

Kimberly Carter, restaurant owner, offers tasty dishes and nurturing workplace

When Kimberly Carter moved to the Humble area in 1999, she was busy raising five children. Four years later, she took the plunge and became a business owner by purchasing the Catfish Cafe from a gentleman named JC who had founded the restaurant in 2001.

The Catfish Cafe offers traditional, Southern-style fried catfish and shrimp as well as chicken, fried crawfish tails, fried oysters, gumbo, poboys, hand cut steak fingers, chicken fried steak and a large assortment of homemade side dishes including pinto beans, potato salad, loaded mashed potatoes, onion rings, cole slaw and homemade desserts, called "Plum crazy desserts" featuring such tasty treats as banana pudding, coconut cream pie, pecan pie, strawberry shortcake and Texas sheet cake.

"We sell out fast!," cautioned Carter.

Prior to entering the restaurant business, Carter practiced dental hygiene for 16 years and raised five children: Christine, 28, Rob, 27, Greg, 24, Brad, 21 and Matthew, 16. Carter married Dave Carter in 2010 and welcomed a sixth son, stepson Parker, 14, into the fold.

Catfish Cafe has been and continues to be a family affair. Carter said, "All of my kids have worked at the cafe. Three of them worked their way through college and have since grown up and moved on to

successful careers of their own. Two of my kids still work at the Catfish Cafe; one is in high school and the other in college."

The restaurant has a staff of between 16-24, depending on the time of year. Some of the staff have been with Carter since 2003.



"I have a few long time employees that a lot of my customers have gotten to know and love. One staffer, Brian, has been with me from the beginning," said Carter.

"I really enjoy working with my staff, most of whom are young. Many are working their way through school. I have had many come back over the years, whether they have gone on to join and serve in the military or to graduate from college, they come in from time to time to say hi and give me updates on their life." Carter said.

Carter attributes the success of Catfish Cafe to the attitude of the staff.

"Every day we give it our all. I love our customers, many of whom I have come to know. We have so many regulars that come in and they just give us a familiar smile, and I really enjoy it. It makes it all worthwhile," said Carter.

Blending motherhood with owning a business has been a challenge that Carter has taken on daily.

"Balancing work and family life is sometimes difficult. Restaurant ownership is more of a lifestyle than a job. We are open 360 days a year and I handle all aspects of the business, from bookkeeping, scheduling, hiring, training, inventory, payroll to actually working the front line. It's a challenge, to be certain," admitted Carter.

Brooke Martin, Kingwood Pines Hospital director of business development, can vouch for Kim's hard work ethic and said, "Kim's passion for her business and her strong work ethic are evident. She is a very focused person and has learned the art of being able to balance work and home, which is a talent that many working moms struggle with every day."

Carter's friend Laqueta O'Neal echoed Martin's thoughts and added, "She is a very hard working mother. She's also sweet and very business savvy. She's a fair employer and keeps a clean and neat restaurant. I love the fact that she employs a lot of our local teens and helps in their growth and knowledge of the business world. Kim Carter is a huge asset to the Humble area."

Catfish Cafe is located in the back of the Spec's plaza on FM 1960, at 7042 FM 1960. The menu is available online at catfishcafe.biz. Orders may be phoned in by calling 281-812-8055.



Kimberly Carter, Owner



OPENED DOORS:
2001

FAVORITE QUOTE

"Have a game plan, do your very best everyday, and no matter what keep on going."