



The OBLI Story

OBLI Organics was founded by two sisters, one with two young children and the other expecting her first... both of whom have strong career experience in marketing. Both looking for an opportunity to do work that mattered in a creative environment while keeping family a priority. An organic clothing company that allowed them the opportunity to be stewards of the environment fit the bill.

Both Michelle Young and Melissa Blanco are athletic, well-traveled and blessed to come from a family that appreciates nature and outdoor living. When the family was struck with three cases of breast cancer within a year in 1999, the sisters turned their appreciation for life into a personal education and dedication to organic foods, which became a mainstay for them both. "It doesn't guarantee our lives will be cancer-free, but making the effort to avoid unnecessary chemicals and pesticides makes sense to us," said Young.

A dream to form a family company was always a dream that inspired countless discussions during holiday gatherings. During a weekend birthday celebration in April of 2007, Michelle and Melissa discussed a recent episode of *Oprah* featuring working Moms who started their own successful companies from home. Later that week Melissa forwarded Michelle a link to the *Rachel Ray* show on "Millionaire Moms" and the very next day the idea for OBLI Organics (an acronym for On Borrowed Land, Inc.) was born.

The idea fit the sisters' original goals and proved to be a natural outgrowth of their beliefs and lifestyle. After some internet research, Melissa connected with the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and two weeks later the sisters flew to Chicago to attend the OTA's annual *All Things Organic* trade show. While at the show, they delved into the new industry attending seminars and workshops on the organic textile movement; walking the show floor and meeting with other retail owners.

Michelle's advertising agency background following 10 years in resort and club marketing complements Melissa's position of more than 8 years experience in relationship and marketing management for a Fortune 100 company. Melissa's specific experience in marketing channels and customer satisfaction is a tremendous asset to launching OBLI Organics. The exciting and most challenging part was learning the retail industry -- something completely new to both of them.

OBLI Organics offers a private line of children's clothing and doggie fashions produced using only 100% certified organic cotton and manufactured under Fair Trade practices. The sisters wanted to stick to their goal of offering hip and trendy clothing with an "ecolectual" edge in order to appeal to the mainstream. This allows OBLI to educate their clients along with way by providing additional information about living green, buying organic and fair trade practices on the company's website. OBLI Organics has trademarked the term "ecolectual," meaning guided or motivated by an intelligent respect for the environment. Michelle and Melissa hope to "spread the ecolectual initiative" and OBLI is the perfect conduit!

"It's not always realistic to expect everyone to buy organic and live "green" all the time," says Melissa. "However, everyone making small efforts can return big results. This is the message we want to send."

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