Monroe's Small Business Development Center Opens an Entrepreneurial Center

The Small Business Development Center at King Graduate School has opened a new center to assist local business owners and entrepreneurs. The center will also serve as a space to counsel clients and conduct training events on topics ranging from basic financial principles to using the internet and social media to promote one's business.

For years, the Small Business Development Center has helped local business owners bolster struggling businesses and turn business ideas into workable models. Many of the center's clients are Monroe students looking to create their own businesses. Most outside businesses are referred through a partnership with the New Rochelle BID, although some actually get hired in the future. The help is invaluable. "I am going to use this experience on their resume to reflect their experience in working with new and growing businesses," says Ken Blackwood, co-founder of Irie Jerk Chicken.

According to Ken Blackwood, co-founder of Irie Jerk Chicken, "the help is incredible to have this private viewing area for the Mardi Gras parade. Monroe alumni Richard Harris, whose business, Island Blend Juice Bar is slated to open in mid-May, says, "my experience at the SBDC was excellent. I was looking to create their own businesses and turn business ideas into workable models. Many of the center's clients are Monroe students looking to create their own businesses. Most outside businesses are referred through a partnership with the New Rochelle BID, although some actually get hired in the future. The help is invaluable." He and cofounder Clive Edmondson worked with students of the SBDC to develop ideas for bottling and marketing the sauce they use in their mobile food business.

President Jerome and I were lucky enough to spend time in Florida this winter, where we connected with alumni and prospective students at our Alumni Reunion on Saturday, March 15th at Universal Studios in Orlando. It is hard to believe how widespread our graduates are: once all concentrated in the New York City area, they now live in areas around the world. LinkedIn continues to be a useful tool for us to be in touch with our graduates, no matter where you live, so we encourage you to join and stay connected!

We are looking forward to our upcoming events, which will give our graduates a chance to maintain their strong connection with Monroe. A new Alumni Ambassador Program, headed by Lauren Rosenthal, aims to establish a strong Monroe presence in all the geographic areas in which our alumni now reside. Homecoming weekend will be Oct. 25th, 2014, so save the date. We are planning exciting events for the whole family!

Enjoy the warm weather, and we will keep you posted about the upcoming calendar.

All my best,

Leslie Jerome
Alumni Director

Alumni Spotlight: Kimone Salzano, Wild Mangoes

Kimone Salzano has loved cooking since she was five years old. The chef, who moved here from Jamaica in 2000, now brings that passion to her catering and private chef service, Wild Mangoes. Kimone specializes in seafood dishes and Caribbean-Italian fusion dishes such as Jerk Pasta. She caters parties to up to 100 people, as well as in-home personal catering events.

Kimone believes in making a difference through food. She regularly volunteers at soup kitchens, and she and her ten-year-old son frequently deliver food she prepares for those in need. Kimone hopes to one day open her own fine-dining soup kitchen. Monroe College prepared Kimone for all of the details of owning her own catering company with core classes such as catering management, menu design and pricing. She is also extremely grateful for Monroe's support of her own catering company with core classes such as catering management, menu design and pricing.

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On Saturday, March 11th, over 50 Monroe College alumni, faculty, prospective students and their families gathered for an alumni reunion at Lombard's Seafood Grille in Orlando. The event, hosted by President and Mrs. Jerome, gave graduates, no matter where you live, a chance to share their unique experiences at Monroe with each other and with prospective students and their families.

Richard Cruz ('85), who attended the reunion with his wife, Daisy Torres ('84), said, "I was lucky enough to meet at Monroe. We are celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary!" Professor Jeffrey Donovan ('81), shared his ongoing Monroe story, once a Monroe student himself, Professor Donovan has been teaching Information Technology at Monroe for over 15 years. Hydie Aurelien ('08), who flew in from New York to attend the event, said, "I received my Associates, Bachelors, and Master's degree in three years at Monroe College, and now I am pursuing my Doctorate."

After dinner, the group was escorted on an unforgettable private tour through the main streets of Universal, as thousands of people lined up to wait for the Mardi Gras parade to begin. Nivia Cox ('50) said, "it is incredible to have this private viewing area for the Mardi Gras parade. Only Monroe could do this for us!"

Plans are underway already for the next Alumni Reunion. Please contact Lauren Rosenthal to learn more about the Alumni Ambassador Program: rosenthal@monroecollege.edu