

Yogurt franchise to open at Hammond Square

By Joan Davis - Hammond Daily Star
Wednesday, October 21, 2009



A 21-year-old LSU student plans to open a Menchie's Frozen Yogurt franchise at 524 Palace Drive in Hammond Square, across from Albasha Greek & Lebanese Cafe.

Travis Hood of Denham Springs said construction began two weeks ago on the 1,250-square-foot serve-yourself frozen treat shop.

The store will employ 15 to 20 people and will open the first week in December, he said.

A full-time junior business management student, Hood said the idea to open a business came during a mission trip in May with the Baptist Collegiate Ministry at LSU.

"I saw (Menchie's) and knew I wanted to get involved," he said. "Everybody thought I was crazy, but within the next three weeks after returning, I had signed the franchise documents."

His parents, Dr. Ed and Gwen Hood of Denham Springs, are his partners, he said.

Until he gets his staff trained, he will manage the store with some help from his mother, he said.

Menchie's has franchises in Covington and Baton Rouge.

Hood credits his uncle, civil engineer Chuck Spangler of Hammond for selling him on the idea of locating in Hammond Square.

"I knew they were redoing the mall, and Hammond was one of the top cities on my list," Hood said. "It's a college town, and there are good opportunities in small towns."

He has more family in Hammond, also.

His sister, Allison, is a freshman at Southeastern Louisiana University and a member of AOPi.

Hood plans a Greek Night to attract college students and intends to join Hammond Chamber of Commerce, he said.

The store opening will fall between semesters, so Hood said he will have about a month to launch his business.

He has his sights on opening a second franchise in Denham Springs and earning a master of business administration after he graduates in two years.

The web site is www.menchies.com