

Demos': New generation steps up to serve

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When Demos' Restaurant owner Jim Demos was 9 years old, he began helping his father in the family's restaurant business. Two generations later, Jim's grandson, Jamey, 8, is already planning on continuing the family legacy.

On Sunday, July 11, Jamey finally made his debut working at Demos' Restaurant. His task consisted of greeting and seating customers and cleaning tables.

"I told Jamey that he could start helping in the restaurant when he turned 8, a year earlier than me, because I want him to be even better than I was," Jim said.

In the 1920s, Jim's grandfather got started in the restaurant business eventually handing it down to Jim's father, a Greek immigrant, and his brothers. At that time, the business was a combination of a confectionary and restaurant.

"Not only is Jamey the fifth generation, but there were uncles, aunts and cousins all in the restaurant business from as far back as I can remember," Jim added.

Jamey is the son of Peter Demos and his wife Kristin. Peter got his start in the business at age 12 as a dishwasher and by 19 worked his way up to manager. At one point, Peter was the only person, other than Jim, who knew the recipes for the sauces and seasonings, said the restaurant's website.

However, Peter originally planned to become a lawyer, completing law school and joining the Tennessee Bar Association in 1999.

"[The restaurant] was something I always did and I loved it. I went into law wanting to help people, but realized that I could do more helping people in the restaurant business than I could as a lawyer," Peter said.

As the president of Demos', Peter has remained very involved with the community sitting on the boards for the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Leadership Rutherford. He has even supported fundraisers for organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Special Kids, Boys and Girls Club and United Way.

Growing up and seeing this, Jamey felt everyone should assume he would want to follow the family tradition and get involved too.

"When [Jamey] was in pre-school, he drew a picture saying that when he grew up, he wanted to be a server at Demos'. He always talked about it, and when I told him he was going to do it, he responded, 'It's about time'," Peter added.



So Jamey had his day, with bussing tables being the most exciting part and keeping his hands out of his pockets the hardest. When asked afterwards if he was still interested in joining the family business, Jamey felt a little confused.

“ ... he thinks he is in the family business. I asked him if he wants to work again, and he said yes. He wants to know why he can't do it every day,” Peter said.

But Jamey's grandfather has the answer for that question.

“He learned how to make customers feel welcome, seat customers, [buss] tables and that you have to work more than 35 minutes before getting a break. We'll let that register for a while before we take on the next task,” Jim laughingly suggested.