



Tom Ramsey Jr

Business Owner and Philanthropist

☎ Phone: 512.748.7777

✉ Email: snappysnacks@aol.com

📍 Address: 15630 Vision Drive Ste A Pflugerville Texas 78660

TRJ Snappy Snacks
Mobile Catering Inc.
Founder and CEO
Incorporated: 2000
www.snappysnacksmobilecatering.com

Celebration of Love
Founder and President
Established: 2003
www.celebrationoflove.org

The Tom Ramsey
Foundation
Founder and Director
Established: 2019
www.thetomramseyfoundation.org



My Story

INTRODUCTION

Tom Ramsey, the visionary behind TRJ Snappy Snacks Mobile Catering based in Pflugerville, Texas, has left an indelible mark on countless lives in Central Texas and beyond, thanks to his dual impact through business endeavors and philanthropy. Renowned as a trailblazer in the mobile catering sector, Tom's innovative strategies in designing, leasing, and elevating food truck experiences to new heights, along with his provision of crucial resources, services, and mentorship to aspiring entrepreneurs joining the Snappy Snacks community, have earned him national recognition. Through his initiatives, Tom extends a pathway to entrepreneurship for those poised to tackle the rigors of owning and operating businesses within the food service realm.

Beyond his office duties, Tom dedicates himself tirelessly to charitable endeavors, devoting substantial time and energy to aiding others. As the founder and President of "Celebration of Love" from 2003 to 2021, he spearheaded efforts to provide essential resources and sustenance to families through local area food banks. Additionally, Tom demonstrated his gratitude to the brave men and women of the military and their families, receiving numerous accolades from Fort Hood Army Base for his unwavering support. His contributions included providing food, Christmas toys, and bicycles to tens of thousands of military children, earning him the highest civilian honors. Now, Tom's focus extends globally as the founder of The Tom Ramsey Foundation, established in 2019. His vision is to "build bridges" by uniting individuals and organizations who share his passion for philanthropy, aiming to extend hope and assistance to marginalized communities worldwide.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER JOURNEY

Tom is recognized as a pioneering figure in the food truck realm, boasting over 45 years of robust operational and managerial expertise. Since the age of eighteen, he has been deeply immersed in various facets of the food service sector. Starting from modest origins as a lone food truck operator, Tom ascended to become the proprietor of one of the nation's largest and most prosperous commissaries, playing an instrumental role in shaping today's food truck revolution and the surging popularity of mobile catering combined with experiential marketing.

Hailing from Dallas, Texas, Tom relocated with his mother to San Jose, California at the age of 14. By eighteen, he was already married with a family to support, thus embarking on his journey in the burgeoning food truck industry of the late 1970s. Two influential figures profoundly impacted his trajectory: Mr. Jerry Stratton, a seasoned business owner who mentored Tom in the nuances of food truck operation, and Mr. George A. Hermann, the visionary behind George's Industrial Catering. George, who later acquired a competitor known as Snappy Snacks Mobile Catering, provided Tom with supervisory roles, imparting invaluable lessons on managing a fleet of food trucks and orchestrating their catering routines. Tom absorbed every facet of the trade, diligently learning from the ground up under George's guidance.

An entrepreneur at heart, Tom actively pursued various business ventures. Over the years he owned five food trucks under the name "Tom and Jerry's", and later started a pay phone business, operated a nightclub, and opened three successful taquerias all in the San Jose area. In October 1989 however, Tom's life would drastically change after a devastating 6.9 magnitude earthquake hit the northern California bay area. The quake was one of the most powerful and destructive earthquakes to ever hit a populated section of the United States. The disaster affected every part of Tom's life. He lost his businesses, his home, and his vehicles. The devastation left behind by the earthquake led to bankruptcy and eventually homelessness for Tom and his family. While at the lowest point in his life, a trusted friend and "compadre", Jesse Fernandez, provided Tom with shelter and temporary sales work at his van conversion shop, "Happy Vans". In Tom's own words, "I was a fighter, and I wasn't going to give up. Eventually I went back to my roots as a food truck operator. At the time I thought it was a step backward and not forward. I worked day and night yet still struggled to support my family. Little did I know that every negative thing happening to me would contribute to where I am today."

A FRESH START

With only \$1500.00 in hand but filled with determination, Tom decided it was time for a fresh start. Departing from San Jose, California, at 4:00 am on December 25, 1996, he embarked on a journey with his family to Central Texas. Working various jobs to save up, Tom eventually gathered enough funds to purchase a food truck, which he operated in the small town of Hutto, Texas just outside of Austin. While he managed the driving, his sole employee, affectionately nicknamed "Tia," handled the cooking.

