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## Uptown Cold-Brew Coffee Startup to Employ Domestic Violence Victims

By Lindsay Armstrong | September 4, 2015 4:42pm

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS —  
Tastes good, does good.

That's the philosophy behind a new cold-brew coffee company launched by Washington Heights resident Diana Saliceti.

[High Bridge Cold Brew](#) will produce small batch, cold-

brewed coffee concentrate to be sold at local businesses and delivered directly to customers' homes.

But in addition to making a great cup of joe, Saliceti plans to offer job training and employment opportunities to at-risk individuals, specifically victims of domestic violence.



High Bridge Cold Brew Coffee company will offer jobs and training to those who have experienced domestic violence.

Saliceti, a Harvard-trained attorney, left the world of corporate law behind last year to search for a new challenge. She considered many things, including teaching, but ultimately decided she wanted to launch her own business.

The 42-year-old said the seed for opening a socially responsible company had been planted years before while she was still in law school.

“We had a speaker from [Homeboy Bakery](#) in L.A.,” she said, referring to the company that provides jobs to former gang members. “I remember being struck by what an amazing idea it was to use an enterprise for social good as well.”



**Diana Saliceti is the founder of High Bridge Cold Brew, which will start distributing this fall.**

Listening to another speaker almost 15 years later spurred Saliceti into action.

“When I was looking to make this shift into entrepreneurship, I went to a fundraiser for a domestic violence intervention program. One of the

program spoke. With their help, she got her cosmetology license, and that enabled her to find work and get out of this abusive relationship,” she said of the “ah-ha” moment.

women who had been helped by this

“Economic empowerment can make a real difference for these women.”

Saliceti initially envisioned opening a coffee shop Uptown that would offer jobs and free legal clinics to the community.

“I was working on a business plan and looking at spaces, but I kept struggling with, if it’s an espresso bar, how many jobs can I really offer?” she said.

She also had concerns about the privacy of her potential employees.

Saliceti had already purchased a commercial-grade grinder and 40 pounds of coffee beans. She had planned to build a following by first selling her products at street fairs and markets while she worked on opening the shop.

“Then, I thought, if I’m already making this cold brew, why don’t I just focus on that?” she said. “I can create more jobs and open a storefront when I’m already established.”

Saliceti has already contacted New York City-based organizations that support people experiencing domestic violence, and she plans to coordinate with them to find employees who would be involved in all aspects of the company, including making, delivering and marketing the product.

Saliceti was recently accepted into the [Urban Horizons Kitchen](#), an incubator for small food businesses run by the [Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation](#).

Once Saliceti receives her food establishment license from the state’s Department of Agriculture, she will begin producing her cold brew for distribution at the Urban Horizons commercial kitchen in The Bronx. She hopes her first batches will go out this fall.

“A year from now I would hope to have at least a handful of employees and trainees, and to be in the local markets and delivery channels,” she said. “To be on the radar and compete with [Grady’s](#) and [Wandering Bear](#) and some of the other local cold-brew companies.”

The product will also be available for delivery directly to homes and offices, she said.

[High Bridge Cold Brew](#) will produce a regular coffee concentrate, a decaf version and possibly some flavored coffees, Saliceti said. She hopes to expand into teas in the next year.

Saliceti — who has been working to perfect her cold-brew recipe by asking friends and family to test out different samples — added that cold brew isn't just for the summer months.

“It's great for cold coffees, but you can also heat it up,” she said. “A lot of people like that because it's like having immediate access to a high-quality, strong coffee.”

Uptown residents should get a chance to try Saliceti's recipe at the [Medieval Festival](#) in Fort Tryon Park on October 4.

Saliceti chose to name the company after the historic [High Bridge](#) because it connects Washington Heights and The Bronx, the two areas she sees as integral to her business.

“I also like the symbol of the bridge with the job-training angle,” she said. “A job can be that bridge of opportunity to move on to bigger and better things. Hopefully this place will be a stepping stone for people.”

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