

River Road is known as [Fair Lawn's](#) "friendly, neighborhood business district." What's the secret behind the warm and welcoming ambiance? Some might say it has to do with a woman's, or in the case of the River Road District, a women's touch and influence on the mix of businesses and service providers.



*Yelena Kodryanu and business partner, Elina Barsegyan, opened IntelliChild Academy (12-29 River Road) in 2012, becoming some of the newest women business owners in Fair Lawn's friendly neighborhood business district.*

PHOTOS/VINCE BAGLIVO

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"[Fair Lawn's](#) River Road District has had a significant number of businesses owned by women over the years," noted Bob Landzettel, president of the

River Road Improvement Corporation (RRIC). "And the trend has continued in recent times, with many new businesses with female proprietors joining the ranks of longtime district businesses owned and operated by women."

Carol Baskinger opened Dance Designs (12-38 River Road) 31 years ago, and has been at her current River Road location since 1991. A multi-talented performer who has excelled as an actress, dancer, vocalist and choreographer, Baskinger has transformed her dance studio to become almost a community center for nurturing local talent in the performing arts. Baskinger and her staff have had the enjoyment and professional fulfillment of seeing many graduates of Dance Designs perform on Broadway and beyond.

Sara Adkins, owner of The Flower Cart (13-20 River Road), provides flowers for weddings, funerals, religious events, birthdays, anniversaries and other important events. In addition to a loyal local customer base that appreciates the convenience of her shop on River Road, Adkins also serves a large and growing online list of online customers. All recognize her artistry and attention to detail on every order.

Known for her work with professional athletes and tri-athletes, in addition to people simply seeking better health, Charesse Foye, owner of Massage Spa (4-06 [Fair Lawn](#) Ave.), has years of experience in massage therapy. A volunteer with the well-known Ironman USA series of demanding events, Charesse is a member of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA).

Stephanie Cody of State Farm Insurance (12-45 River Road), Inna Schafir of Garden Pharmacy (13-38 River Road) and Iliana Santiago, owner of Xpress Haircutters (12-28 River Road) have been familiar faces in the district for many years. Michele Villani, the friendly host of Davia (6-09 [Fair Lawn](#) Ave.) is co-owner of the much-loved restaurant with her husband, chef Paul Villani. Adriana Settenhofer, DDS (12-35 River Road) is one of several female doctors, medical and other professionals.

"[Fair Lawn](#) is a great, family-oriented town with a good school system and parents who would like to give their children the best they can," noted Yelena Kodryanu, who opened IntelliChild Academy (12-29 River Road) in 2012 in Fair Lawn with her business partner, Elina Barsegyan. "River Road is a welcoming and caring community, and perhaps that reflects the nurturing nature of women."

Heather Polyi, the founder of Glam Spot NJ (12-45 River Road, Suite 6) has worked with some of the biggest names in television, films and the music industry as a makeup artist and stylist. Now, local residents have access to Heather's "red carpet" artistry and skill conveniently close by. Polyi, along with her talented "crew" of stylists and hair pros, provides expert makeup and styling for men, women and children, custom makeup blending, workshops, parties, special events and more at her studio on River Road.

"The fact that many women are among the district's business owners is no accident," Polyi concluded. "This is a friendly, neighborhood business district, and I think women respond to that atmosphere and contribute to it in many positive ways."

To find out more about these women-owned businesses and all businesses and restaurants in [Fair Lawn's River Road District](#), or for more information about programs and services provided by the RRIC, visit [FairLawnRiverRoad.com](http://FairLawnRiverRoad.com). You can also follow Fair Lawn's River Road District at [Facebook.com/fairlawnriverroad](https://www.facebook.com/fairlawnriverroad).

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