

Small Business Success Awards 2004

Richard Stockton College SBDC

Clients: Mario and Theresa Suarez and William Castiglioni

Business: Island Sun Tanning

(Suarez) Mays Landing Rd & Highway 9

Somers Point

609-926-1110

<http://www.islandsunsalons.com>

(Castiglioni) 3101 W. Brigantine Ave.

Brigantine

609-266-0566

Mario and Theresa Suarez opened the original Island Sun Tanning salon in 1987 in Somers Point, focusing on great products and services at low prices to generate a volume business. Over the years, the original location has expanded to 12 tanning units and UV free spray booth to service over 15,000 customers and increased sales of retail products to include a wide variety of tanning lotions, sunless tanning, skin care, jewelry, teeth whitening and other related products.

Despite an initial reluctance to try franchising, Mario and Theresa met with Joe Molineaux from the Richard Stockton SBDC to discuss the concept in early 2001. Joe and the SBDC provided the information and counseling that made it possible to license their first franchise that summer. Since then Molineaux and the SBDC have assisted with several other franchises and continues to consult with Mario Suarez. The company has grown to a number of franchises in southern New Jersey.

Molineaux worked with Island Sun franchisee William Castiglioni, initially an Island Sun customer who found the prospect of franchising the business appealing. Castiglioni started attending seminars and received consulting at the SBDC. At a "Building and Financing Your Business with the SBA" seminar he met with Darren Mitchell of Sun National Bank and started laying the foundation for a \$75,000 SBA loan enabling him to open his salon in Brigantine.

In his first year of ownership, Castiglioni has continued to work with the SBDC and is aggressively marketing, thus far experiencing excellent growth.

The stories of Castiglioni and the Suarezs exemplify the role the SBDC played in cultivating winning partnerships and successful franchisee/franchiser relationships.



Stockton SBDC Director Joe Molineaux with franchisee William Castiglioni of Island Sun Tanning in Brigantine and franchisors Theresa and Mario Suarez of Island Sun Tanning in Somers Point.