



## Louisiana Small Business Development Center

For Immediate Release

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### LSBDC Helps Sclafani Cooking School Mix up a New Recipe for Success



**“Papa” Sclafani**

Three generations of Sclafani’s have grown up in the food industry, beginning in 1945 with Pete “Papa” Sclafani who opened the popular Restaurant Sclafani in the New Orleans Mid-City area. In 1958, Restaurant Sclafani moved to Causeway Blvd. in Metairie. The restaurant attracted both locals and celebrities like Frank Sinatra and Frankie Avalon.

First son, Chef Frank Sclafani, Sr., CEC, FMP, studied the restaurant business and cooking under “Papa” Sclafani for 30 years. But in the 1980s during the oil bust, Chef Frank Sclafani decided to close the restaurant and open a cooking school. The nationally renowned Sclafani Cooking School at 107 Gennaro Place in Metairie has trained professional chefs, restaurant managers and other food service professional for 20 years.

But when Hurricane Katrina hit, Sclafani Cooking School saw its enrollment drop dramatically. Many of its students were displaced. New students couldn’t find lodging to attend the month-long program, and grant opportunities were less available for Louisiana students.

That’s when granddaughter Dianne Sclafani came to the LSBDC Greater New Orleans Region for help. LSBDC consultants worked with the Sclafani family to revamp their business plan and marketing strategy.

“Even though there is a great demand for cooks in the News Orleans area, we have not been able to attract a lot of new students. Many of our current students are coming from outlying regions, like Baton Rouge and Hammond. They’re having difficulty finding lodging. So with the help of the LSBDC, we are researching the feasibility of creating an on-line school. This would allow students to do most of their culinary book study online,” said Dianne Sclafani.

“We are very grateful to the LSBDC for all their counseling, guidance, and research to help us adapt and survive in this changing economy. Our family has been in the food service industry for three generations, and we intend to continue that family tradition,” said Sclafani.

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**Chef Frank Sclafani has cooked for three Presidents including Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George Bush.**