

# 2019 SUCCESS STORY

GRAND FORKS



NORTH DAKOTA  
SMALL BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

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## FRENCH TASTE

**GRAND FORKS** - Warren Sai, owner of French Taste LLC, came to the University of North Dakota to pursue a Major in Engineering in Petroleum. At the time, Warren was 18. Soon after starting, Warren realized that he did not enjoy what he was learning. This was not an instant decision. He went through his first semester,

reached out to his father to let him know that he was not enjoying engineering, and his father said, "Son, keep doing it, you will like it." Warren proceeded with a first full year and reached out to his father again, and his father said, "Son, keep doing it, you will like it." Warren gave it a second year. After year 2 concluded, Warren came to a turning point in both his schooling and his career. He changed over to Communications and Entrepreneurship and now has settled in as a Marketing major.

He realized that it was a sign when he had a trip planned to go to Cancun with his friends, arrived

at the airport and was told that his passport was expired. No Mexico for him. He was faced with staying in Minneapolis or going to Chicago to face his dad. He figured now was the best time to tell him his plan to change majors.

Warren had fond childhood memories of making crepes

with his mom from time to time. Each year, as he'd grown up, he'd gone back to France to spend time with family and would always go to a famous restaurant that served crepes. And, for a time, his dad had opened and operated a crepe restaurant in Chicago. The one thing Warren had not forgotten: his love for crepes.



Warren Sai

### Challenge/Solution

Warren was working with Kathy Lund at the Pancratz Center in the College of Business and Public Administration and she referred Warren over to the SBDC. He didn't want to feel stuck just going to class and a home, but was anxious to apply what he was learning to a business of his own.



The SBDC helped Warren with his business plan as he wanted to make sure it was right. He received assistance in getting prepared for competitions and was able to feel more prepared and confident. “The



conversations made me even more sure about what I was doing,” he said.

He took the plunge and opened up French Taste LLC in May of 2018 with the focus on spreading French culture through serving sweet and savory crepes.

“Nicole and the ND SBDC’s services were the best. She was always helpful and answered every question. She has knowledge, patience, many resources to provide, a relaxing atmosphere, and with her being a small business owner herself, she was able to help me with what I was feeling or experiencing with my journey,” he stated.

food court and within six months, he was able to open up in the Memorial Union at the University of North Dakota serving crepes during consistent days and hours where people could easily find him.

He placed third in a business plan competition, joined the Chamber of Commerce, accomplished his projected sales for the first year in month five, and received a Dream in Action award in January of 2019.

### Impact

Warren started with a folding table serving crepes in downtown Grand Forks during the Farmer’s Market, Art on the Red, and other community events around Grand Forks. Next came a

His biggest challenges have been learning the food industry and giving his start-up the time it deserved while still being attentive to his classes. He hopes to see the business expand and potentially franchise down the road.

Warren’s advice for other entrepreneurs, “Stay positive. Wake up at 5:00am. Know your goals, priorities, and your mission then put time and effort into what you want to accomplish.”

You can find more information about French Taste LLC on their [Facebook](#) page.

