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Contact: Katie Johnson

Tel. 603.502.0688

katie@fromscratchbaker.com

www.fromscratchbakingcompany.com

LOCAL BUSINESS WITH A MISSION: LOVE PEOPLE, BAKE THINGS

WOLFEBORO – People with disabilities are often misunderstood. However in Wolfeboro, a local business owner is setting out to change this perception with a unique business model and a few tasty treats for everyone in the town to enjoy.

From Scratch Baking Company is a mission that Katie Johnson, a Wolfeboro native, took to Indiegogo to raise her start through a crowd-funding campaign. Opening in the spring of 2015, Johnson is seeking to raise all of her start-up costs (a total of \$65,000) through the 30-day campaign that will finish on December 24. However, Johnson’s primary mission is not the money.

“I founded the bakery on the principle that while people with disabilities may have a unique set of challenges, they also have incredible talents and skills to offer the workplace,” said Johnson. “My older sister, Kristin, has Down syndrome and she proves this every single day.”

Graduating in 2013, Johnson earned her degree in baking and pastry arts at Johnson and Wales University and has since been honing her craft at a bakery in Providence, Rhode Island. Since graduating, she sought out a few different business ideas to branch out on her own. But it wasn’t until she realized that she wanted to combine her passion for baking with her love for people, that it clicked. She decided she wanted to provide a place for people with developmental disabilities, like her sister Kristin, to have meaningful employment opportunities.

Johnson chose to open as a business, rather than non-profit, to prove that working with people with disabilities is a viable business decision and does not need to be seen as charity. Johnson’s employees will have the opportunity to work in baking, customer service and landscaping. Each employee will be matched with a role that aligns their individual skill set and talents. Currently, the bakery has four eager applicants who are equally excited for the opportunity as Johnson.

The bakery will open at 45 North Main Street in Wolfeboro and is scheduled for a soft open date in the late spring. The crowd-funding campaign, ending December 24, can be accessed at www.igg.me/at/fromscratchbakingco. For more information, contact Katie Johnson at 502-0688 or katie@fromscratchbaker.com.