Success is on the Menu for Racine Entrepreneur

Gerald Bester saw two years of planning and persistence pay off when he opened his restaurant, Gerald’s Smokehouse Cuisine, last June in Uptown Racine. Today Gerald’s Smokehouse has become a major dining and entertainment venue for people in southeast Wisconsin.

A key ingredient in Bester’s planning process was the Entrepreneur Training and Business Plan Program (ETP) at the UW-Milwaukee Small Business Development Center where he was able to create a solid business plan and sharpen his business skills.

As an independent trucking contractor, Bester already knew how to run a business, but he still benefitted from the expertise and knowledge of his instructors, especially in writing an effective business plan for his new venture. “After seeing the business plan I created in the ETP program, people have actually wanted to hire me to write their plan, too,” says Bester.

His plan also caught the attention of the City of Racine, which now uses it as an example of what they like to see in others wanting to start a business in Racine.