

2022 SUCCESS STORY

DEVILS LAKE

NORTH DAKOTA
SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Your Ideas - Our Expertise - Your Success

PAUL'S C-STORE & GAS

FORT TOTTEN -- Justin Yankton kicked around the idea of owning a convenience store starting at an early age.

Justin's interest in business stems from his father owning Paul's Grocery in Fort Totten, for over 30 years. Due to his declining health and subsequent passing away in 2014, Justin's brother took over the family grocery store. Over the next year, Justin's urge to open up his own convenience store grew.

He planned to purchase the existing gas and laundromat building from his siblings and convert the whole location into a convenience store. Although it was a smaller location than the grocery store building, he knew this would be the more feasible option and it was conveniently located on the corner of the same lot.

From the very beginning, he was able to rely on Sandy Shively, ND SBDC Devils Lake advisor, for assistance. From creating a business plan and calculating startup costs, to obtaining the appropriate licenses and permits and even registering his business with the state, Sandy was there to help.

"Sandy was able to give me direction, advice, and information on how to start and where to begin on my business plan," Justin noted. He also stated that one of the most difficult challenges of

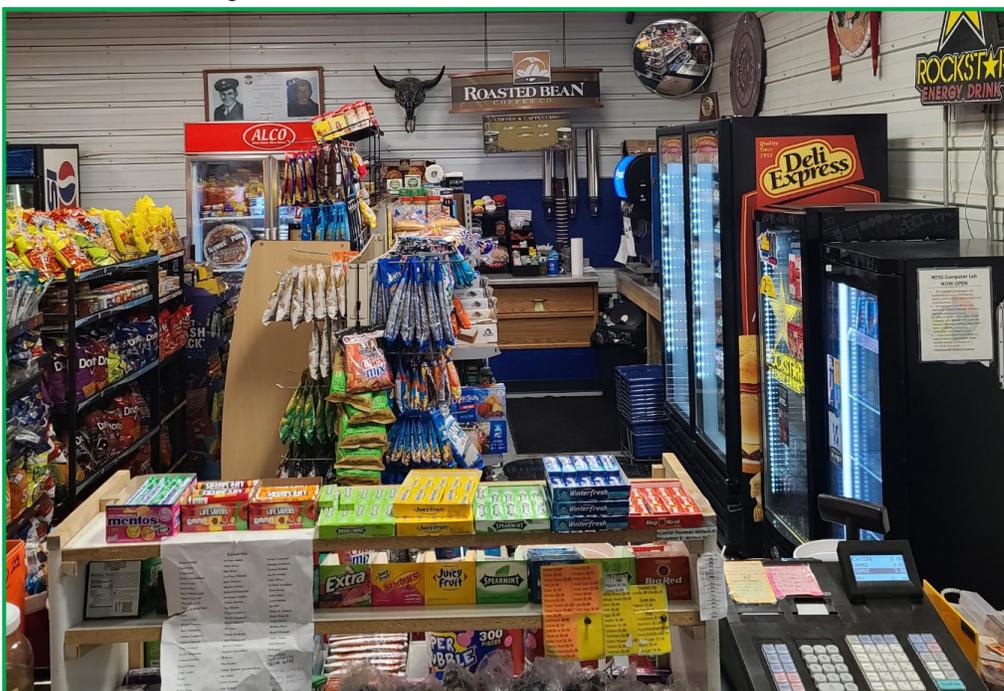


starting your own business is just getting started and Sandy was able to help him overcome that hurdle with her patience and expertise within the industry.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2015, Justin continued to work with Sandy on the business plans while he was gutting and renovating the building. In tribute to his father, Justin named this new convenience store Paul's C-Store & Gas and they officially opened for business on November 6th, 2015.

For the past five years, Paul's C-Store & Gas has grown leaps and bounds. They were able to expand from one employee to five full and four part-time employees. Getting to interact with his customers, employees, and vendors every day is what keeps Justin going. He attributes the success of his business to the Fort Totten community saying, "We wouldn't be here without our community."

Additionally, Justin has kept in contact with Sandy as he is now looking at expanding his store. Sandy has been able



to draw up financial projections and expansion costs for him. The ND SBDC is excited to watch Justin and Paul's C-Store & Gas grow.

He leaves other aspiring entrepreneurs with his advice, "You have to put a lot of time into your business, it doesn't run on its own. If you need help, advice, or information, the ND SBDC can help."