As his business flourished, Tom expanded his operations. Within a year of his return to Texas, in 1997, he established his own catering house, "King Arthur Mobile Catering," in a 2500 square foot warehouse. This venture laid the foundation for what would evolve into TRJ Snappy Snacks Mobile Catering Inc, a thriving enterprise paying homage to his mentors, Jerry Stratton and George Herrmann. Today, the business has grown into a multi-million-dollar enterprise, boasting a cutting-edge commissary and catering facility sprawled across a 10-acre complex in Pflugerville, Texas, just north of Austin.

This unique facility houses TRJ Snappy Snacks' corporate headquarters, a licensed wash bay spanning 5,000 square feet capable of accommodating up to 16 large food trucks, over 1,200 square feet of full-service commercial kitchens, a 2,500 square foot mechanic shop, and a 16,000 square foot commissary warehouse known as "La Placita Super Mercado." Open to catering operators and the public alike, the Super Mercado stocks a variety of food, beverages, produce, and dry goods, including a premium meat market offering the freshest quality products. Additionally, an outdoor food and music pavilion spanning 6,000 square feet, capable of hosting up to ten mobile food trucks for special events, sits adjacent to the Super Mercado.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Throughout the years, Tom has been a catalyst for aspiring entrepreneurs, offering leadership and forward-thinking guidance in the food service industry through on-site training, mentoring, and business development assistance. Operating under the ownership of independent operators, Snappy Snacks food trucks cater to a multitude of customers daily across Central Texas, stationed at various businesses and construction sites.

Among the success stories fostered by Tom and TRJ Snappy Snacks are The Peached Tortilla and Chi'lantro BBQ, both of which have emerged as thriving gourmet brands. These ventures garnered national acclaim, showcased on esteemed platforms such as the Travel Channel, The Cooking Channel, and other syndicated programs. Their excellence has been spotlighted in publications including The New York Times, GQ Magazine, Southwest Airlines' Spirit Magazine, and Food & Wine.

Owners of these food trucks have expanded their footprint, venturing into private catering and brick-and-mortar establishments. Notably, Jae Kim, of Chi'lantro BBQ, mentored by Tom during the inception of his journey in 2010, now has 13 locations throughout Central Texas. He made a significant impact by securing a deal with renowned businesswoman and Shark Tank investor, Barbara Corcoran, during his appearance on Season 8 of the show.

"The Peached Tortilla", led by Eric Silverstein, has evolved into a multi-restaurant enterprise extending its reach across Austin. It encompasses a fast-casual outpost at Austin Bergstrom International Airport, a bar-centric dining experience named Bar Peached, and a forthcoming establishment in Cedar Park, adjacent to Austin. Silverstein's endeavors also encompass an event venue, Peached Social House, along with a comprehensive full-service catering arm. Eric garnered recognition as one of the top 30 Up-and-Coming Chefs in America by Plate Magazine. His expertise has been featured in a number of publications, spanning from People Magazine and Kiplinger's Finance to Food Network, CNBC, the Cooking Channel, Forbes, and Austin Monthly. In 2019, Eric added author to his list of accomplishments with the release of his memoir-cookbook titled "The Peached Tortilla: Modern Asian Comfort Food from Tokyo to Texas."

SETTING THE STANDARD

On September 23, 2010, the Austin City Council unanimously passed a set of more rigorous regulations governing the mobile food vending industry. These regulations were the result of a comprehensive review of sanitation and safety standards spearheaded by Tom, an effort later supported by other influential figures in the local industry. These regulations and safety standards remain in effect today, ensuring that all mobile units operating in and around Austin, Texas undergo regular inspections and obtain proper licensing. This commitment to adherence guarantees customers receive top-tier food quality and service.

In response to the escalating demand for more efficient and productive food trucks, Tom has taken the initiative to custom-design numerous mobile catering vehicles. Additionally, he has served as a consultant for truck standards and design, collaborating with prominent industry entities such as the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) and leading truck manufacturers like AA and Wyss Catering in California.

Tom's commitment to excellence extends beyond vehicle design. He has established a state-of-the-art commissary facility staffed by professionals who share his dedication to superior customer service. This comprehensive approach has positioned his business as a benchmark for mobile catering companies across the United States.

