

SBDC for the Metro East Celebrates Expansion of Client Sweet Katie Bees

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville celebrates Sweet Katie Bees' July expansion to a new location at 131 E. First St. in O'Fallon.

Owners Kate Hendrix and her daughter, Beth, are delighted to take their business to new heights by offering customers inclusive options for treats and coffee, as well as breakfast and lunch.

“We are enthusiastic about this move, and we are optimistic for the future,” Beth Hendrix shared. “We are thrilled to share our expanded offerings with our fantastic customers in O’Fallon’s flourishing downtown area.”

Opening a bakery was always on the Hendrix’s bucket list, and the success of Sweet Katie Bees has been a dream come true. The business started small for a reason: to provide customers with sustainability through local and organic goods, while also making accommodations for different allergies and diets.

The business has expanded from a simple cupcake shop and espresso bar into much more, now offering dessert, coffee, breakfast, lunch and a smoothie bar. Sweet Katie Bees takes pride in having something for everyone, with their most recent additions being for customers who are on the keto diet, as well as those who are diabetic, vegan or gluten free.

SBDC Director Jo Ann DiMaggio May has been extremely helpful throughout the expansion process by being a resource, a sounding board, and an overall support base to Kate and Beth. She’s also assisted in increasing sales and traffic, helping with staffing, and the strategic posting of job listings.

“It’s nice to know the SBDC is a resource we can always turn to,” Kate said. “If they don’t know something, they will find out. We strongly recommend the SBDC to any business starting fresh – that’s what they’re there for, good and honest feedback that truly helps you to succeed.”

“Kate and Beth are remarkable business owners and have worked hard for several years,” said DiMaggio May. “They never hesitate to ask questions and are eager to learn. This expansion will allow them to better serve their growing customer base. We look forward to assisting Sweet Katie Bees as it continues to grow.”

Next, Sweet Katie Bees plans to create an online store. Additionally, the owners would like to expand into St. Louis.

Customers can visit Sweet Katie Bees’ new O’Fallon location Tue.-Fri. from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Tue.-Fri. and Saturdays from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Contact Sweet Katie Bees at 618-622-9930. For more information, visit <https://www.sweetkatiebees.com> , Facebook @ SweetKatieBeesCupcakeAndCoffee Bar, Instagram @sweetkatieb, or Twitter @sweetkatiebees.

The Illinois SBDC for the Metro East assists start-up ventures like Sweet Katie Bees 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.