. Using the resources available to her – experienced business professors, graphic design students, and website mentors – Doheny started building her budding brand. But it was her younger brother who came up with the name, "Astronobeads," not only combining "astronomy" and "beads," but also pointing out Doheny's first name, "Bea" fits in with the title.

"I guess it was just fate," said Doheny, who received the national title "22 Under 22 Most Inspiring College Women" her junior year. "What I love about entrepreneurship is that you learn the most by getting out there and trying it yourself. Even though it was a huge balancing act between classes, online orders and my social life, the reward was so much greater, and I learned so much more than I could have in a classroom."

After graduation, Doheny knew she wanted to move to San Diego to tap into its plentiful, coastal art scene. While she's busy with online holiday gift orders this season, Doheny has also been navigating her way through the Ocean Beach and Pacific Beach farmers markets, selling her Moon, Jupiter and Mars bracelets along with Pluto chokers and cosmos hoop earrings. Her original solar system bracelet continues to be the best seller.

"I just love being in an environment that inspires me and there's so much creativity in San Diego," said Doheny. "It's just a dream everywhere you go. I decided I just was going to get out there and make it happen and make it work. My products just fit so well with the vibes here on the West Coast."

Astronobeads' appeal has extended to the East Coast and is even a sale item for New York City's "StarTalk Radio," hosted by Neil deGrasse Tyson. Doheny connected with the radio station's social media manager, Stacey Severn, and after sending samples of her bracelets, Severn fell in love.

"Our whole thrust is to make science interesting and approachable to people, and Bea's jewelry seemed symbolic of bringing the solar system a little closer and making it accessible and fun," said Severn, who herself wears a solar system bracelet on her left wrist. "The beads were like the first thing I wanted to get into the store."

The beads have also become a regular gift given to celebrity guests on the show, including Bill Nye and Whoopi Goldberg, who wore her solar system bracelet for two weeks on "The View." That's one of Doheny's favorite stories.

"I was just getting my nails done, sitting in the pedicure chair watching TV, and there's Whoopie on 'The View' wearing my solar system bracelet," said Doheny. "I saw the Saturn bead pop out from under her sleeve and I was like, 'No way.' Thank god I got my nails done that day, otherwise I would have never known."

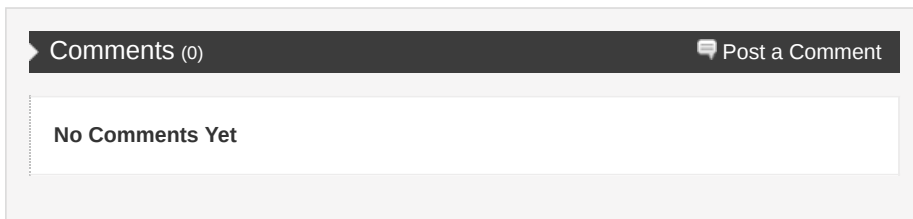
Doheny is currently in the process of building new ideas for a horoscope and zodiac

line and is hoping to get into more retail locations in San Diego. Until then, Astronobeads products may be purchased at astronobeads.com. For a limited time, there's a 20 percent-off coupon for online purchases. The discount code is "sandiego."

"Astronobeads is more than a bracelet," said Doheny. "It's a cosmic perspective. We're all connected in this universe and, through this business, I want to help build that connection."

Astronobeads

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