

March 2007



ACCION San Diego
Small Business Loans

Welcome to ACCION San Diego's February newsletter! We are pleased to use these newsletters to keep our clients, partners and friends informed so that we can continue to serve our community in the best way possible.

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Celebrate Entrepreneurship Week USA/ February 24- March 3

Entrepreneur Story: Billy Joyce



With six years under his belt as the owner of Surfside Cuisine, Billy Joyce has a solid client base. His phone is constantly ringing and his email box fills up daily with requests for his services at one big event after another. Surfside has grown quickly and now Billy feels that his business is running him to an extent;

not exactly what he had in mind when we finished culinary school. To create a balance of living life and his culinary dream, Billy is now taking some time to step back and go for his real dream job of serving as a personal chef. To reflect this change in his services, he recently altered his business motto from "Catering with a Personal Touch" to "Professional Chef Services with a Personal Touch." As a new member of the US Personal Chef Association, Billy is taking things slowly and focusing on being one-hundred percent ready before jumping into this new venture.

ACCION San Diego has been there for Billy throughout the various phases of Surfside Cuisine. His first loan was used to buy a trailer when his catering business was beginning to pick up. At that point, Billy only had two years in business and he was not able to qualify for a loan at Union Bank, but they referred him to ACCION San Diego. His second loan at ACCION was used to buy a refrigerator to expand his capacity, and his most recent loan is being used to jumpstart the personal chef side of the business including advertising, web design

and equipment.

As a personal chef, Billy will service customers in their private homes once a week where he will cook five days worth of meals, exactly as his customers prefer them. "If my customers have special dietary needs, health needs, or just have a very hectic schedule, but prefer to eat nutritious homemade meals, I can provide them with that service," Billy comments.

Billy explains that being a personal chef is the business he has always dreamed of; he is able to be creative, work closely with his customers and really dedicate himself to cooking. With a baby on the way, he also sees this as a business opportunity to do what he loves without having to be stressed-out running around town for his next big catering event. Nonetheless, although Billy is switching gears he is not completely done with catering yet. He has a loyal customer base which he will continue to serve as it pays very well and can often be exciting, like the two events he has catered for Senator John Kerry.

Ultimately, cooking (along with surfing) is Billy's true passion. He has worked in the culinary realm in various capacities, from restaurants, yachts and fishing boats, to huge parties and now you never know, he might just be in your neighborhood. Along with hard work, knowing when to ask for help and being disciplined, Billy says that it's imperative to enjoy what you do.



"Many kids go to culinary school and all they think about is owning their own restaurant; I was advised against that early on and I'm happy I took another route. Now, I'm finally doing something that I'm sure I will be successful in and I know I will enjoy it very much," says Billy.

Entrepreneurship Story: Maria Solano



At Eva's Bakery in San Ysidro, Maria Solano is hurriedly finishing a birthday cake that will be picked up at noon. The shop is a small storefront in a strip mall overlooking Tijuana, just off the 905 Freeway on Beyer Street. There are plenty of schools nearby and inevitably the

bakery's busiest time of day is from 2:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. when her shop fills with the famished after school crowd. They rush to her store anxious to munch on some delicious Tostilocos (Tostitos with hot sauce), sip on a soda or delight in some flan.

Like many small business owners, Maria had never thought she would have her own bakery. After years working behind the scenes at a deli in La Jolla and another one in Chula Vista, she says the biggest transition she had to make was to serve clients face to face. In her last job, the owner put her in charge of the shop's bakery and it was there where she learned how to run a business and began dreaming that one day she would be her own boss.

Maria had always baked for family and friends' parties and after much coaxing they convinced her to open her own shop. Soon thereafter, her sister-in-law informed her that there was a retail opening in the little strip mall where she worked. The shop was already furnished for a bakery; the previous owner was retiring and was selling the business with the equipment for \$20,000. Maria raised part of the sum from savings and family, but she was short a bit. After attending a few group sessions at the Foundation for Women, they referred her to ACCION San Diego to apply for a loan. She was extremely intimidated to go to a bank so when she heard about the simple process and personable staff at ACCION San Diego she called right away. Within two weeks, ACCION San Diego was able to provide Maria with a \$6,000 loan to complete the remaining payment for acquiring the bakery.

Now, after four months in business, she has expanded her services to include party packages with empanadas and tamales. Just last week, she baked 100 empanadas and a cake for a party for only \$180.

"Those are my starting out prices, but as soon as people are hooked, prices will have to go up," says Maria smiling.

Volunteers Available to help you!

We now have a group of dedicated volunteers who are eager to help our clients in many areas such as **accounting, business management, financials, Microsoft Office and QuickBooks**. Any Client who wishes to take advantage of these services can contact his or her loan officer for more information.

EntrepreneurshipWeek USA

With a theme of "What's Your Big Idea?, Take it On!, *EntrepreneurshipWeek USA*, February 24 – March 3, 2007, is a week long effort to

celebrate the power of entrepreneurship and to ignite the nation's consciousness around the importance of being entrepreneurial. The nationwide goal is simply to increase public awareness of entrepreneurship.

On a national basis, *EntrepreneurshipWeek USA* is sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, The New

York Times and Inc. magazine. Official events are being planned in cities across the country, culminating in Washington, D.C, where the focus will be on the importance of policy to the nation's entrepreneurs.



Spotlight on Small Business Community Coalition Member:



Alliance for African Assistance provides assistance, here in the United States and abroad, to: refugees, internally displaced persons, immigrants, those seeking asylum, victims of torture and war, distressed women and children, and altogether those suffering from economical hardship to become self-sufficient and help bring back their dignity

and respect. The mission of their Micro-enterprise Program is to provide those living in the United States with refugee or asylum status technical assistance related to doing business in the United States. Their services include, evaluating a business idea or an existing business, starting a business to create an economic future, strengthening or expanding an existing business, providing an opportunity to apply for a small business start-up loan, providing an opportunity to apply for a small business loan to strengthen or expand an existing business. They also provide low-cost interpretation and translation services in more than 65 languages. Interpreters are available seven days a week, including after hours. For more information visit www.alliance-for-africa.org, or call (619) 286-9052.