

Business

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Downtown Mesa brewery abuzz with customers

BY CHRISTOPHER BOAN
Tribune Staff Writer

Brilliant sunshine pours through the multistory façade of downtown's 12 West Brewery on a recent Friday afternoon.

The brewery is the brainchild of Bryan McCormick, who founded the microbrewery four years ago in Gilbert.

McCormick long sought to bring his brewery to the space he owned at 12 West Street.

This vision came to fruition in mid-December, bringing an array of microbrews and artisan-crafted cocktails to the community.

General Manager Chuck Fowler laid out the brewery's vision, calling the space transformative for Mesa's burgeoning downtown area.

"Bryan really wanted a big gathering area and communal space where people

could go and make memories and share stories, drink beer and just take in what downtown Mesa has to offer because right now, the area's going through a revitalization stage," Fowler said.

"So, we really want to be a part of the revitalization project down here and we really wanted to a part of it all, and it's really been an interesting ride because with him building this place and the success of this place, we've only been open for about two months, but the community's loving it."

The ultimate success of 12 West's downtown outpost will come down to the ability of Fowler, McCormick and Chef David Linville to create a one-of-a-kind experience for patrons.

Linville, who was brought in by McCormick last year, brings decades of experience as a chef at various Southern California culinary institutions, such as the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills and various spots in Venice Beach.

A native of Northern California, Linville seeks to bring what he calls 'gastro-conscious' cuisine far from your typical pub grub.

The brewery side of 12 West's operation is hauled in from a brewery McCormick built in his garage.

McCormick's original plan was to brew all of 12 West's beers on-site downtown, but the concrete floor could not handle the massive tanks needed for such a task.

The Mesa native described the company's newest space as one sure to bring members of the community together, creating a truly unique environment for patrons of all ages.

"12 West Brewing Company is crafted for the community," McCormick said. "We know the bond formed when sharing a pint or sipping a cocktail at the bar – people meet, converse and make memories



Bartender Trey Bivens pours a cold one at the 12 West Brewery in downtown Mesa. (Pablo Robles/Tribune Staff Photographer)

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The Point ready to grow as Eastmark shop hub

BY CHRISTOPHER BOAN
Tribune Staff Writer

A massive shopping center currently under construction represents a new chapter for the fledgling community of Eastmark in Mesa.

The Point at Eastmark, anchored by a Safeway store, represents the first such complex in the city's newest enclave.

The center also represents the dawning



He believes the shopping center's future is bright, based on the community's open-armed embrace of its first tenant, Safeway, over the last three months.

"There's certainly a lot of excitement," Lamond said. "And we hope excitement will continue to carry through as other tenants start to open and give the community the services and goods they've sorely needed."

One such tenant is Elle Jackson, owner-

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surrounded by good friends, tasty food, and great beer.

"We want to be a community space, where our guests are on their own time."

A major theme for Fowler is making 12 West a spot everyone - adult of child - can enjoy.

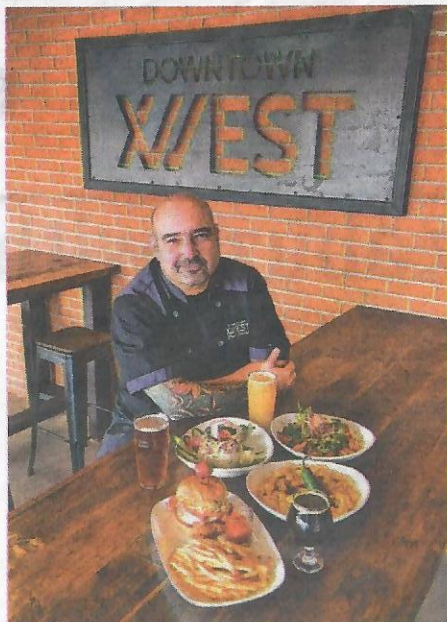
This tenet requires the staff to offer a wide range of entertainment options, from games to good food and drink—a task McCormick and staff are well aware of.

"The cool thing about the brand is it's extremely family-friendly," Fowler said. "People come in with their kids and the kids are welcome to hand out, play the board games we have. They run around. You hear kids laughing, you hear people joking and telling stories.

"The days are gone where you can't bring your child to a bar. This taboo is no longer there. So, I think we really pushed forward. We want people to feel comfortable."

Fowler said 12 West is currently in the process of adding a live music venue in the brewery's basement, which will add an additional element to the facility.

The downtown outpost joins McCor-



Chef David Linviolle has prepared many ummy menu items at 12West Brewery. (Pablo Robles/Tribune Staff Photographer)

mick's other space, at Barnone AZ - A Craftsman Community — in Gilbert.

Fowler believes 12 West - one of three breweries in downtown Mesa along with Desert Eagle and Oro breweries - has the chance to do something unique.

"That's really what downtown and 12

West is trying to be a part of. We're trying to be a part of the community. We're not trying to push people away or be the big guys of the block, we just want to be a part of the community overall," Fowler said.

"So, whatever we can do to support each other and grow the business down here, I think everyone benefits from something like that, too."

Above all, Fowler wants 12 West's newest space to reflect the truly unique culture Mesa established.

The Chandler native believes 12 West can be a great partner in Mesa's continuing push to redevelop the downtown corridor, giving the town a space to be proud of.

"There are a lot of different vibes to this place. It's an up and coming area. We believe it's one of the last, true downtown suburb areas in the East Valley needing to be developed and we think it's around the corner," Fowler said.

"For this to be a hub for entertainment, a hub for people to bar-hop and go to quality places down here as well. We have a lot of great facilities and restaurants and bars down here too and I think it's time a lot more companies and a lot more cultures come down here and support the area too." ■

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Jackson toured the grounds as they were under construction and knew it was the place to put her facility.

"We knew this was going to be the place and the homes surrounding it would meet the need and the desire to be in a destination location," Jackson said.

Jackson has been teaching "pop-up" classes in various locations as her permanent studio is under construction.

She's excited to get the keys to her new home and bring a full-slate of fitness courses, tailored to residents of all ages.

"It's an absolutely incredible experience," Jackson said. "It's been a long road, but trust and belief we've had from the community has been incredible. And it reinforces the need of a business like ours in the area."

Jackson says she's eternally thankful to Lamond and his team for their collaborative approach, as she's counting the days until her new location opens to the public.

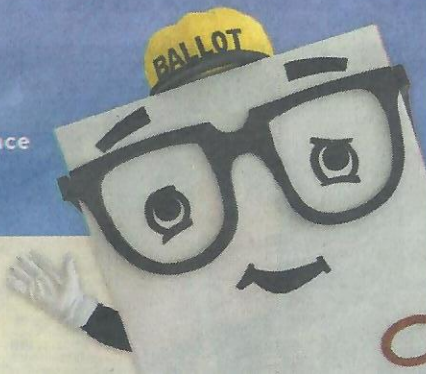
"I'm just so unbelievably grateful to be a part of this groundbreaking endeavor because it's grown around the community and bring a lot of good services and amenities to our community," Jackson said. ■

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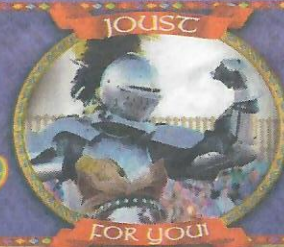
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