

# Georgetown teen's sauce is proving to be hot stuff

By **EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

On most weekends, the kitchen of the Muil residence in Georgetown South looks like it's been the site of a red paintball battle.

Actually, for a few hours, it's transformed into a family-run production line that is churning out a hot sauce unique in more ways than one.

For starters, the CEO of Muil-E's Hot Sauce, Ryan Muil, is just 17 years old.

As well, the sauce is being shipped off to "chili heads" around the world, and the foundation for the company was laid with the idea of creating a template for other young entrepreneurs to follow.

Sharply packaged in 250-ml jars and four-litre jugs with a cartoonish mule chomping on a red chili pepper, Muil-E's popularity has taken the business to somewhat of a crossroads in terms of its future.

Does it remain a feel-good story about a small business that supplies 18 gourmet food emporiums and butcher shops in southern Ontario, or will the company accelerate into mass distribution in order to reduce its price point, hopefully finding shelf space in the national grocery chains?

"The next step, which I really want



Ryan Muil is the CEO of Muil-E's Hot Sauce, whose popularity has seen the family-run business supply 18 gourmet food emporiums and butcher shops in southern Ontario.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

to pursue right now, is to take it into bigger markets, with franchises, things like that, but it's more difficult than people think," said Muil, a Grade 12 Christ the King student, who will head off to university in September.

"We've approached grocery chains and thought that M&M's (Meat Shops) would be the best choice because they're a Canadian-based company, so

we called a few times but heard nothing back. You just have to keep calling people and knocking on doors and hopefully one day the right person will be interested."

Even before starting high school, Muil wanted to become an entrepreneur of some sort and approached his father David, an executive with the multi-national firm Intertek, about

starting up a business.

David and wife Tracey came up with the now-trademarked idea of KidPre-neurs, a business model designed to teach business concepts to young people through real-life application before attending post-secondary school. Recalling his university days, David felt that the textbook knowledge he was provided with didn't prepare him well for the real business world and that the mere age of a budding entrepreneur shouldn't be a barrier to success.

"Now when they're at a lecture at university, they can understand what purchasing power is and the economies of scale and diminishing returns," said David, a McMaster University business graduate.

"They know what all those things mean because they have a business model to apply them to. It's almost like a summer school concept to teach kids about taking ideas from scratch, no matter what it is. Don't worry about the idea. What's important is what's involved in the various stages— what are the processes that you have to go through with business planning, marketing strategy, supplier sourcing and raw materials, and we have to get into production. Learning about production was a big deal for Ryan. Then

See TEEN'S, pg. 10



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### Georgetown

Saturday, January 26, 2pm - 4pm  
Gellert Community Centre, Kinsmen Hall  
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