

By Shopping Locally, You Help Strengthen Your Community!

# Maumee Uptown Business Spotlight



Zach Yingling holds a tray of cookies, offered daily at Georgette's Grounds & Gifts. The restaurant in uptown Maumee, Sunshine Art Studios and the packaging plant on Maumee Western Road are part of Sunshine's supported employment programs, which hire workers with developmental disabilities. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUNSHINE COMMUNITIES



Georgette's Grounds & Gifts can offer meals to visitors at nearby Sunshine Studios, its sister business. The studio can be rented to the public for parties, business meetings and other gatherings and, like Georgette's, is part of Sunshine Communities, which supports more than 400 men, women and children with developmental disabilities.

## Georgette's Coffee Shop Marks 11th Year In Uptown Maumee

BY NANCY GAGNET  
MIRROR REPORTER

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and for the staff at Georgette's Grounds and Gifts in uptown Maumee, that means more than earning a weekly paycheck.

Georgette's, which opened in 2005, provides shade-grown coffee and meals from fresh, often locally sourced ingredients, and fair-trade gifts. This month the shop marked its 11-year anniversary in uptown Maumee.

The National Disability Employment Awareness initiative supports diversity in the workforce and inclusion

in the community. Joni Campbell, vice president of retail sales, says Georgette's employs 11 individuals with disabilities, a testament to the skills and dedication they bring to the workplace. But community employment isn't just about jobs, she added.

"Many of our employees have built friendships and relationships with the community outside of work," Campbell said.

Julie Stevens, a supervisor at Georgette's, agreed.

"A lot of our regulars that come in will stop and talk to the employees and show an interest in their lives," she said.

Maumee city administra-

tor John Jezak said that the coffee shop is an important part of the community.

"Georgette's has proven to be a wonderful addition to the uptown, particularly by offering a convenient place to enjoy a morning coffee and a bite to eat, often in conjunction with a breakfast meeting," Jezak said. "Beyond their high-quality offerings, the opportunity they offer to their special-needs clients is heartwarming and adds to the appeal of uptown Maumee."

In addition to coffee drinks, the restaurant offers breakfast, lunch and a wide array of sweet treats baked daily. In November the coffee shop will also begin offering a

special premium coffee roasted in-house, and the shop will offer a new flavor each month.

At the rear of the coffee shop is Georgette's gift shop, offering fair-trade gifts and items that support artists with developmental disabilities.

Georgette's is owned and operated by Sunshine Communities, which supports more than 400 men, women and children with developmental disabilities throughout Lucas and Fulton counties. The nonprofit provides residential, vocational, clinical, recreational and other services. In addition to individuals with disability working at Georgette's, 13 men and women package Georgette's beans at the nearby campus of Sunshine Communities, more specifically, in the former home of Sunshine's founders, Roy and Georgette Engler; and 18 individuals work at Sunshine Art Studios, located at the corner of West Wayne and Conant streets.

The Georgette's kitchen crews also offer meals for those who rent space in Sunshine Studios – for parties, business meetings and other gatherings.

Jezak said that with two key businesses on Conant Street, Sunshine has a valuable presence in uptown Maumee.

"Between Georgette's Grounds and Gifts and the new art studio, Sunshine has played a significant role in the restoration of key uptown properties and drawing commercial traffic to the district. They are an important part of

our success," Jezak said.

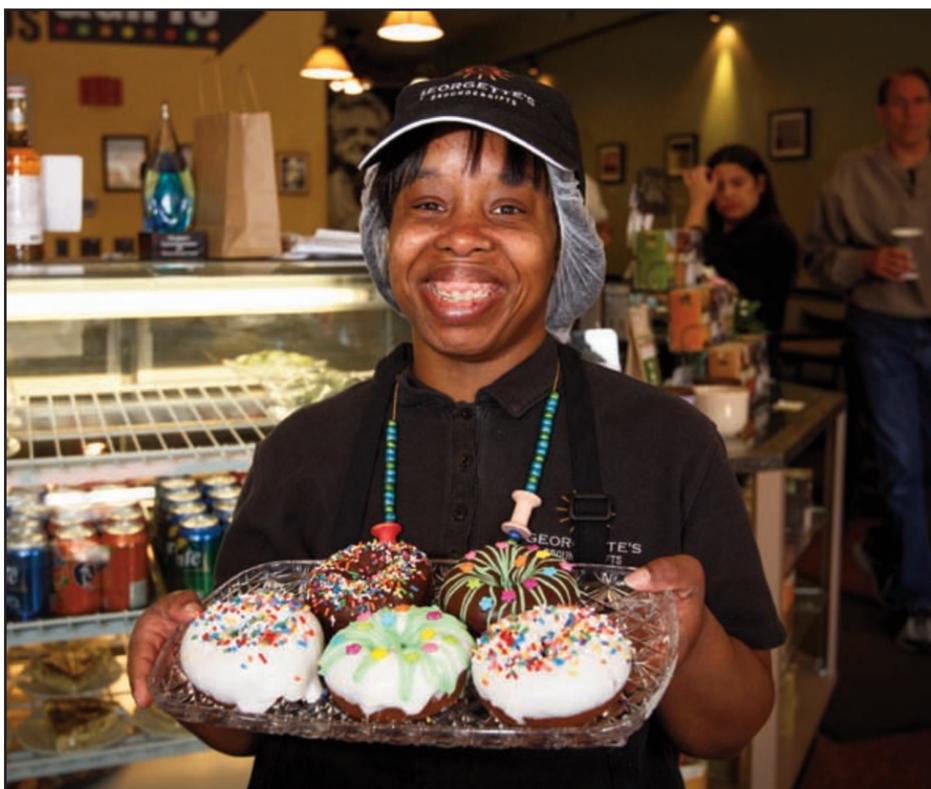
Georgette's Grounds and Gifts is located at 311 Conant St. in Maumee. Hours of operation are weekdays from 6:30

a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For information, call the shop at (419) 891-8888 or visit [www.georgettes.org](http://www.georgettes.org).



Katie Ray packages Georgette's beans at the nearby campus of Sunshine Communities, in the former home of Sunshine's founders, Roy and Georgette Engler. The coffee is sold at Georgette's in uptown Maumee.



Monique Hooker holds a tray of freshly baked donuts, made each morning at the uptown coffee shop along with breakfast, lunch and coffee drinks. At the rear of the coffee shop is Georgette's gift shop, offering fair-trade gifts and other items.

### Uptown Update

THE LATEST NEWS IN UPTOWN MAUMEE

#### MUBA Hosts Monthly Membership Meetings

Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) membership meetings are open to all MUBA members. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 1 at DECA located at 415 Conant Street.

#### MUBA Hosts Maumee Holiday Open House

The Uptown Maumee Holiday Open House will take place on Sunday, November 13 from noon to 4:00 p.m. The event will feature holiday specials at uptown businesses. In addition, at 4:00 p.m. the Maumee Indoor Theater will host a free screening of the family movie *Polar Express*.