

Location:

110 East Pitt Street
Bedford, PA

County:

Bedford

Description:

Real estate purchase loan

Total Project Cost:

\$320,000



LIFeSTYLE NEXTdoor

People:

Bedford is a surprising hub for Italian cuisine because of one man: Stefano Ferrari. After immigrating to the U.S., Stefano began offering relaxing-but-unforgettable weekend dinners. Aided by a prior loan from The Progress Fund, he opened Living Italian Food & STYLE (LIFeSTYLE). He and partners began importing and wholesaling Italian foods. Then, they rented part of an historic building and opened the breakfast-and-lunch café NEXTdoor. When their friendly long-time landlord decided to sell, Stefano decided to buy. “We definitely have no plans to go anywhere else,” says Stefano.

Progress:

As Stefano sought to buy the building, a partner opted to transition out of the business – a complicated combination. As luck would have it, David Kahley, president and CEO of The Progress Fund, stopped for a meal. “He was like, ‘What’s going on? What do you have in mind?’”

recounts Stefano. The legal steps to transition one partner out while simultaneously buying the building was a complicated legal process but the end result was a \$320,000 loan from The Progress Fund.

Impact:

Stefano and his brother/partner Davide may be the only born and bred Italians in Bedford, but they’ve shared Old Country customs with scores of employees and thousands of customers. Now they’re expanding the import and café businesses while bringing their casuale eleganza to brewpubs in which they’ve invested. “We kind of grew to be a very strong attraction for people looking for gourmet Italian food,” says Stefano. “It’s like Field of Dreams.”

This project was financed in part using Pennsylvania Small Business Credit Initiative (PSBCI) funds from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development.

The Progress Fund is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