As a Hispanic American entrepreneur, Tom's business has been certified under the state's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program for minority-owned enterprises. His efforts have not gone unnoticed, as evidenced by his recognition as the "Small Business Person of the Year" by the U.S. Small Business Administration-San Antonio District. He has received multiple accolades, including Business and Person of the Year honors from the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

Customer service and quality have remained the cornerstone of Tom's burgeoning clientele, now extending nationwide. However, it was Tom's visionary collaboration with Cardenas Marketing Agency (CMN) that propelled food trucks beyond conventional catering, transforming them into "mobile marketing billboards." Through this partnership, Tom has forged connections with renowned national brands such as McCormick, Simply Asian, and Anheuser Busch. Subsequently, Tom's expertise caught the attention of other marketing agencies, leading to collaborations with esteemed entities including NBC Television, HBO, Walgreens, Heinz, and television personality Rachael Ray, among others.

Tom's success with corporate clients soared alongside the burgeoning popularity of food trucks. His capacity to provide comprehensive services encompassing food preparation, branding, and multi-city experiential marketing tours, all delivered through his state-of-the-art food trucks, became highly sought after. By 2016, King's Hawaiian, based in Torrance, California, bestowed upon Tom exclusive management and operational rights to their corporate King's Hawaiian food truck. This truck was utilized for marketing their bread products and made special appearances across the country, including The Food Network's televised "Taste of Hawaii, Coast to Coast" tour and appearances in Times Square, at ABC's Good Morning America studios, and throughout Manhattan and Brooklyn.

From 2016 to 2018, Tom collaborated with King's Hawaiian to create breakfast recipes and catered to tens of thousands of Central Park concert-goers during Good Morning America's "Summer Concert Series." The distinctive food truck was also invited by Macy's Department Store in New York to cater their VIP section of their televised Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular for two consecutive years. Tom now proudly owns the King's Hawaiian Food Truck, entrusted with maintaining the name and reputation of King's Hawaiian and the quality of the gourmet food it serves. He continues to foster a close relationship with the family-operated company behind the brand.

PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Tom's forward-thinking nature constantly seeks avenues to contribute more to his community. In 2012, he extended an invitation to local high school students interested in media and film to collaborate on the creation of "De Austin Show," an entertainment production showcasing performances and interviews with musical talents from Central Texas. To facilitate this venture, a studio was erected on the Snappy Snacks premises, offering students hands-on experience in all facets of production, from setting up for musical acts to operating cameras, sound equipment, and editing.

The students assumed full responsibility for the production from inception to completion. In exchange for their internship on the show, they received scholarships, creating a mutually beneficial arrangement for musicians, viewers who enjoyed live performances on television, and students pursuing careers in television and film.

The synergy between schools, the television show, and Tom's food truck business sparked yet another avenue for student career development: the establishment of culinary programs in Pflugerville and Round Rock ISD high schools. These programs include specialized courses focusing on food truck operations and management, which continue to thrive in Tom's community to this day.

CELEBRATION OF LOVE

Raised in a single-parent household and experiencing poverty firsthand, Tom understood the hardship of not always having enough food to eat from a young age. These formative experiences deeply resonated with him when he organized a one-day holiday outreach event for families in his community. The response was staggering, prompting Tom to recognize the need for further action. This event blossomed into "Celebration of Love," a multifaceted non-profit organization established in 2003. Drawing from his own resilience in overcoming adversity, Tom's mission was simple: to pay forward the support and kindness he had received to others in need.

In 2006, Celebration of Love established the "Reaching Out Center" (ROC) with a core mission of offering essential support to families in the local community. The ROC provided vital resources such as food, basic necessities, clothing, and job training opportunities within a nurturing and supportive atmosphere.

Furthermore, leveraging Tom's fleet of mobile food trucks, the organization extended aid to victims and first responders during natural disasters. Celebration of Love played a crucial role in providing food, water, and other forms of assistance to individuals and families affected by tornadoes, flooding, and other catastrophic events.

Established in 2007 as an extension of Celebration of Love, "Soldiers of America" directly assisted military veterans, soldiers, and their families by providing food, support, and resources. Collaborating with the Fort Hood Army Community Service office, the organization expanded its food pantry to cater to families stationed on base.

Tom discovered that many military families encountered challenges, both financial and emotional, especially when their loved ones were deployed during the holidays. To address this, the organization secured the use of a military hangar where it hosted an annual holiday celebration for thousands of military families over the years. This special event featured toy and bike giveaways for military children, food, live music, celebrity appearances, visits with Santa and his elves, complimentary haircuts, car giveaways, and more. Hundreds of dedicated sponsors, supporters, and volunteers joined Tom and Celebration of Love in bringing the spirit of Christmas to Fort Hood and putting smiles on the faces of military families.

