

## The struggles of entrepreneurship

By Evan Latvalla and Ashley Lopez Dishmeyer

Entrepreneurship offers endless opportunities and great potential for contributions to society. It has become a way for people to seek out change, rather than waiting to adapt to it. However, entrepreneurialism is much more challenging than it seems.

Chef Josean Jimenez from MRKT Farm to Table in South Deerfield has experienced the ups and downs of being an entrepreneur. In 2012, Jimenez opened his restaurant which specialized in farm to table ingredients sourced locally from Western Massachusetts and New England.

“The love of food has always been an important aspect in my family, so I unconsciously gravitated towards the kitchen,” said Jimenez. “My moving to the states and attending culinary programs in school helped push my passions forward. Eventually, I started working in restaurants in Northampton. I fell in love with cooking and I wanted to pursue it wholeheartedly... so I opened my own restaurant.”

Jimenez also spoke about his experiences growing up around people who shared the same vision. He believes every cook’s dream is to open their own place. Jimenez personally witnessed the operation of his close friend’s business in Holyoke. The successes of Fernandez Family Restaurant and Catering inspired Jimenez to open his own place. He met some individuals that were willing to support his idea for a restaurant which allowed him to gain relationships with customers and build his own audience.

“It kind of makes it easier to open a restaurant when you have a good support system behind you,” he said.

Family has always been very important to Jimenez. After a few years of running a successful business, he chose to step back from MRKT Farm to Table in 2016 to spend more time with his young children. Jimenez mentions how entrepreneurialism pressures owners to sacrifice a great deal to be successful, specifically much of family time.

An article in the October 2017 issue of *Community, Work & Family* focuses on the struggles faced by many workers with families who face a demanding schedule.

“Given the increasing necessity of having workers deviate from a standard schedule in a 24/7

economy, our findings was that nonstandard schedules were associated with increased work-to-family conflict among all respondents raises cause for concern.”

Jimenez said he dedicated so much time in his business and missed out on many family milestones.

“After stepping back from the restaurant, I made it a clear goal to try to make up some of that time and spend more time with my family. I’m refocusing on having a balance between family and work,” he said.

Despite stepping back from his restaurant, Jimenez still has the drive to open up a new business in the future, where his family can be included in the process.

“I’m always looking for the opportunity to open something new, yet more casual than what I did before, and definitely with family. I think family is a good support system that can function as an important role in the restaurant industry,” he said.

Jimenez is not alone in the struggle to achieve success in balancing his dream job and family life.

A study done on Latino-owned businesses by Stanford University describes Latinos as the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs. In the last 10 years, the number of Latino entrepreneurs has grown 34% compared to 1% for all business owners in the United States.

However, Latino-owned companies make less revenue, averaging \$1.2 million in revenue compared with \$2.3 million brought in by a white-owned company.

Since Hispanics on average continue to have lower salaries than whites, this means Latinos typically have lower credit scores, which can mean higher interest rates or being turned down for loans.

The Stanford study presumes if Latino-owned employer firms were given the same chances, they would generate an additional \$4 billion in revenue and 1 million jobs.

Find more stories from other business owners and advice on how to become a successful entrepreneur by watching *Presencia* on WGBY Springfield May \_\_\_(?).