Debbie McCullough’s second career is oven-hot, with baking skills from her mother, and business sense from her father. As a result, the patrons of this former medical transcriptionist are getting a taste of an idea five years in the making.

McCullough, 47, in June opened Debbie’s Delicious Desserts, where customers of the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce member can tempt their taste buds with a variety of cookies and pies.

For five years, McCullough had worked out of her home in Ellwood City as a caterer providing...
FARMERS MARKET, GARDEN GROW IN POPULARITY

E.C. produces!

Right: Locally grown produce is shown at the Ellwood City Farmers Market on Saturday, July 28, 2018. Far right: An accordion player performs at the Ellwood City Farmers Market on Saturday, July 28, 2018.

John Young, of Ellwood City, right, purchases locally grown tomatoes, cucumbers and onions from Rob Matvey, of 3 D’s Produce Farm & Greenhouse, Edinburg, at the Ellwood City Farmers Market on Saturday, July 28, 2018.

Naya Marinaccio, 8, of Ellwood City, visits a vendor at the Ellwood City Farmers Market on Saturday, July 28, 2018.

Alex Kearns, 7, of Ellwood City, anticipates the taste of locally grown tomatoes while shopping at the Ellwood City Farmers Market on Saturday, July 28, 2018, with his mother, Kelly.
FARMERS MARKET, GARDEN GROW IN POPULARITY

E.C. produces!

A panoramic view of the Holy Redeemer Ministry Center garden on Saturday, July 28, 2018 and, in inset, on Friday, June 8, 2018.

Above: A butterfly approaches a flower at the Holy Redeemer Ministry Center garden on Saturday, July 28, 2018. Right: Banana peppers capture the early morning sunrays at the Holy Redeemer Ministry Center garden on Saturday, July 14, 2018. Far right: Trichomes on tomato plants are shown at the Holy Redeemer Ministry Center garden on Saturday, July 21, 2018.
Sweet success in E.C.!

“When a customer comes into my shop, they will be greeted with a smile and friendly face. We really try to get to know the customers by first-name basis.”

Debbie McCullough, owner of Debbie’s Delicious Desserts, is shown Saturday, Aug. 4, at her shop at 366 Circle Way, Ellwood City.

A 9-inch apple pie is shown Saturday, Aug. 4, at Debbie’s Delicious Desserts, 366 Circle Way, Ellwood City.

“I decided to go in a different direction”

Within her shop at 366 Circle Way, customers can choose from 9-inch, 6-inch and hand pies – 6-inch pies that are folded, crimped, fried and glazed. Among the flavors of her 9- and 6-inch pies are apple, cherry, peach, blueberry, blackberry and rhubarb; and hand pies in cherry and apple, and in the fall, pumpkin and pecan.

Among the flavors of her cookies are chocolate chip, peanut butter cup and the monster – oatmeal cookies with chocolate chips and M&Ms.

“Everything’s in it,” she says.

McCullough, a 1989 graduate of Riverside High School, attended SUNY Broome Community College in Binghamton, N.Y., where she earned an associate degree in health information technology and embarked on a 20-year career as a medical transcriptionist. She became unemployed when her company outsourced the service.

“It was at that point,” she says, “that I decided to go into a different direction.”

Greeted with a smile and a friendly face

She credits the success of that different direction to her mother, Connie Bell -- “the great pie baker in Ellwood City. I owe all my pie skills to her” – and to her late father, David R. Bell, who was “business-minded. I owe him the business part.”

Aside from the influence of her mother and late father, another thing that will set her shop apart, she says, is “the experience.”

“When a customer comes into my shop, they will be greeted with a smile and friendly face. We really try to get to know the customers by first-name basis.”

Debbie’s Delicious Desserts is open to the public from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

Customers can call (724) 201-0383 for an order of pies or cookies Monday through Friday.