

# **SBDC at SIUE assists Minas Espresso to bring Brazilian coffee to the Metro East**

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EDWARDSVILLE - Owner Bruno Nobre of Minas Espresso, Inc., with the guidance of his business partner and father-in-law Norberto Torres, approached the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville (SIUE) late last year about marketing his Brazilian aromatic coffee.

Nobre had been working with the SBDC since November of 2017, so he was able to move quickly through the startup process. Additionally, he has ample experience in farming coffee beans and is eager to get his product to consumers.

The SBDC was able to help Nobre with the content of his business plan. Growing up in Brazil and traveling around the world, he has vastly improved his English, but there were some things with which he still needed assistance. SBDC Director Jo Ann Di Maggio May provided feedback on his business plan and strategies, as well as setting up networking connections. Specifically with marketing, chamber of commerce and insurance referrals, May wanted to get Nobre on the correct path for getting his product and business ready for the market.

“I have enjoyed working with Mr. Nobre,” May says. “He is a hard worker, determined to be successful in his business venture. Bruno is extremely personable and has the skills and motivation to lead his company. I look forward to all of Minas Espresso’s success and supporting them along the way.”

Nobre appreciates how supportive the SBDC has been throughout this process. “Jo Ann was always checking in to offer support and services frequently,” he stated. He is confident that May supports his business and where it will go in the future. He knows that he can count on May and the SBDC with guidance that he may need throughout the business ownership process.

Nobre’s coffee is being imported from his farm in Brazil. The coffee farm has been in his family since 1935 and started with his grandfather, Benedito Inacio.

Nobre grew up on this farm and got his first job there, as well. There are many memories and stories stemming from it. He learned the ropes and the little jobs that help run the farm, such as watering trees or getting water to the workers.

Nobre’s mother managed the farm after his grandfather passed away. He wanted to be able to utilize the farm for his start-up and to not let his grandfather’s hard work and legacy perish. In 1996, Nobre took control of the farm and started from scratch. However, Nobre left the farm to pursue his engineering education and career, but eventually felt as if something was missing.

Though Norberto Torres' path in life was different from Nobre's, their beginnings as engineers were quite similar. As Torres pursued his education as a metallurgical engineer, he spent more than 20 years working for the multinational tire manufacturer Pirelli.

Torres' dedication to Pirelli resulted in moving with his family to Italy, where he gained more experience and learned both English and Italian. When he eventually returned to Brazil, he bought a small farm on the countryside, where he would go with his family whenever possible to relax and take a breather.

In 2015, Nobre and his family moved to the United States for a job, a project manager position for an engineering company. He noticed he was still missing something in his life – part of home. He saw an opportunity to bring his passion for coffee and family together, as well as put his career experiences to the test.

His involvement in the family coffee business was finally becoming tangible. Nobre decided that he was going to start his coffee business and reached out to the SBDC around Thanksgiving. Minas Espresso will help support his family as well as his family in Brazil.

When Torres heard about his son-in-law Nobre's stories regarding a coffee venture in the U.S., Torres saw an opportunity to start a new business while pursuing something meaningful that connected to his love for the countryside. As a coffee lover himself, Torres decided to support Nobre's dream, become his business partner and open Minas Espresso.

They believe that Brazilian coffee is the best, and they want everyone to have a taste of it, all while helping out the Brazilian farmers on Nobre's farm and offering amazing coffee to American families.

Metro East residents enjoy supporting small businesses, especially when they are family owned and this is a perfect example. Customers receive innovative products, support local businesses and their community, explore new shops, and have unique shopping experiences.

Minas Espresso, Inc.'s current goals are to sell online and to local stores. This includes, but is not limited to, restaurants, hotels, grocers and more. Nobre is in the process of trying to finalize plans for Coffee Tours at Minas Espresso warehouse. Patrons will be able to take a class, taste test, experiment with tastes and see the entire process of making coffee – similar to a brewery tour, but for coffee! Nobre and Torres' long-term goal is to open local coffee shops.

Minas Espresso, Inc. will have its Grand Opening on Saturday, April 28 from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. The warehouse is located at [4767 Signature Industrial Drive, Unit C](#), in Edwardsville.

The first 100 individuals to pre-order five or more bags will receive an electric grinder. Pre-order Minas Espresso Coffee at [minasespresso.com](http://minasespresso.com).

Contact Minas Espresso, Inc. at [888-916-4627](tel:888-916-4627) or at [info@minasespresso.com](mailto:info@minasespresso.com).

The [Illinois SBDC for the Metro East](#) assists start-up ventures like Minas Espresso, Inc. as well as existing businesses headquartered in the nine-county region of Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe and Randolph. It is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and [SIUE](#) as a service to Illinois small businesses.

By aiding entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the Metro East by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining new jobs and encouraging new investment. It enhances the region's economic interests by providing one-stop assistance to individuals by means of counseling, training, research and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses. When appropriate, the SBDC strives to affiliate its ties to the region to support the goals and objectives of both the [SIUE School of Business](#) and the University at large.

To learn about the SBDC, contact the [IL SBDC for the Metro East at SIUE](#) at [\(618\) 650-2929](tel:(618)650-2929).