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Oh How Sweet It Is: Employee's Wife Serves Up Joy and Love With Her Pies

It's a love story that began more than 30 years ago when Melting Quality Control Technician Eddie Jackson and JaWanda Webb met. This love story and Eddie's love of sweet potato pies are what eventually led to the opening of a delectable pie shop in Birmingham that has received local and national accolades, including Birmingham Business Journal's Small Business Award and Best Pie Shop in Alabama by USA Today.

"When Eddie and I first met at church years ago, it was a God thing," JaWanda said. "It was like we had known each other forever and a friendship began. We married six months later and will celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary in July. Eddie and I have always been a team. We are so connected, and I honestly believe we have the same heartbeat. What we've built with JaWanda's Sweet Potato Pies wouldn't have happened without Eddie's love and support."

JaWanda had always enjoyed cooking, and she quickly learned that Eddie's favorite dessert was sweet potato pie. "He would always order sweet potato pie when we went out. It wasn't something that I made, but shortly after we were married, I started to make and perfect it, because I knew he liked it so much," she said. JaWanda took her mother's sweet potato pie recipe and began to tweak it as well as look at other recipes. "I wanted to make sure it was sweet enough, the texture was right, it was silky smooth and full of flavor. After making it a few times, I had it where I wanted."

For Eddie, his love of sweet potato pies began as a child when his mother baked them. "I just love the taste, and when you grow up on something, it becomes a part of you," he said.

Eddie began telling his friends and family about the delicious sweet potato pies JaWanda was making, and everyone wanted to try. "The number of pies I was making started to add up," JaWanda said.



Left: Eddie and JaWanda Jackson at her Sweet Potato Pie Shop. Right: Je'Niah, Jeremiah, JaWanda and Eddie Jackson. "We all consider ourselves to be servants - me, Eddie, my sons - and serving people is what we do," JaWanda said. (Photos courtesy of JaWanda Jackson.)

"So I decided to put a price on them and see if people still wanted them, and they did. One person told another and then another, and that's how the business began. I'd always wanted to be an entrepreneur, but I wanted to do something that was unique. When I researched and discovered there wasn't a pie shop in the Birmingham area, especially a sweet potato pie bakery, I thought I might be on to something."



To test the market, JaWanda and Eddie started going to local farmers' markets to sell her pies. "We would sell out every Saturday," she said. "We started with the original but shortly added our pecan sweet potato pie and then the orange crème cheese sweet potato pie and continued to sell out. We had people coming from all over to buy our pies. I just enjoyed serving, loving and meeting everyone. We began adding cakes and cobblers to the menu so customers would have a variety of desserts."

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JaWanda's Sweet Potato Pies (Continued from Page 1)

JaWanda's Sweet Potato Pies continued to grow, and her pies were soon available for purchase at Cowboys' convenience store on 280. They are also now available at select Piggy Wiggly locations in Birmingham. In 2015, Eddie found the perfect spot for JaWanda's storefront location in the Inverness Village Shopping Center. Today, JaWanda is serving up 16 different flavors of sweet potato pie along with crusty crème cheese and chocolate pound cakes, cobblers and more in her shop. Her storefront location is open for curbside only on Fridays from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information about her tasty treats and how to order, visit www.jawandasweetpotatopie.com.

"We want people to know sweet potato pie is not just a dessert to be enjoyed during a specific season but enjoyed winter, spring, summer and fall," JaWanda said. "That's why we've come up with so many different flavors. We strive to do something for everyone.

"I get such joy and satisfaction that people love what I'm making," she said. "We pray over our products,

and we pray that people will feel better once they eat them. We all consider ourselves to be servants – me, Eddie and our sons – and serving people is what we do. We serve God by serving His people. We are honored and humbled to have this opportunity to serve others through JaWanda's Sweet Potato Pies."



Eddie said, "JaWanda loves people. She has a prayer jar in the shop so people can drop off prayer requests. People come into the shop, and she'll stop whatever she's doing and pray for them. I'm amazed at her humility and her ability to love, console and help. I'm so proud of her and seeing her dreams come forth. My advice to other men would be to encourage their wives if they have talents they want to pursue and dreams they want to achieve. Encouraging my wife doesn't make me less of a man, it makes me more. This is something we achieved together."