

SMOOTHIE KING

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ONE SMOOTHIE KING FRANCHISEE ENJOYS THE “FRUITS” OF HIS LABOR

(Ocala, FL) --- Whoever said family and business don't "blend" has obviously never met Jerry McGrath. As the newest Smoothie King franchisee, McGrath is not only consulting with his family about his venture – he's employing them.

Smoothie King, the original creator of the smoothie, blends real fruits, pure juices and nutritional supplements to create over 50 flavors, 40 of which contain less than 1g of fat. Smoothie King also sells nutritional products such as vitamins, minerals, low-fat snacks, sports nutrition supplements and more.

It was Smoothie King's sports nutrition concept that first caught the eye of Jared McGrath and consequently, his father, Jerry. As a football player at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Jared frequented the local Smoothie King. Impressed by their assorted menu and instant popularity with all age groups, Jared thought it sounded like an excellent business proposition for his father, who was looking for a new career.

After carefully planting the seed in his father's mind, Jared would call home ever so often and ask him if he had contacted Smoothie King yet. The answer was

always “no,” so after weeks of incessant nagging, Jared finally took matters into his own hands and made the initial contact with Smoothie King.

“Jared called one day and said, ‘Dad, you have an appointment this Saturday at nine o’clock,’” Jerry says. “So we went up for a ball game and went over and met with the local franchisee in Nashville.”

With two kids heavily involved in college sports and him constantly traveling to keep up with their games, McGrath decided to hold off on buying a franchise. But once his kids graduated from school, he began talking with Smoothie King corporate once again and decided it was time to purchase his Ocala, Florida store. And who better to run his store than his newly graduated daughter, Kelly Kilcrease.

“It’s very much a people business,” McGrath says. “Quite honestly that’s one of the reasons why I wanted to do this. It gives me something to do, but Kelly’s the one who’s going to be managing it on a day-to-day basis.”

Slated to open in late June, McGrath’s Ocala store is located in one of the busiest shopping centers in the city. Nestled in between a Starbucks, Bed, Bath and Beyond and an Office Depot, he hopes to get some of their foot traffic. He’s even planning a grand opening that will include free smoothie samplings, along with a joint marketing initiative with high school athletic and college teams.

Sold in three different sizes (21oz., 32oz. and 40oz.) the smoothies range from \$3-\$7. Popular flavors include Caribbean Way, Pineapple Surf and Peach Slice Plus. While smoothies are still the bulk of the business, Smoothie King also does a great deal of business in sports nutrition with their supplements, vitamins and low-fat snacks.

“Everything now is about being in shape, watching what you eat and maintaining a healthy lifestyle,” he says. “When you drink one of our smoothies, you’re not

thirsty afterwards. We pride ourselves on being top of the line. Smoothie King is the original – they are the king.”

After years of being in the theme park industry, McGrath is looking forward to a new career that will hopefully spawn two or three more stores in Ocala and hopefully retirement. And to make sure the business stays in the family, Jared will be on hand to help out with some of the marketing initiatives, while Jerry’s other children, Kristin and Michael will lend a hand as needed.

Currently, there are over 300 franchises in operation, located in 34 states -- with an additional 59 stores in development across the US.