

## Andrew Chmielewski

Andrew Chmielewski knew he didn't so much want a business degree as he wanted a business. And the perfect product was waiting for him in his father's kitchen. Andrew's father (and his product's namesake, Dave) is a retired Detroit firefighter known at the station for his homemade toffee. It was such a hit that friends and family who had received the toffee as gifts started placing orders.

With an initial investment of \$10,000 in 2010, Andrew launched Dave's Sweet Tooth, making the toffee in his dad's kitchen and selling the product at local craft shows. Dave's Sweet Tooth has grown to a 5,000-square-foot manufacturing facility now in Harrison Township and sales in more than 5,000 stores including, T.J. Maxx, Marshalls and HomeGoods stores nationwide. In addition, the company most recently inked a deal with Kroger, along with local favorites such as Whole Foods Market, Busch's Fresh Food Market and Fresh Thyme Market. The toffee business employs 18 and is projected to surpass \$500,000 in 2016.

If that's not rewarding enough, Andrew was also a Crain's "20 in their 20's" winner for 2016 and after a May 5th TV appearance on "Good Morning America" resulted in 3,200 orders and more than \$120,000 in revenue in one day.

One thing Chmielewski learned with Dave's Sweet Tooth is that the best way to sell a product is by getting people to try it. "People love our toffee because it's a soft, it doesn't stick to your teeth and it tastes delicious." Andrew said, "I always knew the business was going to succeed, because I knew we had a great product, I just needed the right people to guide me on the path to success."

