

# ARCADIA NEWS

Newspaper Clipping

## Mother brings SMILE to life

By Sarah Stecko

Home-baked biscotti is no laughing matter to SMILE Biscotti, who opened their doors six months ago. They have already sold more than 20,000 pieces - more than 130 per day.

So, what's the secret? Consistency.

The baker, Matt Resnik, has a keen eye for details and uniformity when it comes to the products.

Favoring sameness and performing tasks intricately are some of the symptoms of his autism disorder. Resnik was diagnosed with Classic Autism at age two, but with the help of the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC), he has found a way to turn his disorder into an advantage.



**Baker, Matt Resnik**

Resnik's mother, Denise faced the dilemma that many parents of children with autism are concerned with: what happens to children who grow up to be adults with autism? According to the SARRC website, about 85 percent of adults with autism still live in their parents' homes and 90 percent are unemployed. Denise's strong desire for her 22-year-old to have a productive lifestyle led to the creation of SMILE Biscotti. SMILE stands for Supporting Matt's Independent Living Enterprise.

The key agent in achieving this entrepreneurship was the support of SARRC. Prior to launching SMILE Biscotti, Denise actually co-founded SARRC and is a current board member since 1997. SARRC has helped in innovating autism research, increasing awareness and providing interest-based programs to appeal to every individual. The "Rising Entrepreneurship"



program is one of the latest to enable others like Resnik to build a future using their passion. SMILE Biscotti's goal is to sell 100,000 biscotti by the end of the year. SMILE Biscotti is already set to expand to retail outlet Arcadia Farms by late spring.

He sings while he bakes: "I like to think that means he's happy with the work," said Denise, who affectionately calls him Matty.

Another successful entrepreneur through SARRC's programs is Matt Cottle, who is the baker for Stuttering King Bakery since 2012. Cottle chose the name after his inspiration of King George VI's quote, "The highest of distinctions is service to others." Like Resnik, he also participated in the "Culinary Works" program and was enrolled in one of its first classes. His mother Peg is the manager of Stuttering King Bakery.

"It's important for other parents of adults with autism to know that they can't do it by themselves," said Peg, who actively helps in the business.

According to the SARRC website, "One in 88 children are affected by an "Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)." The amount has rapidly risen from it being one in 10,000 children being diagnosed with it two decades ago. There is still no known cause or cure for autism, but awareness has increased as April is declared National Autism Awareness Month. There are now more support resources supplied by organizations like SARRC for both children and adults.

Like Stuttering King Bakery's Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/StutteringKingBakery](http://www.facebook.com/StutteringKingBakery).