



“Smiling Scoops began years ago as an idea in a notebook. I felt like Florence was missing a place where families could walk in to enjoy some ice cream. I told my wife that if we did an ice cream parlor, it had to be downtown. Then this building became available and we were in a position to make everything happen. I get all my ideas and everything from the One above, and it wouldn't be possible without God.

It's hard work. I've got a car wash and used car lot, too. But I was born and raised in Florence,

and Florence has been good to me, so why not do something good for your city?

We've got a lot of support. Florence has some great people around—a lot of hospitality and everybody always shows us a lot of love.

Along with being a business owner, I'm a dad. And to do both of those things, it takes a lot of responsibility. It takes a lot of waking up when you may not like it so you can provide for and protect your family. Good men go through a lot, but if you want to be a good man and take on that responsibility, you can. I love being a dad. It's something I always wanted to do.

When you walk into Smiling Scoops, you're gonna get a big surprise: full of colors, neon lights—everything. There's a big wall of candy and the ice cream cabinet holding some colorful ice cream flavors. Then you see the menu—we offer a whole lot of different options that are made with ice cream. You get your money's worth. It's not pricey. You can come in, enjoy your day or your night with good music, sit down with your family, and enjoy ice cream. That's what we want. That's what we're growing. That's what we want to do.

I see a lot of different smiles on a lot of different kids' faces, and that motivates me—and motivates us—to push forward.

I was born at McLeod Hospital, born and raised in Florence. I grew up in a neighborhood, they call it Glendale. I was raised by my grandmother. She was a single mother raising three adults and one grandchild. So, I know it was a little bit hard for her, but she was the type of woman that always made sure—if somebody came and needed to do plumbing work or electrician work or whatever—she'd make me follow them like a puppy so I could learn. And she said, 'You're a man, you have to learn how to do these things.'

I'll say this—I didn't graduate school. I just felt school wasn't for me. So, I quit school and went straight to work, and I learned a lot of different things by just going to different jobs and working. I had some great men in my life that kind of took me under their wing and showed me a lot of different things.

But it was hard for an individual like me. And when I say hard, I mean a lot of interruptions. You got a lot of people that try to pull you off or try to push you down. You got a lot of people that try to persuade you to do wrong. Sometimes in that path, I did kind of go off track, but I know God always brought me right back in line. Then when you get older, you get wise, and you start to realize all that stuff was stupid. You start realizing the wrong things we've all done in life were stupid and just...weren't worth it.

But in spite of those wrong people and missteps, there were a lot of great people around me in Florence. A lot of people helped me. I had a lot of guidance, a lot of people supporting me and giving advice, and I listened to everyone.

Today, I'm proud. When I walk in the door, I still can't believe that I did this."

—Stoney Duprey, Smiling Scoops