

Summer Company 2017: Jake Hancock NewSweater Fingerboards



Jake Hancock isn't your average 15-year-old.

While most teenagers enjoy a summer off lounging around, Jake was hard at work transforming what started as a hobby into a full-fledged business.

NewSweater Fingerboards is a company that makes customizable mini skateboards.

Jake, a passionate skateboarder, learned of fingerboards when a friend brought a plastic 'made in China' version of one to school.

"I thought: I could make them better because I really like making things."

And when he did, fellow classmates took notice.

"When I started making them, I'd bring them to school and people in my class would want to buy them and then eventually people in all different grades would buy them. So I thought, I

could probably make a real business out of this."

Though he's been casually making and selling his boards for a few years now, this was the year Jake could finally take advantage of the summer company program.

He learned of the program two years ago through his mom, but wasn't old enough at the time to apply.

So though he already had his hands in a plausible business, it wasn't official until this year when the summer company program taught him how to register his business and provided him with grant money, which he used to purchase equipment to better the efficiency and quality of his product-making.

"I've been able to improve everything about my company," Jake says.

Though summer is tough on sales due to his client base being out on their full-size skateboards, Jake says he's made the most of it by prepping all kinds of fingerboards for wintertime when everyone will be buying. He also received media coverage opportunities from CBC and CKWS, which has helped him get the word out about his business.

"For (the) Kingston community, people don't really know what it is. But I'm trying to slowly get people into it. I'm going to try to start selling my boards in stores so people in the community can see them and get them."

He says one comic shop owner approached him wanting to feature his products, so he was hoping to make a deal with him.

In the long run, Jake dreams of taking on the making of full-size boards and becoming a skateboard shop owner.

"I'm going to try and take some business courses and hopefully go down that path."

