

Nick D’Anna ’12

Owner, Carrello Di Cannoli
and The Cannoli Shop



D’Anna earned his bachelor’s degree in Business from DelVal in 2012. He had a successful career in medical sales before he and his wife Teresa embarked on a family dream to open a small business rooted in their Italian heritage. He found the perfect location for his Cannoli shop near his hometown in New Jersey, but then the COVID pandemic hit and he had to make the difficult decision to not move forward with the lease.

He was deflated for a moment, before his wife Teresa presented a new idea – the mobile cannoli cart. The entrepreneurial couple ran with the idea, getting a custom cannoli cart crafted in Italy and inventing the cannoli caddies to make them mobile. Now, four years later, The Cannoli Guy has millions of views on Instagram and they are booked with weddings and events through 2026. Just this fall they opened their first storefront called The Cannoli Shop located at 376 Hollywood Ave in Fairfield, New Jersey – the first cannoli shop in the state.

Office Space:

D’Anna’s “office” includes a fleet of mobile cannoli carts available for weddings and corporate events across the tri-state area. With a team of 10 “cannoli guys” serving at various events, D’Anna is still hands-on, working alongside his team. “I never wanted to be one of those business owners who sits back and forgets what it’s like to be on the front lines,” D’Anna says. “I love being part of the events.” Now that the brick-and-mortar shop is open, D’Anna divides his time between managing daily operations at the store and overseeing his event bookings.

Roles and Responsibilities:

As small business owners the D’Anna family does it all – from social media and marketing to accounting, scheduling, procurement, booking, sales and everything in between. They are also raising two kids who love being at the store and watching mom and dad work. D’Anna takes pride in the quality of the ingredients they use so securing the right ingredients to make the perfect cannoli’s is an ever-evolving task. “I have always had this vision and plan for this business, but to be honest I never could have predicted the way that this has gone and the success that we have had so early. I give all the credit to the people around me that helped us get to this point and I’m excited to see where it goes next,” said D’Anna.

Connection to DelVal:

“DelVal and the business courses I took there still stick in my mind as I run this business and I truly believe DelVal gave me a foundation for all of this,” D’Anna said. D’Anna reflects on the courses he took as a business major, including economics and finance and more notably, small business entrepreneurship. He also remembers the value of fresh and local ingredients that the small agricultural school instilled in him. “Looking back now, I probably wish I paid more attention in many of those classes because now I’m using a lot of those skills my professors were teaching each and every day,” D’Anna concluded.

The Rewarding Aspect:

For D’Anna, running this business is about family legacy. His father, who immigrated to the United States from Sicily in 1952, always dreamed of opening an Italian market or shop. “I’m grateful to continue that dream through our family business,” says D’Anna. Sharing the journey with his wife and children brings him tremendous pride, and he hopes one day to pass down a thriving business to his kids, just as his father passed down his dream.

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