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Black Excellence – Nativity Knights: Noel Stemn (Xavier '07) and Isaiah Tatum: Owners of Woo Juice (Arrupe '09)

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Black Excellence – Nativity Knights

Noel Stemn (Xavier '07) and Isaiah Tatum (Arrupe '09)

Owners of Woo Juice

'Freshly cold pressed juices and smoothies that represent our city of Worcester'

IG: Woo_Juice508

What does it mean to you to have a black owned business?

"It truly means everything. We want to be a staple in our community. We want to be role models to the younger generations and show them that they can look like us and make it in our city and own a business. We want to show the younger generation that this is beyond high school and college and that if you have a dream you can achieve it.

This is a crazy thing to think about and realize that this is OUR business. Growing up, we didn't learn that we can have our own business, we were basically told that we couldn't have our own business and it's impossible. The fact

that we have our own business is unreal and we did this and we figured it out, against all odds and what we were told growing up we learned and realized we can have our own business. It takes a lot of courage to step away from your day to day life and pursue a dream and what we wanted but we took that risk and now the respect we are receiving and the feedback is amazing and special to us.”

What does it mean to you to open a business in the city you grew up in?

“Opening a business here in Worcester means a lot to us. We are giving back to the community and that is one of the things we strive for. We learned everything we know here in this city. We wanted to give back and bring health into the community. Health is wealth and Woo Juice is based around health. We did this for the city and to give back to the city. This city is flourishing and we wanted to be a part of the change and continue growing here with our people that made us who we are.”

Why Woo Juice? Where'd you get the name and logo?

“We started with ‘Woo’ because of course we are from Worcester and are based out of Worcester. Juice is just a tastier option, and we wanted to create something so that you can replenish your body. A juicing business is something that is not in Worcester, this is new to the city that is all natural and organic. So that’s where the Woo Juice idea came from.

We wanted to have a logo that is appealing that we can really use for branding. We had some ideas for a logo and decided to collaborate with one of our friends Kofi (Instagram: KoLABfx) and he helped with the creation of our logo. Since we wanted it rooted in our city and appealing the smiley face for Worcester was an easy choice but then we have the smiley face drinking juice to finish it off.”

What has Nativity meant to you growing up?

Nativity means everything to us. It is more than just a middle school. They helped me and my family throughout high school and college and always made sure to reach out. We still keep in contact with teachers like Ms. Horan, and classmates and truly receive the support from all the people we’ve met here. The support that Nativity gives us is huge. Nativity has been staple for everything that we’ve done. It’s been the foundation for us and with everything we do we think back to what Nativity showed us and taught us. No Nativity means there’s no WooJuice, this partnership started at Nativity that is where we met and through the years we have grown and now we have our own business together. So we owe it all to Nativity.

Me and Richard still sit down and talk about the stories and memories we’ve made here at Nativity all the time. Nativity helped me and made me who I am today. When I think of it, Nativity has made the biggest impact in my life. We struggled while at Nativity, we didn’t have this nice building. I remember taking the city bus to school every

morning, the gyms we used for basketball practice and gym class and the work we had to do to make it all possible. Although it was a struggle, it has made me who I am today.

Advice to the younger Nativity generation?

Isaiah: "Don't let your mind hold you back. You can accomplish anything you set your mind to. All you have to do is focus and have the courage and drive to do so. If it's your dream, make it happen, don't let anyone tell you otherwise or try to stop you. Own that 9-5 and do it your way"

Noel: "Stay open minded, the possibilities are endless. Don't let anybody tell you what you can't and can do. Don't be put in a box because possibilities are endless. You can do anything you set your mind to. You'll get the results you want if you put your mind to it. There's no 'right' way to do it; everyone has their own way and path to achieve things you just have to find yours."

What is the Nativity Knight Drink?

This drink was created to give back to the school that made us, the school that brought us together. Nativity was really the best time of our life. It helped me get to where I am. Thinking back to when we were students, of course we hated school and it was frustrating but once we graduated we saw how great this school is and the love for Nativity just kept growing. Nativity helped us grow as people and made us who we are.

We wanted the drink to have that nice purple color, that 'NATIVITY KNIGHT' purple. It consists of blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, and apple juice.

When is WooJuice Opening/Where? What can we look forward to?

Be on the lookout for Early Spring. Look forward to seeing us open on 22 Front St. the Woo Mall (the old Midtown Mall).

You can expect us to talk about Nativity and continue to incorporate Nativity in the stuff we do. Expect us to stick to ourselves and things that made us who we are and what made us, which is Nativity Worcester.

Our plan is to continue our brand and to grow and our goal is to open 1 woo juice in each low income neighborhood here in our city of Worcester.

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