

Project Profile



Location:

120 Willow Run Drive
Kane, PA
cjspirits.com

County:

McKean

Description:

Distillery start-up

Total Project Cost:

\$320,000



CJ Spirits



People:

There's something in the water in the Allegheny National Forest. It brings out the wild side in visitors, and the natives – like funeral director Sam Cummings and semiconductor sales manager Tom Jones – have an untamed streak. So when Pennsylvania started licensing small distilleries, the two boyhood friends heeded the call and decided to launch second careers. Why not? “The local water is perfect for distilling,” notes Tom.

Progress:

With a plan from the Clarion University Small Business Development Center, Tom and Sam foraged for financing before finding The Progress Fund which provided a \$120,000 loan.

Impact:

Not far from the Kinzua Sky Walk and the Elk Country Visitor Center, on historic Route 6, Tom and Sam built CJ Spirits, which features cocktails, food, tours and tastings. The Allegheny spring water isn't the only thing that imparts a taste of the Pennsylvania Wilds. “Over 80 percent of our grains are grown locally within 15 miles of the distillery,” says Tom. Scores of outlets are selling their Rocksov Ultra Premium Vodka, Graveyard Sam's White Whiskey and Wilds Gin. “We're doing one batch at a time,” Tom says. “This allows us to make a purer product than the larger producers. You are only getting the ‘hearts’ of the distillate in our vodkas.”

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