

**Small Business Development Center
Penn State**

Helping businesses start, grow, and prosper.

Business is Brewing at B.R. Beans!



"The SBDC helped us put our dreams on paper...and made it a reality."

- David Rodgers

David Rodgers
Kathy Carroll-Rodgers
Ed Bauer
B. R. Beans
21 North Dorcas Street
Lewistown, PA 17044
Mifflin County

www.poconomountaincoffee.com

Coffee Shop, Retail Fudge, Baked Goods, and Coffee Outlet

Year Founded: 2007

SBDC Assistance: Attended 'First Step of Starting a Small Business' Workshop, Business Plan Development, Research Industry Trends and Food-Service Regulations, Used SBDCNet

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In early January of 2006, David Rodgers and Kathy Carroll-Rodgers met with Michael Ryan at the Penn State SBDC's Outreach Office in Mifflin County. David had attended one of the Center's 'First Step of Starting a Small Business' workshops, and they were ready for one-on-one consulting.

For several years, they had been growing their home-based gourmet fudge business, while managing several restaurants and bakeries, and serving in business management positions in other industries. The husband and wife team had a wonderful skill set that they could apply to a new business.

After doing some research, they decided to pursue opening a coffee shop and retail bakery outlet in the Lewistown area. From feedback gathered from local business owners and individuals, they heard that a coffee shop that had been located in Downtown Lewistown, but which had closed when the owner decided to sell the building, was sorely missed. There was no other establishment in the area that offered an assortment of specialty drinks in the 'lounge-like' atmosphere found in the coffee shops in large cities.

Over the next year, as the Rodgers found a potential location for their business and obtained cost estimates for renovations and the equipment and supplies needed to get started, they worked through several revisions of their business plan with the SBDC. After careful consideration of several different factors, they determined that the location that they had chosen was not going to be the most feasible, and that they needed to do some additional research.

By the summer of 2007, the Rodgers brought a partner on board. Ed Bauer, the owner of Pocono Mountain Coffee had been expanding his coffee business for several years. In addition, he had many contacts in the industry, which provided a wealth of information. It seemed to make sense for David, Kathy, and Ed to work together on this project.

The team met with the SBDC to revise the Rodgers' original business plan to reflect differences in start-up and recurring expenses for a different location, as well as additional income that would come about from the new partnership. The team knew that their new project had tremendous potential, and quickly moved forward with their plans.

Financing was arranged to purchase a building in Downtown Lewistown, and immediately renovations were started. After many years of neglect, the building was completely renovated, creating an appropriate atmosphere for the coffee shop. The original red brick walls of the building were exposed and restored, to compliment the bright yellow and rough-hewn board walls in the rest of the shop. The food-prep area was built to meet PA Department of Agriculture standards, and the eating area was furnished with counter-height seating as well as comfortable tables and chairs. The building, once an eyesore, quickly became an attractive addition to the revitalization of Downtown Lewistown.

B.R. Beans was ready to open for business on October 31, 2007. The Grand Opening happened to coincide with the Annual Halloween Parade in Lewistown, which generated a tremendous amount of walk-by traffic, creating an instant awareness in the community.

The owners are the sole employees of the business, and make sure that all customers are completely satisfied. Their line of coffee, tea, smoothies, and specialty drinks, soups, cheese, marinara, BBQ, and dessert fondues, gourmet fudge, biscotti, cheesecake, and other baked goods, and their coffee catering service have literally become the talk of the town. After listening to their patrons, the menu will soon expand to include sandwiches. A steady flow of customers keeps coming through the door to enjoy all that B.R. Beans has to offer!