



“Natural High” for Family-Operated Saucy Q Bar B Q

Employees at Saucy Q BBQ stand outside the main restaurant in downtown Mobile on Government Street.

The Wingfield family knows how unexpected blessings can come from devastating storms. More than 25 years ago, in the midst of one of Philadelphia's historic blizzards, **Elbert Wingfield** salvaged food left in the family freezer and found the inspiration for his renowned sauce and ribs.

From that last-ditch effort to make a meal during a miserable circumstance, Wingfield created a Mobile institution, Saucy Q Bar B Q – the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

Not long after that Philadelphia storm, Wingfield and his wife, Jacquelyn, decided to move back to Mobile. “We came back for the Southern hospitality and the soul food we know we have a knack for making like ribs, collard greens, red beans and rice. These are the recipes and meals passed down from my grandmother, **Mary Wingfield.**”

Over the years, since its modest beginning at the Flea Market in west Mobile in 1990, Saucy Q's food hasn't changed much, but the number of devotees has. Despite obstacles such as Hurricane Katrina, the oil spill and the down economy, Wingfield gives kudos to his customers for remaining loyal.

Known for its best-selling signature ribs and pork, the restaurant expanded to Government Street in Midtown, a location known as the “mother ship” because of its enormous customer base, and Schillinger Road at Cottage Hill. To meet demand, the family also opened a restaurant on Moffett Road in Crichton.

Jarret Wingfield, Elbert and Jacquelyn's youngest son, has even bigger dreams for Saucy Q's future. It was Jarrett's idea to bottle and sell the Saucy Q Sauce in stores and to expand the company through franchising. He

says the day he steps foot into a Saucy Q in Atlanta, “Man, that'll be the day!”

Elbert admits he opened with the intention of passing something on. “We're a family restaurant, and my vision was to see the kids in it. My biggest fear was that this would be a one-generational thing, that when I'm gone, this ends.”

Fortunately, three generations of barbecue enthusiasts are carrying out his vision. His older son, Darnell, and his wife, Odessa, manage the Moffett location, while grandson Darnell Jr. says he takes up the reigns wherever he's needed to assist the other 30 employees of Saucy Q.

“For all of us in the middle of a loud, busy restaurant, we strive for the occasional silence at a table where the only sound is a metal fork hitting the plate over and over. Knowing they love our food, it's like a natural high,” says Elbert.

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