



Carson College of Business

Business Growth Mentor  
& Analysis Program

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
VANCOUVER

## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

# Bleu Door Bakery

For Bonnie Brasure, baking has been a labor of love since she was 12 years old. When a former bakery space on Vancouver's Main Street became available, she recognized the opportunity of a lifetime.

Brasure opened Bleu Door Bakery in October 2011. All she had was a kitchen, a walk-up bakery counter and a few outdoor tables. But her delectable brownies, cookies, quiches and sandwiches drew fans from day one—so much so that Brasure had no time to think about the future. She was making a living, but what if her costs went up or if she lost her lease? And could she ever plan to retire?

### THE PRICE OF SUCCESS

Brasure was working all the time, and she was worried: "I have this thing I created, and the community has embraced it, and I'm insanely busy. And I'm watching other businesses close." Wondering how long the good times would last, she felt she needed a business consultant but couldn't afford it. Her accountant recommended she get in touch with WSU Vancouver's Business Growth MAP.

The experience was transformative. Over the course of a school year, Brasure worked with two teams of undergraduate students, each supported by an instructor and volunteer mentor. After analyzing her business fundamentals, the first team helped her realize that she needed to expand—and could afford it. That gave her confidence to buy the building where she was leasing space and turn her tiny bakery into a real breakfast-and-lunch café. She got in touch with a lender, and things fell into place. The second team did a customer survey that resulted in a greater emphasis on local sources, including the coffee, and some marketing ideas.

Brasure has the word "leap" tattooed on her wrist. She lives by these words: "When the fear is so great of all I am and all I will become, I will close my eyes and leap."

### A LEAP OF FAITH, A HAPPY OUTCOME

So she bought the building and remodeled the space, which is triple the size of her original bakery. Her new, 2,400-square-foot café, which can seat up to 30 people, opened July 7, 2015. It has an expanded menu and staff, but the same promise as always: baked goods made from scratch every day in small batches. The charming little walk-up bakery remains open beside it.

"I can't encourage small businesses like myself enough to try to get involved," Brasure said. "I couldn't hire enough people to do what Business Growth MAP has done for me. Hands-down, it's one of the best things I've done since I opened."

Bleu Door Bakery



### BLEU DOOR BAKERY

Learn more about Bleu Door Bakery at  
[bleudoorbakery.com](http://bleudoorbakery.com).

### BUSINESS GROWTH MAP

To find out more and apply to the program,  
visit [business.vancouver.wsu.edu](http://business.vancouver.wsu.edu).