

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Whisk Expands its Specialty Baked Goods Business in Sheboygan

Sheboygan County, WI – The Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) works with local entrepreneurs to encourage investment in community-identified markets. One market that has been identified is high-end baked goods; specifically, baked goods catered to food allergy requests.

The SCEDC and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at UW-Green Bay has assisted Shawna Silberzahn of Whisk in expanding her growing, in-home, bakery business into a storefront at 633 N 8th Street in Sheboygan.

Silberzahn's passion for baking can be traced to her childhood, assisting her mother and grandmother in the kitchen.

"I grew up in Stevens Point, where I remember many weekends baking with my mother and grandmother," Silberzahn said. "I loved looking through Grandma's recipe box and enjoying her famous chocolate cake with a dusting of powdered sugar, or her molasses raisin cookies. My mom always had me help with baking our Sunday dinner desserts and I drank it all in."

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in health, promotion, wellness and nutrition from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Silberzahn pursued a career promoting health and wellness lifestyle initiatives.

"I loved the idea of supporting people through healthy lifestyle changes, which is where I got my first job in Sheboygan, as a health coach," Silberzahn said. "I worked with companies all across the United States by supporting lifestyle changes with ideas, support and resources. I loved the job, but didn't love being in an office all day. After that, I decided to stay at home with my kids and started my master's degree in dietetics."

Six years ago, Silberzahn was introduced to the many benefits of a Paleo-based diet, which led to major lifestyle changes.

"I love studying nutrition and became aware of a Paleo-based diet back in 2013," Silberzahn said. "As a family, we made the shift to the lifestyle where we revamped our diet by eliminating grains, dairy, processed foods, sugar and increased our intake of vegetables, grass-fed meat and fruit. My daughter's and my eczema completely cleared up. My husband noticed significant health improvements as well. Overall, we felt great, but we found family gatherings like birthday parties, weddings and barbeques to be a problem. I decided to do a lot of baking myself with our new diet focus. I did a lot of trial and error to find treats that not only we enjoyed, but everyone else in the extended family and friend circle did too."

Under Silberzahn's direction and innovation, Whisk offers an intriguingly diet-conscious take on the dessert-making process.

"Whisk offers desserts that are completely free of grains like wheat, corn, rice or oats; gluten, dairy, refined sugar and soy," Silberzahn said. "In addition to that, we offer options that are nut-free, egg-free, Keto [low carbohydrate] and things that can be made with grass-fed butter and cream. Whisk wants anyone to be able to enjoy a dessert that caters to their dietary needs. I aim to provide treats that are not only delicious but beautiful too. I love to decorate cakes with fresh flowers, herbs and other local edible things."

Silberzahn says the SBDC Entrepreneurial Training Program (ETP) worked wonders in helping her develop a business plan for Whisk.

"I went into the ETP class with the goal of expanding my successful in-home business, but had no idea where to start," Silberzahn said. "That was September 2018, and I will open my doors to the public on May 27th. The class was incredibly helpful for determining the feasibility of your idea, and then the specific steps to pull together a cohesive action plan. I appreciated the support of Ray York and the SCEDC for the accountability and resources. I am overwhelmed with the support that Sheboygan offers for small businesses."

SBDC Director Tara Carr is a strong believer in Silberzahn's specialty bakery concept. "Specialty bakeries are trendy, and on the rise, due to diet restrictions and food sensitivities," Carr said. "Shawna's new bakery will meet the dietary needs of the Sheboygan community and be pleasing to the palate."

York believes Silberzahn has all the ingredients required to succeed.

"Shawna reached out to the SCEDC for suggestions on possible expansion for her in-home business," said York. "She was growing rapidly, and it was easy to see why. Her products are works of art and taste amazing, and Shawna is great at marketing her products and herself. She took the SBDC ETP class to help solidify her idea and establish a financial plan that worked for her. It was exciting to see her progression and how she connected with local business partners."

Aside from baked goods, Whisk also features a broad selection of locally roasted and organic coffee, including a select menu of drip coffee, pour-over coffee and nitro cold brew, along with a select list of specialty simple syrups featuring honey and maple syrup with no refined sugars.

Silberzahn says Whisk strives to be the go-to bakery for those seeking gluten-free, keto and vegan baked goods.

"Whisk is unique in the fact that we will always have gluten-free, keto and vegan options available every single day we are open," Silberzahn said. "We make special-order items as well, such as bread, pizza crusts and granola that fits within these guidelines. We go the extra mile to make sure all customers will leave our store happy and not worrying that they've destroyed their hard work when making a dietary change."

Whisk will open its new bakery on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, and will have limited hours over the following several weeks. A grand opening has been set for Sunday, June 23. Whisk will be open 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday through Tuesday, closed Wednesday, and open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday.

For more information on Whisk, visit whiskpaleo.com, email info@whiskpaleo.com or call 920-783-6049.

For more information about SCEDC entrepreneurial services please email or call at info@SheboyganCountyEDC.com or call (920)452-2479

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Attachment: SCEDC logo, SBDC logo, Whisk logo, Whisk Cake 2 img, Whisk Cake 1 img

The Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) is a countywide private/public partnership, leading economic development efforts to improve the economic wellbeing and long-term prosperity of the businesses, residents and communities of Sheboygan County, through collaborative retention, expansion and attraction efforts for business and employment development. The SCEDC leverages a variety of tools available to encourage business growth and job creation. Key performance indicators tapped by SCEDC track and measure businesses assisted and resources leveraged. By applying many tools to assist businesses and communities and help them succeed, SCEDC achieves increased economic prosperity for Sheboygan County.

