

Up Close & Personal

Nadja Piatka: Focusing on the Positive...The Recipe for Success

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Eighteen years ago, Nadja Piatka began a business with just \$100. She baked muffins and brownies in her home kitchen then sold them to local coffee shops. Now the Buffalo resident is an international food supplier, selling her products throughout the United States and Canada.

Piatka's phenomenal success story began in 1993. She found herself an unemployable single mother after her marriage of about 20 years ended. "I finally decided that the only person that would hire me was me," she said. "So I started doing what I love- baking." Piatka would begin baking her low-fat, low-calorie muffins, brownies and other desserts at 4 a.m. She sold them to local bakeries, where they sold "like crazy." As her product reputation grew, she eventually out-sourced to a bakery that baked and distributed her product. Since then, she has out-sourced to larger facilities and sold her product to large corporations including McDonalds and Subway Restaurants.

Piatka is also a leukemia survivor. About four years ago, she received her diagnosis. "It was hard since I worked for myself ... I wasn't able to work on the business," she said. "It was important, though, that I had a positive mental attitude throughout it. It helped me to be strong enough to get through the leukemia and put it behind me. It's important to take good care of yourself."

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"I always believe in responding to the market and what is most important to other people- eating healthy and eating foods that are natural without preservatives," Piatka said. Her products, Nadja Foods, are available at Top's Markets, Wegmans and Subway Restaurants. Her gluten-free macaroons can be found in the frozen-food section at Top's Markets and Wegmans, which also carries her Petit Angel Cakes.

Piatka also speaks in front of women's groups and businesses. "I love to do that (speak)," she said. "It's really important to not think about the negative and look at what opportunities

are presenting themselves (presently) and stay focused."

Amidst her array of phenomenal accomplishments, Piatka is most proud of her family. "I'm proud of my children ... my daughter ... my son," she said. "I'm blessed and happy to have a wonderful husband, Douglas Smith, who has been very supportive of everything I do. It's important to support each other."

For more information about Piatka's product visit her website www.nadjafoods.com. Email veronica@nadjafoods.com to hire Piatka to speak in front of an audience or at an event.