

Ashlyn Kennedy

Oakton, Va., sophomore Anna Romani has been taking photos her whole life, and she decided to make that into a business after “itching to do something” during the pandemic.

She created Anna Romani Photography, which has both an Instagram account and a website under the same name. Through her business, she shoots weddings, graduation photos, senior portraits, and couples photos among many other things.

Romani got involved in photography while working for her high school’s yearbook as a freshman, before gradually working her way up to Editor in Chief by her senior year.

“I feel like I’ve always been taking photos my whole life,” Romani said. “What’s really great about yearbook is you’re photographing literally everything.”

In April of 2020, in the thick of the Covid-19 pandemic, Romani chose to turn that passion into a business, but not without its hardships.

She would have to do what she called “social distance shoots,” which entailed wearing masks and keeping a good amount of space between her and her clients.

As for the endeavor of starting a business, Romani said one of the biggest difficulties was balancing the creative side of photography with the business side, which involves a great deal of accounting and taxes.

“I feel like it’s a unique type of business to have,” Romani said, “because it’s two polar opposite areas and you have to be really strong in both of them.”

A big challenge for Romani arose when she moved from Virginia to Waco for college, which meant transitioning her business as well. The physical locations were different, but so was the culture surrounding photography.

Romani said that the photography markets are completely different, so she had to change her marketing based on the area she was in.

“My marketing [in Virginia] is ‘This is why you should get a senior photo shoot,’” Romani said. “In Waco, it’s ‘This is why I’m the photographer you should choose for your senior photoshoot.’”

Despite the obstacles, Romani has maintained success in her business by emphasizing personal connections with her clients.

Romani said that the relationship aspect is huge in creating good work and good photos for everyone she works with.

“That’s what really drives this for me,” Romani said, “is being able to capture these big milestones in people’s lives and give them this gift of photos that they can look back on and bring them right back to that moment, that day, that feeling.”