

2007 Emerging Business of the Year



Name of Business	Johnny Brusco's New York Style Pizza
Owner	Family Owned Corporation — Franchise
Nature of Business	New York Style Pizza Restaurant
City	Overland Park
County	Johnson
Phone	913 - 897 -1188
Web Site	www.johnnybruscocom
Business Structure	Corporation, Sub-S
Business Began	February 2007
Employees at Start Up	0
Employees in 2006	27
KSBDc Counselor	Robert Kolich

“Even though I am a CPA, it was nice to know I could rely on the experience of the SBDC.”

“Bob reassured me and confirmed my thoughts — he provided a realistic action checklist.”

Mike Gleason, Owner

During the spring of 2006, a principal of a Kansas City area accounting firm came to a career altering conclusion. His goal of owning a family business could not be realized without a dedicated search and plan. Mike Gleason, a successful CPA, knew that he wanted to own a business with growth potential. From experience, he was aware of the many challenges of starting and managing a small business. To minimize risk, he started to look for a proven format in a franchise organization or an existing business to purchase.

A native of New Jersey, Mike came to Kansas to pursue an accounting degree at the University of Kansas. Over the years, his love of east coast food, especially New York style pizza, led him to sample the few offerings available locally. His search for pizza and a business opportunity started and ended when it led to Johnny Brusco's New York Style Pizza. Mike discovered Brusco's via an online search. He was delighted with the pizza and the quality operation and even more excited to learn they had nearly 60 franchises and still planned to grow. Thinking that this might be the answer, he checked them out.

“Work hard to delight your customers – exceed their expectations!”

After researching the opportunity, Mike was encouraged and contacted the franchisor. But during preliminary conversations he learned that, although they had expanded to Tennessee, they had not considered going to Kansas for some time. Before going to Atlanta to meet the franchise principles, Mike came to the KSBDc to learn more and to prepare for the meeting. Bob Kolich, Mike's KSBDc consultant, encouraged him and told him that his experience and resume were excellent and would be impressive. He also prepared Mike to be the interviewer in their meeting. In this way, Mike would learn if this could be a partner and partnership that he could count on.

The Atlanta meeting went well. Both parties (Brusco's and Mike) were impressed with one another. Mike's knowledge of the area demographics encouraged them to consider expansion westward. Bob later assisted Mike in reviewing his business plan, searching for sources of capital and reviewing potential locations. Since leaving the accounting field, Mike has a growing business with fine potential and more than 25 employees. Mike concedes that it has not been as easy as he had hoped and that he is working harder than he imagined. However, Mike is following his passion and has achieved greater work-life balance.

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