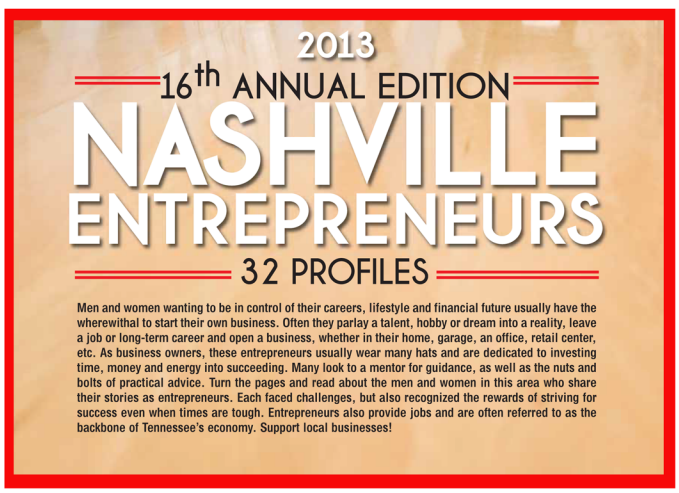
Dan DeFigio

- **Owner/director, Basics and Beyond fitness & nutrition**
- **Author, *Beating Sugar Addiction For Dummies***
- **Co-owner, SNAP Fitness of Antioch**
- **Founder, Science Line Nutrition**





Entrepreneurs recognized by TheNews

Jenny Upchurch
Associate Editor

What is entrepreneurship? For many, it's freedom. Freedom to go in a different direction than anyone else, to make your own decisions, and to set your own standards for customer service. But it also means responsibility. As the owner, it's up to you to reach for those dreams and meet your customers' realities.

Small businesses continue to be the backbone of America's economy.

• There are almost 28 million small businesses in the US and more than 22 million are self employed with no additional payroll or employees

• More than half of the working population is in a small business

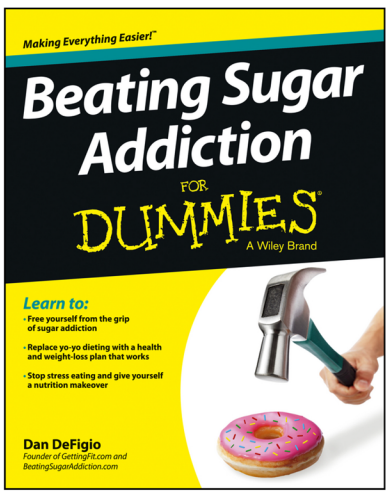
But, according to one leading business magazine, more employer businesses shut down than start up each month. Only half survive five years and only a quarter are still operating after 15 years.

What makes for success or failure? One author suggests that it's crucial to step back periodically from the day-to-day operation. Ask questions like: Did you have a successful year? Where did your business shine? What's holding it back?

Since 1997, TheNews has spotlighted small business owners and their success stories. Each year, articles about these men and women tell how they take risks to realize their dreams of entrepreneurship.

Beginning on page 15, read about these entrepreneurs, the challenges they faced, the rewards they experienced and the advice they offer to those aspiring to a dream of business ownership. Amidst talk of economic doom and gloom, they stay focused on finding opportunities.

This year's entrepreneurs will be presented an award during a luncheon at The Palm with TheNews and Regions Bank as sponsors.



Dan DeFigio

Basics and Beyond fitness and nutrition

Owner
Dan DeFigio

Year Opened
1993

Type of Business
Fitness and nutrition

Dan DeFigio decided to open his own fitness and nutrition business so that he could guarantee the best service.

"It's gratifying to have the freedom to be able to really do things right, and to structure things in ways that deliver superior service to our customers," he said. "Our approach, our professional culture and the way we operate ensure that our clients can get the best health and fitness guidance available. It's very rewarding to have the freedom to deliver the best."

In the 20 years since he started his fitness and nutrition business, Basics and Beyond has opened locations in Nashville, Brentwood, Franklin, and Antioch, plus in-home service. The company, with its 12 employees, offers personal training, exercise rehabilitation, nutrition plans and products as well as The Two Week Transformation system.



Dan DeFigio

DeFigio was a martial arts instructor and professional keyboard player in Boston before going to work at a gym.

"As my practice and my reputation grew, there was a great demand for my services," he shared. "I didn't need to continue working with the limitations that come from being an employee of someone else's business."

DeFigio said his biggest challenge has been finding and maintaining the talent level of employees for the fitness and nutrition team.

"The professionals on the Basics and Beyond team are the finest in the business," DeFigio said. "I weed through hundreds of applicants to find each fitness trainer, nutrition coach and physical therapist that I add to the team."

DeFigio has a special take on whether he'd do anything different as an entrepreneur.

"I try to remember that we're all starting over every day, whether we want to or not. Every day is an opportunity to think and do as you want to, regardless of what you've done in the past."

He said he reads business publications such as *Inc.* magazine to stay plugged into the entrepreneurial mind set.

• Treat your customers and your employees like family.

"As my practice and my reputation grew, there was a great demand for my services," he shared. "I didn't need to continue working with the limitations that come from being an employee of someone else's business."

~ Dan DeFigio

While he didn't need any push to become his own boss, DeFigio said he has had some amazing coaches such as Dick Sullivan and Arlene Adcock from Clover Management and Seth Holdren from Nashville Blast. He is also inspired by entrepreneurs "who are knocking it out of the park" in other fields, such as Hannah Paramore, president of Paramore Digital, and Alex Tolbert, founder of Bernard Health.

Some of the advice he'd pass on includes:

• Stay current.

• Plan ahead, don't react.

• Do everything with love and integrity.

• Listen and learn every day — no matter how smart or experienced you are, you don't have all the answers.

• Be confident in yourself and your vision, even if you're not always confident in every decision.

• Start your business for the right reasons.

• If you always deliver excellence and act honorably, your hard work will pay off, guaranteed.

Basics and Beyond has locations in Nashville, Brentwood, Franklin and Antioch. For more information, call 615-442-7700, or go to www.GettingFit.com.