

SBA Resource Partner is a Main Ingredient to Starting a Small Business

SBDC provides counseling to help The Cupcakerie get started



L to R: Karen Friel, SBA District Director; Janet Williams and Anna Carrier, Owners of The Cupcakerie; Sharon Stratton, SBDC Business Coach

Janet Williams and Anna Carrier, Morgantown, WV natives, had successful careers working in a local law firm but their passion for making and eating sweet treats led them to entrepreneurship.

Williams and Carrier were colleagues for a short time before quickly becoming friends due to their passion for cooking and baking. Carrier was attending law school and working at the firm where Williams was a paralegal. Carrier was obtaining her JD-MBA and knew she wanted to pursue her dreams of opening a business. Their friendship took a twist and turned into a partnership when Carrier told Williams she was leaving to chase her dream and Williams pitched the idea of a cupcake shop. You can say the rest is what you would call history.

The Cupcakerie opened in January 2011, and the ladies catered and provided deliveries until their storefront could open on Willey Street in September 2011. During this time they received counseling from SBA's resource partner, the Small Business Development Center's Business Coach, Sharon Stratton.

“I had the pleasure of working with Janet and Anna on the accounting and marketing side of the business,” states Stratton. “They were experienced bakers with a law background and understood that part of the business very well,” states Stratton.

In the last five years The CupCakerie has seen great success. They are now constantly busy with the storefront and wedding catering. They employ five to eight employees depending on the season and note staffing in a college town is the most difficult portion of their job.

Williams and Carrier advise other small businesses to seek out their local Small Business Development Center stating, “There are a lot of resources out there available to you, you just have to ask a lot of questions and do your homework.”

The U.S. Small Business Administration helps small businesses start, grow, and succeed. For more information on the programs and services available through the agency, visit www.sba.gov.

This article does not constitute or imply an endorsement by SBA of any opinions, products or services of any private individual or entity. All of SBA’s programs and services are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. The SBA is an independent federal agency, created in 1983, to assist small businesses start, grow, and prosper. The SBA provides financial assistance by: (1) making loans to help families and businesses recover from national disasters and (2) providing loan guarantees to commercial financial institutions for working capital (7a loans), building/land/equipment (504 loans through the Certified Development Corporations), and for exports. Through our resource partners, the SBA also offers a variety of business development program and services such as training, government contracting and export assistance. SBA resource partners include Small Business Development Centers and SCORE (Counselors to America’s Small Businesses). For information on the SBA’s programs and services contact us at 304-623-5631 or www.sba.gov/wv.