Ana Rodarte, a successful restaurant owner from Zacatecas, Mexico has always had high ambitions of being a business owner one day. Growing up in Mexico she loved to watch her mother and grandmother cook in the kitchen. They taught her how to cook the family recipes from scratch and with the best ingredients. As she grew up she began to realize how difficult it would be to buy a house and support her family in her hometown. When presented with the opportunity to move to San Luis Obispo, she took it. Ana made the move in 1993 and started working various jobs in the service industry.

She spent 18 years working as a custodian at Cal Poly where she made great friendships and connections within the community. All this time she was preparing tamales, gorditas, and chiles rellenos for friends, just the way she was taught by her mother and grandmother. Her food was a hit and everyone told her that she needed her own restaurant and her entrepreneurial dreams began to take form.

In September of 2015 Ana enrolled in Mission Community Services Corporation’s (MCSC) Spanish Entrepreneurial Training course, “Empezando.” She gained invaluable business information needed to successfully open her restaurant. As an alumnus, Ana received a job opportunity from a local restaurant owner who knew of her culinary talents. While this was a great compliment, Ana respectfully declined as this was not her dream. Shortly after the man called back with an opportunity Ana couldn’t refuse! He asked her if she wanted to buy his restaurant. Ecstatic by this offer she said “Yes!”

As a recent graduate Ana was presented an opportunity to apply the tools and knowledge she gained from “Empezando” immediately. Ana has built a strong mentorship with MCSC Consultant Gabe Quiroz, and continues to meet with him for business advice. Ana says, “Gabe’s advice and knowledge were a great help in getting my business started quickly and correctly.” As an entrepreneur, Ana has learned that “…everything has its time and it will come to you when that timing is right. Now is my time! I am a success.”

MCSC is proud to continuously assist Ana in the expansion of her business. With her initial investment from savings and family, Ana now has seven employees and is recruiting more employees to support the growth she’s experiencing. Although she’s past the honeymoon stage of her business her sales are greatly increasing, “And this is supposed to be ‘slow’ season!” she laughs. Ana gives back to the MCSC community on a regular basis by volunteering as a guest speaker and caterer to MCSC classes. She emphasizes to all students, the importance of obtaining knowledge, and creating an on-going mentorship with MCSC Consultants.

Ana is a successful woman small business owner. She is shaping her dream and fueling her passion “when people enjoy the food and their experience at my restaurant.” Her advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is “Believe in yourself, always. It is not easy but it is the secret to making it.”