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Daves' broken foot inspired fashionable approach to healing and new business for Gainesville entrepreneur

By **TERRI L. ERWIN-FITZ**
Observer staff

Christina Daves, of Gainesville, had a broken foot that inspired her to develop fashionable accessories to wear with her boot while healing from injury.

She thought of the idea while on a train to New York and talking with another traveler from London. Daves was not happy to be wearing a plain medical boot and thought there must be a way to make it more attractive.

Though she did not have a design to wear to New York, she did accessorize her boot for a Virginia Tech game and she says "everyone went nuts" which led her to complete designs and create the business, CastMedic Designs.

Daves is no stranger to retail, she was part-owner of Details for the Home in Haymarket before she retired and found herself off again on another adventure as she developed designs for a fashion boot to be worn by those healing. In fact,

her tagline is The Healing Power of Fashion®.

She initially put together some designs and created a "focus group" of about 50 friends to find out what they liked and did not like about her creations.

She trademarked "the healing power of fashion," came up with designs and spent five months searching for a manufacturer. At a New York textile show she connected with two men who worked with factories in China where the boot designs were eventually produced.

Daves says that 4 million people a year are put in medical boots by doctors to heal from injury and doctors are moving away from casting their patients in hard casts.

Helping her along the way was an appearance on the Steve Harvey show where she was awarded \$20,000. She has also applied for an appearance on Shark Tank. She says she lives by the book, *The Secret*.

At the time of our interview, Daves had heard that Diana Ross was wearing a boot and had reached out to her publicist and was hoping she would wear CastMedic Designs to a taping of a Christmas Special in DC. Just days later, photos appeared with Ross wearing Daves' design.

Mother to Justin, 14, and Megan, 12, she keeps busy by driving them to ice hockey, volleyball and lacrosse practice when she is not busy finding celebrities to wear her designs and running the business. She does this all with the support of her husband.

She currently has 58 designs for both males and females, with the fur her personal favorite. Prices range from \$7 to \$24.

She hopes to make CastMedic Designs a "household name." She has recently partnered with a large medical supply company and has her designs in doctor's offices and hospitals already.

Already thinking of her next product, Daves admits her office is



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Christina Daves displays some of her CastMedic Designs.

filled with designs to help people with other injuries feel The Healing Power of Fashion®.

For more information, call CastMedic Designs at 1-877-600-CAST. To view designs, see www.castmedicdesigns.com.

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