

Sweet Cravings Passionately Perseveres, Gains Support From SBDC At SIUE

by Megan Wieser

August 14 2021 7:15 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - Gourmet popcorn, delicious ice cream and a plethora of Italian ice flavors are available at Sweet Cravings, an old-fashioned, small town shop in Fairview Heights.

Owner Vickie Fair has worked with the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for the Metro East at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Director Jo Ann Di Maggio May since March 2019 to achieve her business goals.

In that time, the SBDC has assisted Fair by finalizing her business plan, pursuing financing options, sharing grant information and providing additional support as needed. The SBDC even used an opportunity under an SIUE U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant to provide logo design, packaging assistance and UPC code help.

After Sweet Craving's grand opening in August 2020 in the midst of the pandemic, Fair ran into another difficult situation. Due to bursting pipes causing water damage to the floors, Fair's business was temporarily closed for 6 weeks.

However, Fair did not let the pandemic get in the way of her business success. In her search for financial assistance, she contacted the SBDC. Di Maggio May assisted Fair with the application process for the well-known Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) offered to help assist small businesses. It was a lengthy and detailed process which eventually paid off.

Fair realized that the passion and energy that she put into her business was not worth giving up and is thankful to have made it through such a crucial time.

"The SBDC has been there to help me along my journey. Marti (last name here) and Jo Ann helped tremendously with the loan application process," said Fair.

"Miss Vickie is a hard worker and highly motivated business owner," said Di Maggio May. "It is great to see her perseverance through such adversity, and it has been an honor assisting her. I look forward to working with Miss Vickie for a long time."

As she continues to work on improvements to Sweet Craving's storefront, Fair's goal is to serve as a place in the community that can bring back memories for those who used to walk to the corner store to buy ice cream. She hopes Sweet Cravings will be a place where community members can make new memories.

Sweet Cravings is located at 706 Lincoln Hwy. in Fairview Heights. The store is open from 12-6 p.m. on Sunday, 3-7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 12-7 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information, contact Sweet Cravings at 618-589-9045 or sweetcravings4all@gmail.com, and find them on Facebook and Instagram at @sweetcravings4all.

The Illinois SBDC for the Metro East assists start-up ventures like Sweet Cravings 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

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.