

LIC Bakery Is NFP Of the Year

BY THOMAS COGAN

Artisan Baking Center in Long Island City, dedicated to education in the food industry, was honored as Not-for-Profit of the Year at the New York Industrial Retention Network's (NYIRN) annual breakfast in Manhattan in late June. NYIRN is now 10 years old, and at the breakfast, held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel on 42nd Street, it hailed Artisan Baking Center and 10 other small businesses that are even younger—calling the latter, who are located in four boroughs, the 10 Under 10. The breakfast was preceded by a trade exhibition that was larger than at previous NYIRN breakfasts, held at the South Street Seaport. Marking the opening of the breakfast was a short film that showed how NYIRN put one of its energy grants to work so that MarJam, a building supply company in industrial Brooklyn could install a solar energy operation and lessen its dependence on the industrial electrical grid, a move NYIRN described as “blue collar goes green”.

Artisan Baking Center, NYIRN's Not-for-Profit of the Year, is a project of the Consortium for Worker Education. It was founded in 2001 and is located at 36-46 37th St. ABC began by conducting classes to prepare job seekers for entry-level employment in the culinary and baking trades and in the service field. That purpose is currently maintained, but additionally the facility is available on weekends and hours when training isn't being conducted for persons developing small culinary businesses. The La Guardia Community College Small Business Center and also Kitchen Incubator or Mi Kitchen Es Su Kitchen, the development group run by Kathrine

Gregory, coordinate such entrepreneurial activity.

In accepting the award, Rebecca Lurie, ABC director, said that developing businesses is “no easy accomplishment”. She also saluted Gregory for her determination. She said that two of ABC's objectives are revenue, of course, but also work with dignity. Toward that end, training might entail ESL classes or whatever else it takes to raise employment or entrepreneurialism above mere work or competition.

In alphabetical order, the 10 Under 10 entrepreneurial winners are: Aurora Lampworks Inc.; Bimmy's; Daedalus Design & Production; Dough Ray Me; Globus Cork Inc.; Material Process Systems; Pat's Exotic Beverages; Rasol Food; Scrapile, and Verë. Aurora Lampworks' Dawn Ladd, in accepting the award, said she constantly encounters persons amazed that a manufacturer and restorer of lighting and lamps would be located locally. But Aurora is local to the city, employing a dozen people in Williamsburg and attempting to bring the environmental approach to lighting fixtures new and old, an example of the latter being the lighting on the Great Western Stairway of the State Capital Building in Albany.

Bimmy's, which subtitles itself Food Made With Love, is run by Elliott Fread, or Mr. Bimmy, who told the breakfast audience, “I'm a Brooklyn boy, and I'm staying.” Not in Brooklyn, though, since Bimmy's is located at 47th Avenue and 33rd Street, bordering Sunnyside, to which it was moved from Manhattan when Fread found available space for renovation and expansion. With 115 employees and a mainly wholesale operation, Bimmy's prepares food (lovingly, Mr. Bimmy

insists) for specialty and health food stores, coffee bars and airport waiting areas from New York to Washington. Fread's further expansion plans include a line of retail locations.

Daedalus Design & Production was begun in Red Hook in 2001 but is now located in the Greenpoint/Williamsburg Industrial Business Zone. With 18 employees that comprise welders, carpenters, scenic artists, draftsmen and project managers, Daedalus designs not only for theater but also for locations and occasions as widespread as a high-end luggage store in Arizona and a bar/restaurant in Park Slope or a mayoral press conference in City Hall. When founders James Robertson and Pierre Kraitsowits accepted the award, one of them told the audience before promptly leaving the stage: “Thanks, but we're late for work.”

Dough Ray Me is a midtown Manhattan maker of a variety of small specialty cookies that owner Jon Chazen names after his friends, so that cookies named Luna, Veronica and Summaiya (which contains oatmeal, raisins, sour cherry and potato chips), among others, are for sale. They are sold in gift boxes in downtown cafés, high-end retail stores and by special order. Said Chazen: “I want to make people smile.”

Globus Cork employs 10 persons in The Bronx and Material Process Systems about 15 in Williamsburg. Globus, in business since 2001, had an excellent display of its cork walls and flooring, one that emphasized the company's use of water-based stains, finishes and adhesives. Material Process System was begun in 2003 by Matthew Josephs and Steven Urbatch, a woodworker and metalworker. Kitchen cabinets, casework and stainless steel accessories are the com-

pany's specialties; an early installation was at a 55-unit condominium in sight of the plant. They envision a workforce 10 times their current one. Globus owner Kenneth Bollella told attendees that he's trying to establish his small company at home and abroad (which might explain the way he spells colour in his literature). He said he's been asked why he wanted to locate his company in New York City and answered that the people here impress him. “I love cork and I love New York!” he exclaimed.

Two other Bronx companies on the list, each family-owned, were Pat's Exotic Beverages, started in 2000, and Rasol Food, which began making its chief product, empanadas, nine years ago in—Georgia! Pat Lindsay of Pat's Exotic was persuaded to go into business with the Caribbean-inspired beverages she had been making for church gatherings. These days, she, her son, Howard, and Carl Dunn run a company with a dozen workers, turning out nearly two dozen different drinks that have such names as Irish Moss, Tamarind and Guanabana, and selling them to restaurants (West Indian and otherwise), bakeries, health food stores and supermarkets. They seek to expand both manufacturing space and product line. Dunn told the breakfast audience he's even been selling on the West Coast. Rasol combines the names of Ramón and Solbey Acevedo, who moved from Georgia to New York and at first made the meat-vegetable-spice-corn dough delights at home, then in a commercial kitchen in Jamaica. A kitchen in The Bronx, a few blocks north of Yankee Stadium, allowed expansion—and the continued success of what it calls its “Miny 'mpanadas” is prompting further expansion.

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