

One Richmond graduate closer to campus “relishes” the risks of entrepreneurship.

After graduating in 1988, Michael Lampros attended the Culinary Institute of America in New York to pursue a lifelong interest in food. After stints as a private chef for various corporations, he launched Gunther Gourmet Groceries in 2001. Named after his dog, the company specializes in flavored salsas and marinades made from his original recipes.

Lampros' products are sold in Richmond at Ukrop's, Kroger and Food Lion grocery stores, Ellwood Thompson's Natural Market, Stonewall Market and other gourmet and specialty retailers. He also distributes to retailers in Maryland, North Carolina and Pennsylvania and hopes eventually to branch into resort stores and specialty chains, such as Dean & DeLuca and Trader Joe's.

A political science and sociology major at Richmond, Lampros said his liberal arts education gave him “a leg up” in culinary school in terms of how to study.

Lampros' advice to budding entrepreneurs: be prepared to work without a vacation for the first five years and wear a lot of different hats. “You may be the owner or president, but you are also the filer, delivery person and the clean up crew.”

Still, he added, “I like the high pace and multitasking.”

“You may be the owner or president, but you are also the filer, delivery person and the clean-up crew.”

— Michael Lampros, R'88,
owner, Gunther Gourmet Groceries

