

Greater Utica

Featured Business

It's safe to say that Frank Saporito, owner of Ancient Shakes in Whitesboro has been intrinsically motivated to become an entrepreneur his entire life. He would stop at nothing to achieve it - it was always purely about the lifestyle and never about the money. After many years of searching for the right avenue, he finally cracked the code. Since 2010, Ancient Shakes has become known all across the Mohawk Valley for their signature meal replacement shakes; however, one could say this business began on a boy's paper route in the 1970s.

In 1972, when Frank was twelve years-old, he and his family moved from East to North Utica where Frank first developed a vision for his future. Most ambitious kids take one newspaper route, Frank had three. He says he ran his paper routes like a "corporation", referring to his strict dedication and meticulous nature. Frank's work ethic wasn't the only thing setting him apart from other kids his age - he also had unique interests. While most boys were reading Sports Illustrated, Frank was religiously reading Entrepreneur Magazine. He didn't know any entrepreneurs personally; however, for some reason, he knew that's what he wanted to do with his life.

In the 1980s, Frank began a twenty-year career in the insurance industry and also in 1981 met Gina, who has now been his wife for 38 years. Frank often drove Gina crazy with his seemingly endless number of ideas for business ventures - some of which he attempted. Frank's first business, was a service in which he provided custom yard signs for special occasions. After moving on from the



yard sign business, Frank purchased a rototiller and trailer and for a brief period he tilled people's yards in the area. Still searching for that special idea, Frank earned his Personal Trainer certification in 1994. For years he'd been a

competitive power lifter and wanted to share his love of fitness with the public. He went on to train many clients over the next handful of years.

In 2000, Frank hit the biggest roadblock of his life - he was laid off from the insurance company. Frank's first venture after losing his job was investing in vending machine equipment and placing them in various businesses across the area; however, it still wasn't what he was looking for. In 2008, he decided to open a fitness equipment business, 5-Star Fitness, in New York Mills. Shortly after the store opened, the economic downturn began and over the next year and a half, Frank was doing all he could financially to keep it afloat. Without the love and support of his immediate and extended family, he says he never would have made it through. But everything changed during one crucial day in 2010.

One day, Frank was staring out the front window of his shop, waiting for customers to come inside. He noticed a young man in the parking lot who had just come out of the gym and started making a homemade protein drink from a jug he took out of his trunk. Before long, a group of his buddies were joining him with



drinks of their own and a tailgate party ensued. That's it! Frank thought to himself, "What if I made customers their shakes on demand and made them better than they ever could?" After all, Frank had been drinking protein shakes for about thirty years.

And so, Frank went into the lab and began experimenting with different concoctions. Before long, the shake business exploded, and Frank traded the 5-Star Fitness name for Ancient Shakes in honor



of the figures and civilizations of ancient history. In 2017, it grew into its current location at 60 Oriskany Boulevard in Whitesboro where Frank is joined each day by his wife Gina and his son Vinny.

Over the years, both the business and menu have evolved to meet customer needs. Regular visitors come from all walks of life; however, they all have one thing in common - they're looking to make a healthier choice that day. With that said, Ancient Shakes is a place where everyone fits in and feels at home. These drinks are made with all-natural nut butters which can also be purchased separately at Ancient Shakes. The selection includes peanut butter, cashew butter and almond butter. These drinks provide customers with a healthy meal replacement - for those that have long struggled to find tasty, nutritious options for breakfast or lunch, Ancient Shakes has been a lifesaver. One misconception about protein is that it's only meant for those who weight train; however, protein can be very effective for those looking to lose fat or maintain essential muscle tissue.

Inside Ancient Shakes is a special atmosphere - in some ways it's reflective of Frank's entrepreneurial journey. Scattered across the walls are a number of signs that bear motivational messages and inspiring quotes. Live music is played constantly on the mounted television. The theme of Ancient Shakes is to never give up, try your best every single day and take care of yourself as you would take care of someone you love. Many years ago, Frank discovered his intrinsic motivation, now he and his family are happy to be a small part of others finding their own.

For more information on Ancient Shakes, visit ancientshakes.com, dial 315- 507-5117 or visit the shop at 60 Oriskany Boulevard in Whitesboro.

