

For immediate release

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## SCORE Mentor Helps Baker Devise Recipe for Success

*Oswego's Cake Charming participated in SCORE's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pitch Competition.*

Tiffany Jones had never baked in her life. Yet, while going through a divorce, the mother of four found “a place of solace” in perfecting her brown butter cookie recipe.

“It helped me turn my brain off,” said Jones, owner of Oswego-based [Cake Charming, LLC](#). “It really stemmed, the root of it all, from baking as therapy.”

Since she first put her cookie sheets to use in 2016, Jones, who describes herself as a “self-starter,” has bounced back from homelessness to create a mouthwatering menu of “thickalicious” signature cookie creations such as Sugardoodles (a sugar cookie crossed with a snickerdoodle), brookies, as well as a variety of cupcakes, custom cakes and treats featuring Cognac.

“In my hometown there is no singular storefront bakery and that’s what I aspire to get to,” said Jones, who operates as a home-based baker. “I’m the secret sauce. Anyone and everyone I talk to we’re already family by the end of the conversation.”

In an effort to take her sweets to a larger audience, Jones participated in [SCORE's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pitch Competition](#). She was one of 45 finalists. More than 2,200 small businesses applied to compete in five pitch events. Contestants were pared down to 60 contenders. Participants were matched with SCORE mentors to refine their pitches, strengthen their presentations, and hone their business plans. Jones teamed with SCORE Fox Valley mentor Edmund Peterlinz, who had worked for a bakery ingredient company, ran a technical sales force, sold bakeries and ran distribution centers with bakery ingredients.

“She had a real personal struggle and was trying to work her way out of it,” Peterlinz said of her need to raise funds. “It’s hard to run a business if you don’t have money.”

Peterlinz has leaned on his career experience in helping Jones develop a business plan, identify her value proposition and determine who her customers are. He’s also worked with her on how to cost her product and provided guidance on cottage food laws.

“He really truly has helped me grind and drill into understanding the business profile,” she said. “He’s helped me to identify my what, my why.”

Jones received positive affirmation for her business venture, when, at the pitch competition, one of the judges stood up, took her cookies off the display and passed them out to the other judges.

“I’m learning how to scale the product. I’ve done projections,” she said. “You can be at \$10 million. I know the product will carry itself.”

In the meantime, Jones, who received assistance with a place to live and mentorship through [Bridge Communities](#), pays it forward by contributing to the Glen Ellyn, Ill.-based nonprofit organization.

“I do give back as I can and when I can,” she said. “It’s such a worthy cause.”

To learn more about SCORE, request a mentor, or volunteer to be one, visit [score.org](https://score.org).

#### **About SCORE**

Since 1964, SCORE has helped more than 17 million entrepreneurs start, grow, or successfully exit a business. SCORE’s 10,000 volunteers provide free, expert mentoring, resources, and education in all 50 U.S. states and territories. Visit [score.org](https://score.org).