

Rozzi's Catering Continental Ballroom



Founded in 1975 by Camillo and Judy Rozzi in Kokomo, Indiana, **Rozzi's Catering**, 920 Millbrook Lane, Kokomo, started as a specialty grocery store, deli, and butcher shop. As a way to add revenue, they began offering carry-out party trays which expanded into catering. Eventually, the catering became the main focus of the business and is currently under the management of the founders' daughters Jo Ann and Jennifer Rozzi, both of whom grew up working in the business. Jo Ann is a chef who prepares culinary creations and manages kitchen production. Jennifer contributes her marketing and public relations experience to the marketing and business management. A banquet facility was added in 2005 through the purchase of the Continental Ballroom.

Rozzi's Catering has participated in the Echelon Group Roundtable offered by the Hoosier Heartland Small Business Development Center in Kokomo, the Collegiate Management program through I.U.K., and one-on-one counseling with HHSBDC Advisors, Mike Cassidy and Monty Henderson.

Currently Rozzi's employs 20 full and part-time employees. They have survived the economic down-turn with a strong promotional push, networking, and innovative marketing, all the while, developing the self-discipline to continue this hard but important work to stay on top of their game and competitive in the catering business.

Jennifer and Jo Ann both felt the most valuable part of the monthly Echelon Group Roundtable was the peer-to-peer discussion and meeting with Mike Cassidy. *"The peer group discussion was incredibly valuable. When you are running and managing a business, you can feel isolated even during the 'busyness' of your day. You do not have time to stop and seek peers to consult with on business issues. For two hours a month, I received valuable input from Echelon group members who had either gone through what I was experiencing, or offered advice and ideas we could work from. It was great to be part of a group of 'cheerleaders' from all types of businesses."* Jennifer stated.

"Mike Cassidy, an indescribable resource, is the trusted advisor we needed to help us grow our business. We always wanted to take our business seriously and not operate it the way it began, but instead transform it into something viable, professional, and meaningful. Mike is our guide and cheerleader and probably most importantly he holds us accountable and tells us the TRUTH – even when it is hard to hear. His experience, expertise and genuine care for us and our business has given us the confidence and knowledge to make this transformation." Jo Ann said.

"The Echelon program has made our business more professional. We take it more seriously now and have a good base knowledge we did not have before. We believe the Echelon program is probably the key element that has helped us grow professionally." Jennifer and Jo Ann declared.

"The Echelon Group Roundtables have been our MBA/Business classes. They have given us a foundation of knowledge, a support group of peers, and assurance that we can run a viable business. Throughout the program, we have grown professionally and personally. The program was stimulus to get us out of working in our business and working on our business so we can sustain and grow. The HHSBDC has been our trusted advisor through Echelon. Kathy Rogers, Marketing Director, and her team put together a valuable and relevant program that truly meets the needs of small business owners in all types of industries." Jennifer concluded.