



## **Steve Buresh's Cheesecake Store – Illinois SBDC at Joliet Junior College**

For years Steve Buresh made his cheesecake for friends and family. But when he lost his job at the height of the recession, he decided it was time to take control of his career. With the tremendous support and encouragement from his wife and two daughters, he opened his own business, Steve Buresh Cheesecake Store. Today after three years of making his specialty cheesecake out of a shared kitchen and selling it online, Steve is opening a storefront location in Plainfield, IL which is scheduled to open later this month.

While entrepreneurship runs in his family, Steve said he had a lot to learn about running a business. "This is where Joliet Junior College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) came in," Steve says, "I met some great people there who helped me. I learned a lot about operating a business from the classes and seminars I took there." The SBDC at JJC is a free resource for entrepreneurs to utilize as they approach the various stages of their business, and offers a variety of services such as one-on-one consulting, seminars, and referrals to professionals and lending institutions.

Steve also learned a lot about business from his family's restaurant Frank Buresh's Lobster House, which his grandfather started in his home. Like his grandfather, Steve decided to include his own name in his business. "I'm putting myself out there by doing that," Steve explains, "It's a takeoff on my grandfather's ideal. He put his name on everything. He believed if you put your name on it, you put your heart into it too. "

When Steve needed capital to take his business to the next level, he came to Accion. "I was on my 12th bank rejection when I learned about Accion from the SBDC at Joliet Junior College," Steve says. "The Accion loan process was great and very fluid; everything just meshed together." As part of Accion's services, Steve also worked closely with an Accion loan officer who provided him with additional business support. "It was nice working with someone who knew what I was going through as a small business owner," Steve says. Steve received the capital he needed to purchase the equipment and supplies to grow his business. "The Accion loan gave me the boost I needed and the feeling that this would work," Steve says.

When asked to give advice for other aspiring entrepreneurs, Steve quickly says the best advice he could give is to just keep going. Despite the bumps he has experienced over the years, Steve says there have been many great moments as a



small business owner, such as making customers happy. "It's the greatest feeling when you supply a product or service that makes customers happy and they come back for more," Steve says, "I think that's what many small business owners feel good about. It's not just about the money."

And it's easy to see why customers keep coming back to Steve's business. His cheesecakes, which are always made fresh to order and contain no dyes and preservatives, also include some interesting twists on traditional concepts such as his peanut butter and jelly cheesecake, banana split cheesecake, and maple bacon cheesecake. And for those on the go, cheesecake in a jar is also an option.

Steve recently hired 5 part-time employees and plans on opening two more stores in the next five years. "We deliver to customers up to 30 miles away, so it would be nice to have a store they could go to." In the meantime, Steve is hard at work serving the Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana area.

Michael McClinton, business analyst with the Illinois SBDC at JJC, said, "Steve was very passionate and proactive in pursuing his business goals. It is a privilege to assist clients like Steve who are eager to put their ideas into action." To learn more about the services of the Illinois SBDC at JJC, please call (815) 280-1400 or visit [www.sbdcjcc.com](http://www.sbdcjcc.com).

For more information about Steve Buresh's Cheesecake Store, visit [www.cheesecakestoreonline.com](http://www.cheesecakestoreonline.com)

***Submitted by Accion***