

# These students mean business

## CANDYMAN

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STAFF REPORTER

Joseph Moncada has managed to transform a taste for marketing into the dream job of millions of children around the world.

Moncada is the owner of the Sweet Tooth Candy Emporium. Started as a small candy shop at Wasaga Beach two years ago, it's since grown to include locations at Scarborough Town Centre and Centrepoint Mall, offering candy lovers more than 2,700 items from around the world.

The 21-year-old started the business with his savings of about \$10,000, a loan from his parents and a small grant. It brought in more than \$500,000 in revenue in 2007.

The gimmick is that his target market is adults. That's why so many of his products, like candy buttons or saltwater taffy, have a retro feel.

"I call it a walk through memory lane," he says, describing the reaction he wants people to have to his products. "I want parents to want to bring their kids into the store."

"I used to be a candy fanatic," he says. "Whenever something new comes in, I've got to try it."

Moncada stocks his shelves with everything from chocolate bars flown in from Britain and tequila-worm suckers — the long torsos and little glistening legs of the larvae encased in clear sugar — to classic strap taffy and every imaginable flavour of jelly bean. It's the kind of place that causes kids' eyes to glaze over with joy, if not those of the babysitters responsible for getting their little charges to sleep.

You get the impression that if he doesn't decide to fold the candy empire into another venture, he's going to be giving Willy Wonka a run for his money by his 40s.



Joseph Moncada, a student at York University's Schulich School of Business, shows off some fare at his Sweet Tooth Candy Emporium.

MICHAEL STUPARYK/TORONTO STAR

On the practical side, candy isn't exactly a hard sell and Moncada's products come ready-made.

"I could literally change every product every week in this store if I wanted," he says.

His staff has grown to 25 people and the company is beginning to run itself.

"I've set up the stores so they are all self-sufficient."

Which frees him for his next experience: He's graduating from candy to beer.

After he graduates from York University, Moncada will be off to Belgium to plunge into a management trainee program with InBev, which owns Labatt and dozens of other breweries around the world.

With his business running smoothly and plans to open new locations in Waterloo and Brampton next year, he's ready to give the corporate world a try.

Two young Toronto students are up for a major award: Candy connoisseur Joseph Moncada and the man with the models, Lawrence Krimker, will take part in the National Student Entrepreneur Competition May 14 in Toronto, put on by Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship, a non-profit organization. They're in a field of six selected from across the country competing for \$10,000 and the chance to head to a global meet in Chicago this fall.