

# 2007 Emerging Business of the Year



## The KU KSBDC assisted Wheat State Pizza in its startup and growth, including:

- One-on-one counseling
- Franchising
- Business plan assistance
- Start-up cost/ cash flow projections
- Market research

Name of Business	Wheat State Pizza, LLC
Owner	Ryan Murphy
Nature of Business	Restaurant
City	Lawrence, KS
County	Douglas
Phone	785-865-2323
Web Site	<a href="http://www.wheatstatepizza.com">http://www.wheatstatepizza.com</a>
Business Structure	Limited Liability Company
Business Began	2004
Employees at Start-Up	25
Employees in 2007	200
KSBDC Counselor	Maggie Bornholdt & Will Katz

Wheat State Pizza opened its doors in Lawrence, Kansas in June 2004. Ryan Murphy, a veteran restaurant manager in the Lawrence/Kansas City area started with the single location at 23rd and Louisiana Streets in The Malls Shopping Center. He will be opening the 12<sup>th</sup> Wheat State Pizza in Olathe in early 2008.



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Ryan said it was a combination of things that led to his dream of owning a pizza restaurant. "Since I was a kid I wanted to do it. I always wanted to open a restaurant. I grew up in Emporia where my dad was a wheat farmer. I decided to create a recipe using wheat." Wheat State Pizza makes its own wheat crust — something that sets it apart from other pizza restaurants.

**"KU KSBDC has been helpful from the start-up phase and on through the growth process. They have been willing to research and explain information the business has needed. A service like this is great! Don't pass it up."**

**Ryan Murphy, Owner**

Hiring honest people and attention to detail are two things Ryan believes make a successful business. Ryan encourages his employees to be proactive and to address problems while they are small so that they do not escalate. Ryan says that working in the food industry is similar to playing on a team. "When you are busy at the restaurant and your team comes together to get the job done it creates an adrenaline rush."

Ryan is appreciative of the services provided by the KU KSBDC. He found the research they did especially helpful. Ryan's ten-year plan includes expanding to other states to develop "a nice, solid, regionally-based company in the Midwest."